

ANNE'S JOURNEY

I was diagnosed with hypothyroidism approximately 25 years ago and until 2018 there were no issues of concern. In 2016 I started having issues with my left knee – a knee that I had previously had surgery on, and these issues resulted in a total knee replacement in November 2017. The surgery went well with no complications but upon release from the hospital and arrival back home pain management was necessary and I was prescribed Tylenol with Codeine. After taking just one tablet a severe reaction occurred which resulted in another hospital admission.

After my hospital release, I just did not feel well and strange symptoms appeared such as extreme cold, excess energy and difficulty swallowing. My personality was also becoming unfamiliar to me. I went from family doctor to family doctor, each saying there was a health issue and thought it could be my thyroid, but no one was listening. There was a constant dismissal by family doctors, a nurse practitioner and various specialists (endocrinologist, internal medicine specialist and neurologists).

In the process I was also misdiagnosed with an unusual neurological condition. I did pursue alternative medicine - functional doctor (promised a diagnosis within two weeks if a series of tests were to be done – cost was plus \$20,000-) and two naturopaths (one was driven by supplements and the Bowen technique, the other by tinctures and a diagnosis of “metal toxicity”). There were many visits to labs for bloodwork, CT scans and MRI's, but unfortunately for incorrect reasons. At the same time, I decided to walk the Kidney March for 100 kms - I was like a walking machine as I was never athletic – I knew it was 100 kms in a span of 3 days so walking with my dog Yukon became my life, fatigue never entered the picture.

With minimal assistance from the medical system, I decided to educate myself on thyroid health and joined the Thyroid Foundation of Canada (TFC). I joined as I knew the material on their website was trustworthy as compared to the overall internet. Their website introduced me to webinars that could be accessed for various thyroid health subjects and a HELP line.

I did increase my knowledge base through these webinars. The HELP

line was accessed several times for a variety of reasons. Being constantly ignored (“there is nothing wrong with your thyroid”), there appeared no light on the horizon until one Sunday while eating spaghetti, a piece of spaghetti became lodged in my throat.

Finally, my family doctor did take some action early in 2022 and sent me for an ultrasound. Everything then began to move quickly – an extremely enlarged thyroid nodule was found. A biopsy had to be done. While waiting for the biopsy I was invited by TFC President, Laz Bouros, to volunteer as a test subject for the CSEM Professional Conference in Calgary in November 2022. I jumped at the opportunity - my enlarged thyroid nodule would provide an excellent learning experience for everyone.

Nobody on this earth should go through the misery that I went through for the last 6 years. The biopsy was done, fortunately the nodule was cancer free. I was then referred to one endocrinologist by my family doctor, and a second endocrinologist, reluctantly, by the internal medicine specialist. Because of its size and nature as a “toxic nodule” both endocrinologists concurred the only option available to me was surgical removal. I had my entire thyroid removed (both lobes as a precaution) in November of 2023. The surgeon has been incredible, adjusting my dosage as required and yes, I do have a new family doctor who is helping me navigate back to good health. Thank you to the Thyroid Foundation of Canada for helping me get my life back.



What's your story?

Do you have a thyroid story you could share with us? Our readers find the experiences of others to be very helpful in their own struggle with thyroid disease. Please send your 500-1,000 word story and a couple of photos to: info@thyroid.ca