

Another Test in Life

The editors of *AFP* welcome submissions for Close-ups. Guidelines for contributing to this feature can be found in the Authors' Guide at <http://www.aafp.org/afp/authors>.

Close-ups is coordinated by Caroline Wellbery, MD, associate deputy editor, with assistance from Amy Crawford-Faucher, MD; Jo Marie Reilly, MD; and Sanaz Majd, MD. Questions about this department may be sent to Dr. Wellbery at afpjurnal@aafp.org.

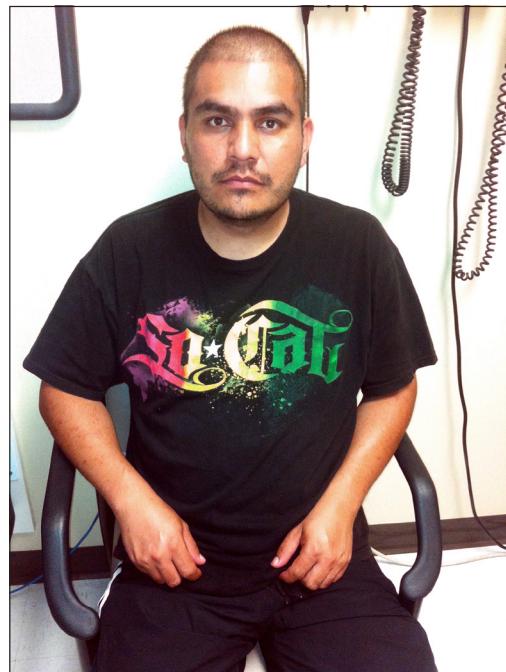
A collection of Close-ups published in *AFP* is available at <http://www.aafp.org/afp/closeups>.

I was recently diagnosed with testicular cancer. I still can't believe it happened to me. I am so young. I never thought I would be the one in my family to get cancer.

I was having some pain in my right testicle on and off for weeks. It became worse with heavy lifting. I also had pain in the right side of my stomach at the same time. I am very healthy, so I was worried something was wrong since the pain kept coming and going.

The doctors initially thought it may be a hernia or an infection, but an ultrasound and blood work showed that my tumor markers were abnormal—that's how I was diagnosed with testicular cancer. I was scheduled for surgery right away.

No one in my family had ever had cancer; I was the first one. I never felt a lump, and neither did the doctors. I was so afraid of having cancer because I was afraid I would die. I immediately thought about my wife, my daughter, and my mother. It was a relief to hear that testicular cancer has a high survival rate and that it had been caught early. I had surgery to remove my right testicle and chemotherapy for two weeks thereafter. Now I'm cancer free and so grateful that I'm healthy. I'd like to think of this as just another test in life.—J.S.



COMMENTARY

Testicular cancer is the most common solid cancer in young men between 15 and 35 years of age, but it is also one of the most curable if caught early. The classic presentation is a young man with painless testicular swelling. However, some patients experience acute pain. Patients can also have a pulling or heavy sensation in the scrotum or lower abdomen. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force does not recommend routine screening for testicular cancer. However, it is important to consider testicular cancer when young patients present with testicular symptoms, even if atypical or if no mass is felt on examination.

SANAZ MAJD, MD

RESOURCES

American Cancer Society
<http://www.cancer.org>

MedlinePlus
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/testicularcancer.html>

National Cancer Institute
<http://www.cancer.gov>

Testicular Cancer Resource Center
<http://tcrc.acor.org/>

Testicular Cancer Society
<http://www.testicularcancersociety.org> ■