

The Decision: Your Prostate Biopsy Shows Cancer...Now What?

John C. McHugh

Jennie Cooper Press

Unknown (pp)

978-0-692-00565-1

There is very little that is more startling than getting a call from a doctor with the news that the diagnosis is cancer. A recent article indicated that 200,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer in the United States every year; 25,000 die of the disease. Dr. John C. McHugh, an experienced urologist and surgeon, brings a rational, no-nonsense approach to the decision regarding treatment for prostate cancer in *The Decision: Your prostate biopsy shows cancer. Now What?* McHugh knows of what he speaks: Not only has he counseled men with prostate cancer in his urology practice for more than 25 years, but he himself was diagnosed with the disease at age 52 and experienced the gut-wrenching decision that is the subject of his book.

Importantly, Dr. McHugh does not overwhelm the reader with too much information. He is writing for the man who already has been diagnosed with prostate cancer. "Right now, you don't need a big, comprehensive book about the causes and intricacies of prostate cancer; that is irrelevant to you." What a man at this point needs is specific information about his options for treatment that is relevant to his particular circumstances.

According to McHugh, the man diagnosed with prostate cancer needs to know about his cancer, his general underlying health condition, and the best treatment options available to him. While the author is a urological surgeon, he is not biased toward a surgical solution. He recognizes that there are valid reasons for choosing other options for treatment, such as radiation and seed implantation. McHugh gives a detailed discussion of the pros and cons of each mode of treatment in language easily understood by the layman. Along the way, the author relays various experiences he and others have had in the course of selecting a treatment.

Significantly, the author describes and discusses the various side effects of each of the treatment options he lists: surgery, radiation and seed implantation. Considering only the treatment procedure without its attendant side effects is only half an analysis, he believes. For instance, radiation treatment is quick and easily administered and allows the patient to return to work sooner than surgery. But radiation can also complicate pre-existing voiding problems and may have longer lasting and uncertain detrimental effects.

McHugh has written an invaluable tool for the man facing the decision of how to treat his prostate cancer.

This reviewer too knows of what he speaks, having been diagnosed with prostate cancer nearly six years ago. He had robotic surgery and is living an active, cancer-free life.

JOHN MICHAEL SENGER (April 28, 2011)

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