

Preface

Why I Decided to Write This Book.

I am really not a bad organ, certainly not bad enough to get all the abuse that's thrown my way. It's an adult lifetime of digital exams, pushing, poking, and prodding, not to mention ultrasound biopsies, taking out small chunks of my maleness. Talk about being underappreciated. I've overheard men say, "What does our prostate do besides sexy squirting when we're younger, make it difficult to pee when we get older, and then eventually get infected and most likely get cancer?"

And then there are the frivolous comparisons ... "Men are so jealous about all the attention being paid to breast cancer that they have to make a big deal about prostate cancer."

In 2002, a group of anatomists met and renamed the female periurethral glands calling them the female prostate. Were any men's anatomical organs renamed by this committee for female organs? I don't think so. Men jealous? Ha!

I know there are books out there about me and my problems that have good, comprehensive information, but after 20 pages or so, most readers find they are confused and contracting the dreaded MEGO (My Eyelids Glaze Over) syndrome. As far as I know, sleep aided by informative but boring subject matter has not been approved for use by the FDA for sleep disorders. So, I ask you, what finally tips the balance from all that has been heaped on me?

So, I thought, if you're not going to stick up for yourself, then who will. The time has come for me to step up to the plate and tell my story.

When I wasn't performing my daily functions, I did a lot of reading, talked to medical experts, specialists, fellow patients, and others who thought they could help me bring a wider perspective to the subject.

I will try to dispel some of the myths, examine some of the truths, and provide you with some basic information and questions that will allow you to have a fundamental understanding of the prostate and its diseases. I hope to raise some thought-provoking questions. Armed with this information, you will be able to ask relevant questions, and have intelligent conversations with your primary care physician, urologist, radiation oncologist, medical oncologist, and your next-door know-it-all neighbor.

You may ask why I am using humor when prostate cancer is such a serious subject. My answer is simple: It is impossible to be under the stresses of the C word, the interminable wait for test and biopsy results, and the complex treatment decisions while you are laughing. Humor and stress can't co-exist. Humor

transforms STRESSED into DESSERTS (sugarless if you are diabetic). By no means am I discounting the upset that the diagnosis of prostate cancer brings. Rather, I think we should listen to famous comedian and actor, Bill Cosby, who says: "Through humor, you can soften some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it."

This book is purely informational and it is not intended as a replacement for medical advice of a physician. It does not imply any recommendation to treat or not to treat, or favor any specific form of treatment. All decisions regarding your care should be discussed between you and your physician.

The Prostate

As told to Joel L. Schwartz M.D.

