

Post from the Past: “Knowing the Unknown”

Read this and other posts at my CaringBridge.org site.

An experience like this comes with many decisions....**so...many...decisions**. How do I want to be treated? Who do I want as a surgeon? What kind of surgery? Do I want hormone treatment? When would you like to start? I've been learning a lot, because I want to understand as much as I can to make the best decisions and know most of what is going on. Basically, it's like I've just enrolled in the latest college class: Breast Cancer101. They gave me this great handbook that's kind of like a “For Dummies” book. I've learned a lot about how lymph nodes work and the stages of cancer. The thing I don't like so much about learning is that it can open up the imagination to more “What Ifs” and “Maybes”. The bad kind...

They recommended I do genetic testing, because of my age. They have identified 24 genetic markers that reveal higher risks for other recurring cancers (ovarian, uterine, colon, prostate, etc). I was asked to record some family history of who else has had cancer in my family and give blood to find out if I have any of these mutated genes. The technology really is amazing, but it leaves me to wonder... Do I really want to know? What will I do with my knowing?

I'll be afraid... afraid of getting cancer again. I'll be afraid of passing it on to my boys. Will that fear drive me to take drastic measures that I will regret?

But, I **want** to know. I want to be proactive in preventing any future recurrences. I want to give my boys a fighting chance and a future....

Tomorrow morning, I go in for an MRI of my chest to see if

there's any more cancer that we haven't found yet. So far, I am Stage 1 because the nurse didn't see anything in the lymph nodes she ultrasounded under my arm 2 weeks ago. An MRI is much clearer and gives a 3D look of pretty much everything. If it has reached my lymph nodes, I will be bumped up to Stage 2 status. I want to know, for sure... but I have to say, knowing is pretty scary.

We will find out Friday the results of the MRI and the next steps in treatment. And go from there I guess...

Thank you ALL, for your love and support, prayers and verses, songs and hugs. We feel your embrace and presence around us in this difficult time. Sometimes, it's what carries me on when I don't want to move any further.

We love you, too.