

EVIDENCE BASED MEDICINE?

by Charles (Chuck) Maack – Prostate Cancer Activist/Mentor

DISCLAIMER: Please recognize that I am not a Medical Doctor. I have been an avid student researching and studying prostate cancer as a survivor and continuing patient since 1992. I have dedicated my retirement years to continued research and study in order to serve as an advocate for prostate cancer awareness, and, from a activist patient's viewpoint, to voluntarily help patients, caregivers, and others interested develop an understanding of prostate cancer, its treatment options, and the treatment of the side effects that often accompany treatment. There is absolutely no charge for my mentoring – I provide this free service as one who has been there and hoping to make your journey one with better understanding and knowledge than was available to me when I was diagnosed so many years ago. Readers of this paper must understand that the comments or recommendations I make are not intended to be the procedure to blindly follow; rather, they are to be reviewed as my opinion, then used for further personal research, study, and subsequent discussion with the medical professional/physician providing your prostate cancer care.

We often hear of physicians who question the use of, for example, 5Alpha Reductase (5AR) inhibitors (dutasteride/Avodart or finasteride/Proscar), in androgen/hormonal deprivation therapy for advanced or recurring prostate cancer. They claim that they follow only “Evidence Based” Medicine.” Evidence based medicine works best for those who do their own research to determine that evidence rather than only read or listen to those who merely follow the direction provided in the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines and fail to do their own homework. Medical Oncologists who are providing general cancer treatment should keep in contact with and review the papers authored by their colleagues who are specialists “specifically” in prostate cancer treatment (Stephen B. Strum, Ashland, Oregon; Charles E. “Snuffy” Myers, Earlysville, Virginia; Mark Scholz and Richard Lam, Marina del Rey, California; Robert “Bob” Leibowitz, Los Angeles, California; Glenn Tisman, Whittier, California, Steven Tucker, Singapore, to name a few). And it would behoove all physicians treating prostate cancer to avail themselves of the material available at the Prostate Cancer Research Institute (PCRI) website, specifically PCRI Papers at <http://prostate-cancer.org/pcri-papers-2/> to keep them more and better in touch with the reality of treating advanced “prostate” cancer.

Undoubtedly, evidence based medicine is the safe road to travel for those physicians who may not have time to involve themselves in research, but evidence based medicine can be trumped by the protocols determined by physicians who go the steps beyond to determine the importance and usefulness of medications not having made it to the expense of trials to determine their efficacy.