

My Trip Back To Me....How I Reclaimed My Joy, Health, and Emotional Well-Being

I know that there are many other women who have stories similar to mine. Thousands of women are suffering from uterine fibroid tumors. I have decided to be very detailed about my condition in hopes of helping others. There are women who are uncertain about what is going on with their bodies, and it is important to become more knowledgeable so they can make well informed decisions for themselves. -Jennifer Bell

Chapter 2

I did my research first and knew to request not to have a Total Hysterectomy. I wanted my ovaries spared if possible. Upon preparation for the procedure my Gynecologist, Dr. Felicia Dawson assured me that they would spare my ovaries if there was not a complication with where the fibroids were located. With a Total Hysterectomy, the uterus and both ovaries are removed. The removal of the ovaries is what brings on early menopause and causes other hormonal changes, including low libido and mood swings. I was not ready for that yet by any means, so I was relieved that I knew about the option because not every doctor provides that information.

The amazing thing about my decision to have a hysterectomy was that almost immediately after making the decision, my symptoms subsided. Believe me, I still had occasional back pain and other issues, but I know for sure that my reduced stress level made a difference in some of the internal activity.

On March 4, 2007, my birthday, I had a hysterectomy. By the way, my myomectomy in Miami at Mount Sinai Hospital was performed on my birthday as well. Both appointments were scheduled by the doctor's office and I have yet to figure out the meaning of why both procedures would be scheduled on my birthday. Interesting. Another interesting fact is that my mother, stayed in the hospital for two weeks after giving birth to me. She had fibroid tumors which had created complications during my birth.

The surgery was a success, with the exception of the need for Dr. Dawson to remove one of my ovaries because some of the tumors were wrapped around it, making it too risky to attempt to remove them. She comforted me by letting me know I would still have a normal hormonal and sexual life...whew! My recovery was normal, my body felt better, and my stomach was flat again!

By the fourth week of my required six-week recovery period I felt so good, I started driving and taking the stairs. I was out by myself on an apartment search. (Keep in mind that I was also on a search to move out and looking for a condo when I passed out and needed the blood transfusion months prior). I was following the leasing agent up the stairs, when I felt what I thought I would never feel again. A small flow of blood was trickling from my body. "I'm bleeding? Why?", I asked myself. Alarmed, but determined not to cause a scene, I held my

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composure, excused myself, leaving the Leasing Office and immediately made a call to Dr. Dawson's office. I was told to come to her office right away. The doctor examined me and determined that I had possibly ruptured at least one artery. Dr. Dawson told me to call my who ever I needed to call and have them meet me at the hospital. She was going to perform an emergency UFE. The procedure severs the endings of arteries, which supply blood to the uterus. Although I had no uterus, I had apparently not completely healed enough to be as active as I was in my fourth week of recovery.

So, here I go again, one month later, back to the hospital. This experience was not as pleasant because for one, I had to have a catheter inserted, and secondly, only level 2-anesthesia sedation was used, so I was partially conscious during the procedure. But, thank God my parents were there and I was in highly professional, blessed hands. The procedure was apparently successful; and I went home after a few days.

Now, however, an additional two weeks was tacked on to my recovery period.

To be continued.....

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