Living with Brain Mets

SUSAN S.
Beloved Wife, Charming and Passionate Grandmother
Ask Susan the key to dealing with cancer, and she’ll tell you, “I consider my doctors family.”

It all started with a simple visit to her doctor to check out a cold. What seemed to be a scratchy throat led to an exam, which led to blood work, then an MRI to the diagnosis of advanced lung cancer. Susan was shocked. To add complexity, her brother had been diagnosed at the same time with an inoperable tumor. Her husband, Bob, was her rock with his love shining a light on any darkness.

As is sometimes the case with lung cancer, Susan’s condition metastasized and worked its way to her spine, liver and her head. Subsequent tests revealed she had 6 growths in her brain. Her doctors decided to treat the lung cancer first with chemotherapy. As you can imagine, all the usual suspects for going through chemo developed as well, nausea, fatigue, and loss of appetite. What made it worse was the chemo wasn’t designed to treat tumors in her brain.

That’s when she learned about Gamma Knife® radiosurgery, a non-invasive treatment with few side effects. What’s more, treatment could be done along with her chemotherapy so she could fight both conditions at once. The procedure was rather simple. She went in at 7am and was fitted for the head frame and a MRI was taken to determine the exact location and size of the tumors. Shortly after, it was Gamma Knife time.

“Once I was approved for Gamma Knife, I felt so much safer. It was so relaxing, I fell asleep during the process.” She was in and out by noon. No cuts. No hair loss. No side effects.

Susan was deeply appreciative of the staff at Swedish Radiosurgery Center. “Insurance was trying to deny the treatment and Dr. Loiselle contacted them himself to explain how important the procedure was to my overall health. Three hours on the phone. But he convinced them to cover it.”

Gamma Knife treatment was finished. The hope is that the tumors in my head are gone for good and will never grow again. She is getting regular MRIs and CT Scans every three months. “I’m still doing chemo for the other cancers, but I’ve got a very positive attitude. I’m grateful to be alive and I’m fighting this all the way!”