New Choices for Colon Cancer Patients

Bio-Medicine.Org

SARASOTA, Fla., Oct. 20 /PRNewswire/ -- Riley Powell taught high school English, and spent her summers training horses at a nearby dude ranch. When she noticed blood in her stool, she thought it was hemorrhoids, from spending so many hours on horseback. But when it persisted, she saw her doctor. At age 34, she was diagnosed with colon/rectal cancer, and was advised to have surgery and a colostomy. Powell opted to travel out of the country for non-invasive treatment that would eliminate the need for a colostomy bag. According to TMD Limited, a medical tourism company, Powell was one of nearly a million Americans seeking alternative treatment outside the US last year.

Over a hundred thousand Americans will be diagnosed with colon/rectal cancer this year, and half of them will die of the disease. This is the fourth most common cancer in the US, and usually strikes older Americans. There is no known cause, and early colorectal cancer often has no symptoms.

When symptoms do develop, they include blood in the stool, diarrhea or constipation, narrow stools, gas and cramping, fatigue, weight loss and nausea or vomiting.

Powell had a fecal occult and a carcinoembroyonic antigen (CEA) blood test, a colonoscopy, digital rectal exam and an endorectal ultrasound. A chest X-ray was done to look for spread to the lungs.

When cancer is confined to the colon, surgery followed by radiation and chemotherapy is the standard treatment in the USA. Powell's cancer was in both the colon and the rectum. When the cancer is in the rectum, a colostomy is also recommended.

The surgeon creates a stoma, or new opening in the abdomen called a colostomy. A bag is fitted over the stoma to collect waste. Complications include being unable to control bowel movements or urine, vomiting, bloody stools and tender skin.

"My grandfather had a colostomy when I was barely a teenager.
'/>"/>

SOURCE [1]

Source URL (retrieved on *05/04/2015 - 5:11pm*):
http://www.mdtmag.com/news/2010/10/new-choices-colon-cancer-patients

Links:

[1] http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-technology-1/New-Choices-for-Colon-Cancer-Patients-11920-1/