Finding Power over Hepatitis C

January 9, 2013 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

Fear is not a good reason to avoid treatment. As a person living with hepatitis C, fear has interfered with my health and happiness far too many times. As a nurse working with hepatitis C patients, I witnessed the crippling power of fear. It is a universal story. Patients told me about their anxieties and why they didn't want to undergo hepatitis C treatment. Some held tight to their stories for years. Yet, every patient who let go and took the plunge told me that the fear about treatment far exceeded the actual event.

Here is a true story to illustrate this point. A patient called me periodically, looking for a holistic cure for hepatitis C. She'd tell me she was going to stick with natural medicine; she was not going to put those toxic poisons into her body; I listened patiently.

One day she was telling me again about how she didn't want to put those poisons in her body. I told her that words are powerful. If she labeled hepatitis C medications as poisonous, then of course she wouldn't want to try them. Who would want to deliberately take poison? For me, I saw hepatitis C drugs as potent medicine. In my heart, they were sacred and healing, no less powerful than herbs used by shamans.

A month later, she started hepatitis C treatment. A year later she was free of the virus and became an ardent supporter of treatment. I heard her speak at support group meetings, confessing her fear and distrust of Western medicine, followed by her transformation. She said what I've heard many say--that what she imagined was worse than the actual treatment.

There are plenty of reasons for not doing hepatitis C treatment, but fear is not one of them.

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