

Stanley (Bill) Pitts **Prostate Cancer Story**

I was diagnosed by biopsy with prostate cancer in June 2001 having a PSA of 2.5 and Gleason score of 6 or 3+3.

On December 16, 2011, I received my first medical treatment for this disease. Dr. Osamu Ukimura with the USC Institute of Urology performed Focal Cryoablation on the left side of my prostate, freezing an area two-thirds of that side only.

The result of that treatment is a PSA of .95 three months after the procedure. Complete continence was maintained and with 25 mg of Viagra, sex is as good as ever. Before the treatment, my PSA was 10.9. I am elated with the results.

I will continue active surveillance which has served me well for ten years. The history of my adventure with active surveillance for the previous ten years and my decision to pursue Focal Cryoablation over other treatment options follow:

Back in 2001 my urologist at Kaiser Permanente wanted me to decide within a month between two treatments that he highly recommended: a radical prostatectomy or radiation. Neither appealed to me.

A friend with a very aggressive case of prostate cancer had been treated at the Livingston Clinic. In checking out this clinic (not in business today), I requested names and phone numbers of men whom they had treated. These men had volunteered for this. One of those I called was Bill Dejka, a terrific guy who was treated by the Livingston Clinic after surgery had failed. Bill gave me excellent advice, most important being to start attending a local support group called the Informed Prostate Cancer Support Group. I would suspect that many of you reading this would find that also true for you.

At our group, I found men at various stages of cancer treatment and men who had done it all, from radical prostatectomy to microbiotic diets. I learned there of a trial at UCSF Magnetic Resonance Science Center. In checking further, I found that I qualified and the MPI spectroscopy was free. Over the years, I was able to have three, each showing little to no evidence of cancer. I was advised by members of IPCSG to get a Ploidy analysis of my biopsy. It was diploid, more good information. I was also advised to get an oncologist at Kaiser instead of the urologist or, at least, in addition to. Dr. Godfrey at Kaiser, an oncologist, offered hormonal therapy, if I wished. I knew I wanted to avoid treatment as long as possible, and Dr. Godfrey supported that decision.

My own lifestyle change was a low fat diet, mainly vegan, with occasional fish or fowl, and positive visualization of my prostate being bathed in my body's natural healing process, along with my usual regimen of regular exercise.. Seven years after the biopsy I was able to use my newly-acquired Medicare and had a color Doppler and tissue ultrasound by Dr. Bahn in August 2008. The result was encouraging: "the known cancer diagnosed in 2001 would be too small to be seen and appears to be a clinically insignificant malignancy at this time." My PSA score at that time was 5.17.

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In April 2010 I had a second power Doppler procedure performed by Dr. Bahn. Because of a rise in PSA to 7.9, he recommended a biopsy and with his ultrasound, he detected a lesion at the upper left base of the prostate. Eight months later in December, I decided to have the biopsy performed by Dr. Bahn. The results showed cancer in the left base and left mid-gland with up to 25% tissue core invasion. Bahn's lab gave a Gleason score of 7 (3 + 4). Dr. Bahn recommended a "proper locoregional treatment" if the PSA elevation continued and evidence of enlargement was seen by ultrasound. My PSA at this time was 7.87.

I went on a more stringent vegan diet and tried some Reichi (energy) treatments to give me time while I decided on a treatment plan, if any at all. My PSA did drop one point but later started to rise again.

On July 16, 2011, I heard a joint presentation by Dr. Bahn and his colleague, Dr. Ukimura, at our IPCSG meeting. The process of focal cryoablation was presented by Dr. Ukimura. This appealed to me: minimally invasive and destroying only the more aggressive tumor. I made an appointment to be examined by Dr. Ukimura to check my potential for this procedure.

In September 2011 I had an ultrasound exam by Dr. Ukimura at the USC Norris Cancer Center. He believed me to be a good candidate for this procedure and met with me and my wife, explaining completely what we could experience and expect. On December 12, 2011, I had the procedure completed at USC, going home that very evening. Other than being quite sore in the rectum area for awhile, the procedure went as explained. Three months later, my PSA was .95; I have full continence and the ability to get an erection, as desired for continued healthy sexual activity.

I will continue with the vegan diet and also active surveillance. This, for me, was the perfect procedure. I still have some cancer in my right side of the prostate, which continues to appear non-aggressive at the present. If it becomes more aggressive, I will make a decision at that time regarding pursuing treatment. Life is good!