

A man from Milton Keynes

I am in my mid-sixties. My story begins mid 2010. After several weeks of going for a wee 4-5 times a night, which had been rare previously, it dawned on me that I should get this checked. (Jumping ahead for a moment: ironically, it stopped soon after I got into the prostate cancer 'system', and I've had no other symptoms either.)

The GP recommended a PSA test and the resultant figure was 6.1. This was swiftly followed by a biopsy - it was clear. Half a year later, the PSA jumped to 10, leading to biopsy no. 2 - a saturation biopsy, with 19 clear cores and one with a smidgen of cancer, 0.4mm.

Six further years of Active Surveillance have seen my PSA oscillate (peaking at 20.9 ... so far), generally being 16-18. A third biopsy found nothing, as did three MRI scans (the most recent being multiparameter).

In the earlier years, with the upward movement of my PSA, it seemed that treatment would be necessary. Prostate Cancer UK, at my request, arranged for me to be phoned by two guys with personal experience: Peter and Tam helped me fully understand about radiotherapy and brachytherapy, respectively ... Thanks, chaps.

However, I had my eye on the HIFU clinical trial being run under the auspices of Professor Mark Emberton, who is also involved with the PROMIS clinical trial included in the presentation at MKPCSG's March 2017 meeting. My GP, ever supportive (I know, lucky me), would have assisted my application. But then that third biopsy result - clear - meant there was no immediate need for treatment, so Active Surveillance was the best option for me: quarterly appointments for 2 years, then 6-monthly.

Early on, I did some reading on the possible influence of food and drink on prostate cancer. I decided to do 3 things:

- (1) switch from my beloved coffee to virtually tasteless green tea
- (2) drink a small glass of pomegranate juice every day
- (3) eat a handful of pumpkin seeds every day.

My consultant was, and still is, ambivalent about two of those, but is a great believer that pomegranate juice helps. However, he thought I didn't need as much per day as that small glassful, so, as an experiment, I reduced the daily amount considerably ... and the next PSA went up nearly 25%. I continued the experiment for a second six months, this time reverting back to the small glassful, and the PSA dropped 10%. Not a very statistically sound experiment, but enough to convince me!

What's next? Possibly an MRI and/or a biopsy. I'm told if the results are clear, my Active Surveillance could stop or - my preference - become yearly. I realise this means I've been one of the lucky ones, so far, and I hope that this continues.