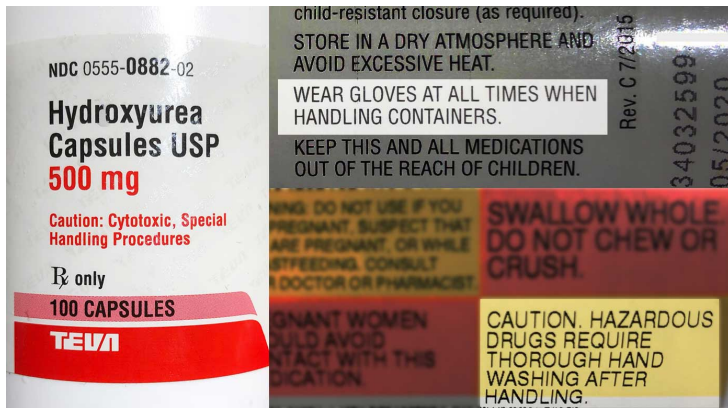


Good news from Tuesday's Bone Marrow Biopsy



The warning labels on the stuff I take don't exactly reduce anxiety! How bad off must one be to need something this scary? The reality is that it's pretty benign stuff.

Reading the warning label on the medicine I take, is it any wonder someone gets a bit apprehensive about having Essential Thrombocythemia? But there's some really good news.

I had my first bone marrow biopsy on Tuesday, something I wasn't looking forward to not just for the procedure itself, but also what it might tell me. In a nutshell, those of us with bone marrow cancers essentially have a fuse, and what we don't know, without a bone marrow biopsy, is if that fuse has been lit, and if it has, how long it might burn. Kind of scary stuff.

The procedure isn't fun, trying to punch a needle through bone to extract material from the inside. But I got through it and actually rode my bike back to the shop and kept working the rest of the day. And then, Friday, I got an email saying I had a message from my doctor. Wow, wasn't expecting anything for at least another week. So I go to Kaiser's website without any of the fear I expected (I'd already intellectualized/rationalized just about all possibilities) and get some really good news. Everything is "normal" except for the minor changes associated with my condition. There is no evidence of progression to something much worse.

I've still got some annoying symptoms that will be with me forever; itching (controlled with Allegra), a bit lower energy levels, and a strange sort of dull pain that comes from the inside of my hip bones. But my platelets (which my disease messes with) are under control so I'm basically risk-free and without restrictions. Like I said, very good news.

The specifics, from the doctor's email-

- NORMOCELLULAR MARROW WITH MILD MEGAKARYOCYTIC HYPERPLASIA
- NO INCREASE IN BLASTS IS SEEN
- There is no Myelofibrosis.
- Reticulin (ranges from 1-3) level at 0-1 (which is very minimal if any, and not unexpected in this condition).