FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Health & Fitness

Choices in Breast Cancer Treatment: Medical Specialists and Cancer Survivors Tell You What You Need to Know

Kenneth D. Miller, editor
John Hopkins University Press
978-0-8018-8684-3
(January 9, 2008)

A diagnosis of breast cancer for a woman or loved one can be a frightening and, at times, emotionally paralyzing experience. There are so many questions: How bad is it? How far has it spread? What are the treatment options? And, perhaps most harrowing of all: Why did this happen?

Fortunately—or unfortunately, depending on the way one looks at it—hundreds of thousands of women in the United States, with the support of their families and doctors, have faced breast cancer, treated it, and survived. In this comprehensive essay collection doctors, nurses, and cancer survivors tell their stories, explain the different kinds of treatments, and give advice on the ways of navigating all of the choices available. Editor Kenneth Miller, a medical oncologist and professor at the Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine, is himself married to a cancer survivor.

Divided into five parts, the first gives an overview and the second discusses various treatments available including hormone therapy, lumpectomy, and mastectomy, as well as reconstructive cosmetic surgery options. The chapters of Part Three are written entirely by Miller, and recap, step-by-step, the process of dealing with breast cancer, from the initial trauma of diagnosis to thoughts on reconstructive surgery after treatment. The personal stories of cancer survivors themselves comprise the last two parts of the book.

Miller points out early on that the panic initiated by a cancer diagnosis might make it difficult to concentrate on reading *any* book, even a helpful book about choices in treatment. Indeed, many facts, statistics, and similar personal stories are repeated throughout the book. While this repetition could grow tedious, it's actually comforting considering the subject matter and a potential reader's state of mind. As Miller points out, "Treatment options are presented by many voices throughout this book, and the most important considerations are reiterated.

Medical information is illuminated by the personal narratives that constitute the human core of this book." It's that human core that makes this an indispensable resource for any breast cancer patient or a patient's friends and family.

Olivia Boler