

April 15, 2017



Dear Friend,

I'm writing this personal update for those who have kindly inquired about my current Adventure with Cancer. If you haven't read the previous updates, here's the short take:

I was diagnosed last October with endometrial cancer, stage III. I had surgery in November, and began chemo in December. After three sessions of chemo, once every three weeks, I started a radiation regime, daily, for 30 sessions over six weeks. This daily treatment required a 2 hour one-way drive to Kansas City every day, but eventually I succumbed to all the kind advice from many folks, who told me to stay in Kansas City. I did that for the last three weeks of radiation, and although the side effects were a little uncomfortable, the overall fatigue was considerably lessened.

Following the radiation treatments, which ended two weeks ago, I had a lovely two week vacation - from treatments, anyway! It was a good two weeks of rest, recovery, and work. I was able to catch up on a lot of website stuff and some project preliminaries. I'm still chugging along slowly on projects - but at least I'm going forward.

Yesterday, I began a the last rounds of chemotherapy - once every three weeks, until the end of May. It was not nearly as stressful as the first chemo sessions, because, by this time, visits to the Cancer Center were definitely Old Hat! It makes such a huge difference, knowing what to expect. So I was relaxed and I enjoyed the day, despite the drugginess of the whole situation.

With the amount of Benadryl they pump into me, it's not hard to settle down into a nice hazy stupor for a while and slip into a nap. But then the steroids kick in, and I'm super-charged for the rest of the day. Now, if those were the only things - a good infusion of Benadryl followed by massive surges of steroids - well, the whole experience would be nothing short of fun! Steroids may not be good for you (albeit necessary in some circumstances), but they sure make you feel good!

Hence, at 2:30 this morning, I was making to-do lists, catching up on work, reading other people's blog posts, and drinking whole caverns of water. I'm sure the crash will come soon, but in the meantime, I'm soaking it up!

Every cloud has a silver lining. It's such a cliché, but it is so true. For me, the silver lining is the ongoing support and encouragement I've received from all of you, from my family, from my friends.

And there are other silver linings as well - the obvious one is that the cancer will hopefully be licked at the end of all of this. And I already mentioned the whole hair loss thing. It's not as bad as it seems and it makes life So Very Easy!

Overall, right now, I feel great. The chemo will kick in tonight or tomorrow, and I'll probably have a rough week ahead. But it all passes, one way or another. The way I see it is this: pain and discomfort are part of life - we all go through our own battles and carry our own crosses. We're not guaranteed a life that is pain and trouble free, so why spend energy in anger over it, loathing it, or giving into it? How we handle it makes all the difference. The trick is to be sympathetic, patient, and kind with everyone, because we really don't know what other people are going through, and so many people go through so much worse. Forge ahead, keep your chin up, and keep smiling, and sure enough, it'll end soon. And it's true - for me, the end, which seemed so far away last year, is already in sight.

Two more sessions to go, and all is well. Thank you so much for asking and showing your kind interest! I'll let you know when it's over!

Love,

Mary