Ethanol Alcohol Ablation for HCC

April 8, 2015 By Karen Hoyt

Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, and liver cancer. This excerpt first appeared on Karen's I Help C blog, March 28, 2015.

I get these hunches. Call it intuition, inkling, or whatever you want. I knew that the tumor was growing again. For several weeks, my snooze alarm was getting tapped more frequently. Not even Matt Bellamy motivated me to get up. After changing the ring tone to Muse's Super Massive Black Hole at full volume, I still went back to sleep. I spent a lot of time on my meditation cushion in stillness, calling on my inner reserve and the Spirit of God to renew my mind and heal my body. So much peace surrounded me. But there was a sense that I was preparing for something.

Then I went in for my 3 months screening and sure enough, the tumor was back. It's the same one that I had the Transcatheter Arterial Chemoembolization (TACE) for. It worked and knocked that sucker out for a while. But, I understood that it could grow again. They call it a recurrent or residual tumor. My medical team swung into action. I met with my interventional radiologist, Dr. Malloy at Integris, and we've got a plan.

Dr. Malloy is a bridge builder. See, treating hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is like trying to plug a dam with your finger. It's not a permanent fix because once those tumors start growing, they are persistent and pop up again and again.

Interventional radiologists build a bridge to transplant. Keeping the tumors small enough to stay within the Milan Criteria is their job. That is really our best option with HCC. Treating those tumors means he has to have a lot of tricks up his sleeve. Well, he calls them options.

Options! Yes, there are always glorious life saving options! Maybe one of the reasons I like that word is because it reminds me of optimism. I outlined some of those options in my TACE blog. For this round, we've eliminated a few procedures that won't work for my situation...

To read Karen's entire blog entry, which blends the lyrics from "Like a Bridge Over Troubled Water" with an incredible explanation of Ethanol Alcohol Ablation for HCC, click here.

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