Aging With HIV Part Two!

March 5, 2014 By Rae Lewis-Thornton

It's 3:30 in the morning and I've been up since 2:30. I woke soak and wet yet again. I changed my night clothes and shifted to the other side of the bed, but sleep don't seem to be coming. I decided to go ahead and get today's blog done.

Yesterday I went to my gynecologist to find some solutions to my perimenopause issues. When I came home I was beat emotionally and physically. First off, she removed my IUD, which I've had for 5 years to help regulate my issues from endometriosis. That left me bleeding heavy and cramping. All I wanted to do was take pain medication and crawl into bed.

Speaking of cramping along with heavy periods, that was the norm for more than 10 years because of endometriosis. Now actually, menopause corrects endometriosis and we were hoping that I was moving in the right direction. But then last Sunday after 7 months, I got a period out the freaking blue. As of today, I've been bleeding for 10 days. So, this Thursday I'm having a vaginal ultrasound to see what's going on. From those test results, she will determine if I will need to have an endometriosis biopsy next week to explore a little deeper. So keep me in your prayers because that is one biopsy that is some kind of painful. I have had three and all I was good to do afterwards is go straight to bed.

We dived into solutions to some of my perimenopausal issues. First off. She confirmed some of the information that I've been reading on my own, that women with HIV have a more difficult perimenopause than women who are not infected with HIV.

With that out of the way, I learned some new stuff. So I'm waking up wet in the middle of the night as I explained in Monday's Blog. Actually, I was blown away to learn that I am actually having hot flashes in my sleep and that's what's making me wet and then the dampness wakes me out of my sleep. She did say that the mood swings are basically common for perimenopausal women from sleep deprivation that's caused by the hot flashes. Shut UP! What a crazy cycle! Keep living and you will learn something new everyday. Hot Flashes in your sleep. WOW!

So we have a couple of options. There is an antidepressant that has shown to help perimenopausal women's hot flashes. Or we could do ***Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)*****.** Which I did a couple years back briefly, when I first started to have hot flashes. This is the route we are gong to take, HRT. But first I need to have a mammogram in addition to the ultra sound before I start and that's scheduled for next week. A mammogram is necessary because a woman can develop breast cancer after 5 yeast on HRT. We need a baseline before I start! Also, before I start HRT, she wants to make sure that there's nothing really serious going on with this bleeding I'm having.

Also with HRT, it appears that women with HIV on antiviral medication, need to take a higher dose of HRT medication because HIV antiviral 's actually interact with HRT. I know a lot of women take natural alternatives, instead of HRT, but those also interfere with HIV medication, like St. John's Wart for example so I can't go that route.

Anyhoo, at least I'm on the road to getting things back to normal. It will be at least two weeks before I'm able to start HRT. I'm praying that all things are good with my test and I'm counting down to relief. In the meantime, I do what I do, keep pressin and do my best. I'll keep you posted after all my test are back.

We also revisited the topic of Osteoporosis. She wants me to be diligent and take calcium everyday and to do 30 minutes of weight barring exercise 5 days a week! Doctors orders!

I said it in Monday's blog and I'll say it again. I try to convey everyday that HIV is a hard disease to live with. It really is more complicated than one pill a day. If you do not have HIV, keep it that way. Who knew that I would have to face another set of issues as I age with this disease? Prevention is our best course of action!

Aging With HIV Part One Click HERE!

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