

Prostate Cancer and How Not to Make a Decision



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When the doctor confirmed my prostate [biopsy](#) results were positive, my mind completely shut down. I could no longer comprehend anything the doctor said after hearing the word “cancer.”

His voice became distorted, and everything seemed to be moving in slow motion. My vision blurred, my heart pounded, and I started to feel sick and weak. I thought my life was over, and I just wanted to curl up into a ball and hide.

Fearing the worst with prostate cancer

My reaction to the cancer diagnosis may have been understandable or even typical. Although, on reflection, I now realize that it was an overreaction. At the time, I hadn't yet learned all the facts.

How could I think my life was over without even giving the doctor time to explain my test results? I knew nothing about prostate cancer or my particular situation, but yet I immediately assumed the worst.

Being urged to slow down

The reality was that I quickly went into shock after hearing my cancer diagnosis. I panicked and thought my only hope was surgery. "Just cut it out," I told my doctor. To my surprise, he asked me to slow down. He replied, "We don't

have enough information to make a treatment decision.”

He explained that I needed more tests. They would help indicate if the cancer was still contained within the prostate or had already spread. And besides, there were many treatment options to consider, and he encouraged me to seek multiple opinions.

Rushing into a treatment decision

Everyone will react differently to a cancer diagnosis. In my case, I was in shock, wasn't thinking clearly, and didn't yet know all the facts. It's easy to jump to conclusions and react to insufficient information.

We need to refrain from thinking cancer is synonymous with death. It's important to stay calm and allow ourselves time to process and understand the situation.

What I needed at that moment was time to recover just from hearing the news. But instead, I made a treatment decision. When in shock, it's not a good idea to make decisions. Especially life-altering decisions.

Not having an open mind

I agreed to wait for further test results, seek multiple opinions, and explore other options before deciding on treatment.

However, in the back of my mind, I was already leaning towards surgery. Therefore, even though I researched other options, my mind wasn't fully open. As a result, I didn't make a fair assessment before committing to surgery. And once the additional tests indicated cancer hadn't spread, I immediately asked the doctor to schedule the surgery.

Acting without all the facts

In hindsight, this is exactly how NOT to make a decision! I want men to make the best-informed decision possible for their particular case. And for that, you need a clear mind, all the facts, and be aware of all treatment options available.

On top of that, you need multiple opinions and time to research potential risks and side-effects of each treatment. All of this will take time. It's far better to take your time with the decision than to rush into treatment and regret it later.

Every case is different

I'm not advocating one treatment option over another, as no single option is best for every case. While one treatment option may work for one, it may not work for another.

Each case is different, including test results, age, life expectancy, prostate size, general health, available treatment options, and

personal preferences. And there are many options to consider depending on your specific situation.

In my case, I felt a sense of urgency to jump into treatment without all the information. And even though my surgery results have been very positive, they could have been very negative. In that case, I would have deeply regretted my decision. Not only because I didn't fairly assess other treatment options, but I failed to seek multiple opinions.

Leaving too much up to chance

Therefore, even though my decision to have surgery provided good results, I'm not happy with how I decided. By making a quick decision, I left too much up to chance. I would have been a lot more comfortable with my decision, knowing that I had an open mind. And fairly

assessed all available treatment options and spoke with other doctors before making a decision.

Then, and only then, I would be happy with my decision. Even if my chosen treatment failed, I could at least take comfort in the fact that I did my homework.

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