

The Team

Written by
Monday, 29 November 2004 00:00

When Jay first discovered the lump in his groin, it was in late September and he kept that information to himself. His gut told him it was the return of the melanoma but he didn't want to alert anyone until it was confirmed. He, Bill and Jamie were planning a "brothers" weekend for Thanksgiving in Sioux Lookout at Jamie and Mary's place and Jay knew disclosing this information would set a worrisome tone for the weekend and he wanted nothing to spoil it. It was only after their "best ever" reunion, that he shared his discovery with his dermatologist who arrogantly dismissed it, referring him to a plastic surgeon in December. And it was then that he finally informed me of her diagnosis and subsequent referral.

Last winter, I was growing concerned about him because everytime I spoke with him on the phone he was either suffering from a cold or recovering from one, an indication that his immune system was being compromised. I was on his case constantly to go for a check-up but it would fall on deaf ears. When I was back for a visit in July, I sat Rachel down to explain to her the severity of Jay's condition, something she was previously unaware of. Jay had told her that the 3-inch scar on his leg was from having skin cancer removed from it five years ago and it was no big deal. Once she understood what the skin cancer really was, she set up an appointment for him with a dermatologist in Markham so that he could have a CAT scan and check-up. Little did she know that the dermatologist was completely incompetent and obviously cared nothing for her new patient. At any rate, Jay no longer sees that dermatologist.

Recently, I asked him why he waited to tell anyone about what was going on and he told me he didn't want to ruin a great weekend and he didn't want me to worry unnecessarily. I am grateful that Rachel is part of our lives now and she and her family are a major part of his ongoing care and recovery. It will make my final departure from here a much easier thing to do knowing that with her devotion and love he will be well looked after. Her parents, siblings and aunts are all on his team now and I am grateful to have them in our lives.