

## Survivor Stories: Annette's Lessons

### Science Based Treatment Options

So it just kind of highlighted to me you need science behind the information that you're getting and you can't just take everyone at their word. So the treatment path that came out from consulting with Alex was, ipilimumab or something like that. Then the immunotherapy that had not yet been approved at that point. It was-- at that point we were in May of 2013-- at this point in time. It was kind of being-- 2014, May of 2014. We were-- it was kind of being geared up for FDA approval for the fall of 2014. So I was not quite-- I was a bit ahead of my time with my cancer as opposed to the treatment.

Alex just kept saying, "We just need to keep you alive. We need to keep you alive until these meds are here. You just need to stay alive. These meds are going to save you. We need to get you these meds. You need to stay alive until we get these meds." I'm like okay. The first one was the IPI and the Cancer Agency gives you a dosage of 3 milligrams per 10 kilograms-- whatever, 10 milli-- or 3 milligrams. All the research says 10 milligrams. You should be getting the 10 milligram treatment. So that was the point where Alex referred us over to Dr. Klimo. I guess was a private clinic. We never really did figure out what that was. We got over there. We're like, are we going to have to pay for this consult?

Nope. We didn't have to pay for this consult. Like I have no idea. We're just seeing this oncologist and somehow we're just seeing him. So we saw Dr. Klimo and he was like, yep. 10 milligrams in and out the door. Okay. And then he referred us over to an oncologist, I guess that would go outside the policies that were set out by BC Cancer. If he felt they were fine, like if he wasn't causing harm. We told our oncologist all of this and she fully supported it. She's like, I just-- it's outside the policy and at this point I don't really feel-- she didn't feel comfortable going outside the policies of the BC Cancer Agency. Fair enough-- those are the rules, right? So she was following the rules in her mind.

So that was great. She paid for our ferry. We ended up having to get treatment over in North Van. So she paid for all our ferry trips back and forth and she did what she could to support us. She followed along and she got copies of our treatment. So she knew what was going on over there, which was great.