

Value of Screening

I recorded a daily journal five and a half years ago depicting my personal battle with cancer on our [non-profit website](#). The journal was meant to help others who find themselves battling this disease themselves; to familiarize themselves with options, treatments, and levels of pain to expect. Tips were also included for the support chains so they could also know what to expect. I received two larynx check-ups each year for five years to ensure the cancer did not come back. However, the check-ups were only to check the larynx for cancer not the rest of my body (see related article, [Why the Holistic Approach is so Important!](#)). They did not find any recurring Larynx cancer. Then almost 6 years after the initial diagnosis, the hospital performed a routine screen of my medical records and decided that I needed a Colonoscopy to screen for colon cancer. Not because I had symptoms or signs of colon cancer but because I was 61 years old and had never had a colonoscopy before.

Absolutely no symptoms, no pain, no discomfort, no irregular bowl movements nor abdominal troubles, no blood in the stool – No Warning Signs! So why should I take the time or spend the money for a Colonoscopy? I spent quite a bit of time thinking of reasons not to do it; but I could only come up with reasons to do it. I was preparing to retire and move to paradise, so why not get it out of the way before then. Some insurance policies would not cover later treatment if I declined medical advice now. And then since Alternative Medicine is not an alternative in this case; it would be the Western "procedure" instead. My wife had two colonoscopies before without incident. So I scheduled it.

3/10/2008: My Colonoscopy. Of course they put you out for the procedure. I, myself, had never had a problem with surgeries nor anesthesia. I woke up after the procedure. My wife joined me in recovery when I woke up. She asked what had taken my procedure so long. The doctor made his rounds soon after that. The doctor explained that I had broken all clinic records. He had removed and biopsied 13 polyps, however, there were at least 8 more that needed to be removed separately. One was located near my appendix and one was so big that it was blocking roughly 97% of my upper right colon. (If this polyp had been located further into the colon where the liquid is processed into solids, I would have been some very serious and painful times. Where it was, the waste is mostly liquid at that point in the process. He said he could not remove that big polyps and scheduled me for a surgical consult. He also scheduled me for another colonoscopy to remove another 8 polyps. Normally I would question this, but he showed me the pictures of the polyps in living color.

4/16/2008: My second colonoscopy. Another 8 polyps removed and snips taken for biopsy. The Doctor again said that 21 polyps were far past the previous record for one patient in 40 days; and I still have at least 2 more and probably many more in the strip of colon they could not get into because of the blockage of the two big polyps. 21 polyps

removed and I was still feeling fine. Within another 2 weeks was my meeting with the surgeon to discuss my options for treating the two big ones.

4/25/2008: The surgeon explained that there are some people who are just predisposition to making polyps (sometimes it is hereditary). He recommended that my children get screened no later than at 35 years of age. Since the symptoms or warning signs of colon cancer are non-existent (in some cases), I agreed. He did mention that the snips he sent in for biopsy all came back benign or pre-cancerous, he mentioned that he was only able to snip a sample from the near end of the big polyp so there was always a chance that the inaccessible side of the big one was cancerous.

5/12/2008: My surgery. My right colon was re-sectioned; the area between and including the two large polyps was removed and the colon was reattached. It was a five day hospital stay and around 3 week recovery period at home. The doctor also said that he removed an ailing gall bladder and repaired a hernia during the surgery. During the 5 days in the hospital, he also said that the sample of the big polyp came back with Stage II Cancer. However, it had been completely removed during the surgery.

6/14/2008: My recovery has progressed well and proposes no threat to our Hawaii trip next month. Didn't need any of the pain meds they gave me upon discharge from the hospital.

I think I will have an annual colonoscopy as recommended. This makes a second bought with cancer. This time early detection through Western procedures was the key and it shows the true value of screening.

Me = 2 Cancer = 0

Shujin
Founder
Ampuku Wellness Therapy

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