

Survivor Spotlight

John Story



John Story in his own words...

May 22, 2006

In mid-December 2005, I had my annual physical with my internist. The result of my PSA test was 4.0. My wife is a registered nurse, which translates into the fact that within three days I was visiting a urologist.

The urologist said that I had prostatitis, and that it could cause the elevation. He gave me an antibiotic for 10 days. He also told me before I left his office that he

would suggest a biopsy, even if the PSA came down after treatment. That, of course, was my red light of what was coming. The lesson I learned here was that urologists (good ones) generally know by feel what's going on. He was right; the PSA came down to 1.6, but the biopsy was performed. I had 3 positive samples out of 18 taken. My results were given me on Friday, January 13.

Over the weekend, I read the book, *Prostate Cancer for Dummies*. This is an excellent, easy-to-read book written by a urologist, who himself has undergone the OPEN procedure. It compared all three treatment options very thoroughly.

During the following week, I talked with folks who had undergone the three treatment options – OPEN, ROBOT and RADIATION. I did extensive research on the Internet. I posted the results of this research on my Website at <http://webpages.charter.net/jrstory> under the MEDICINE category.

On January 20, one week after diagnosis, I met with Dr. E. Bugg. We scheduled the surgery for February 28, since physicians recommend that you wait at least a month after a biopsy before initiating any treatment. I used this time to perform daily muscle exercises, which later helped me get bladder control back faster after surgery.

At 5 a.m., I entered St. Vincent's Hospital for surgery. I had surgery at 7 a.m., and I was back in my room by noon. I had lost only 33 cc's of blood during surgery. They had me up walking that afternoon. The next morning Dr. Bugg released me to go home. I came home with a catheter in place.

I also had a device that resembles a fanny pack (worn by the ladies when shopping) attached around my waist, which contained pain medication that was automatically dispensed into two of the five incision holes. My medication ran out on the fourth day home so my wife removed the device. The On-Q Pain Buster is one marvelous device. (See www.askyoursurgeon.com/howitworks.php.) It totally controlled my pain. I took only five of 30 pills for pain that I brought home. I took none after the seventh day.

Forty-six days after diagnosis, my problem had been removed. I think I was about the 997th patient to visit the ROBOT at St. Vincent's. I had bypass heart surgery four years ago and, compared to that, this procedure was about like a root canal.