Me and HPV

December 12, 2012 By Aundaray Guess

I recalled quite vividly the first time I had something going on with my bum, or as we say in America, my butt, my rump shaker, my donkey donk! You get my drift. After each bowel movement I would have this pain like someone threw gasoline back there and lit it with a light. So after a week of this happening I decided to self-diagnosis myself. I have to say that this was a time when I was very sexually active and in a way I thought maybe it was an after effect of the encounters. There's a joke in there somewhere.

But after a week and going on two I told myself it was no longer funny that something must be going on. Even the shape of my bowel movements started to take on this Picasso type shape. I didn't immediately run to my HIV doctor as I didn't think there were any relations. Also quite frankly at the time even though I was comfortable with my doctor, there was still a hesitant part about me that didn't like to discuss my sex life? Was it because I was feeling guilty of having several sexual partners and the stigma of being classified as a slut? It was something that held me back as I didn't go to him and instead self diagnosed myself.

Doing my own examination I felt several small bumps and one medium sized one. I was relived as I told myself that it was nothing but hemorrhoids. This was an easy fix of just going down to the pharmacy and getting some over the counter cream. So after spending 5.60 and a slightly embarrassing purchase at the check out counter I followed the instructions and waited for the pain to go away. And I waited. And I waited. But the pain never went anywhere. In fact the bumps started to feel bigger. Perhaps my underwear was too tight and my rear couldn't breathe. I was my own Doogie Howser MD.

The funny thing about having HIV for years is that you get used to pain, whether it's being pricked by a needle or certain parts of your body hurting. And in that familiarity you simply bear the pain until it passes. I was trying to do the same. In fact I lived several months with the pain as I just psyched myself up whenever I knew I was going to have a bowel movement. But when the blood starting to make a daily visit I knew I couldn't pretend something wasn't wrong any longer.

The doctor told me right away what it was. HPV, or spelled out in its entirety commonly known as Genital Human Papillomavirus. Damn what is it about these acronyms that only I seem to get. What little I knew about it I just assumed it was something that only females get. Upon further explanation by my doctor he explained it's not another gay disease but can affect those who have multiple partners and/or weakened immune systems. And also it's not something that just shows up in the anus but in the genital areas. The tricky thing about finding out if you have it, especially if you're a man is to just have a doctor do an anus Pap test as although there are tests for women currently there is not one for men.

The crazy thing was that I probably had it for a while as according to information about HPV most men don't develop symptoms or health problems. According to the CDC, "Since HPV usually causes no symptoms, most men and women can get HPV--and pass it on--without realizing it. People can have HPV even if years have passed since they had sex. Even men with only one lifetime sex partner can get HPV". So my highly sexual active lifestyle was not the reason as again it states even having one partner doesn't make you immune. In other words, if you're sitting on a high horse because you have only one partner, still check it boo!

But what do you look for? The following are things to look for:

· Genital warts:

- These will appear on the groin, thighs, penis, scrotum, or anus.
- The wart may look like a lump, be flat, or have a cauliflower-shape.
- Warts can appear a few weeks after contact with an infected person.
- The warts may appear singularly or in clusters.

· Anal cancer:

- Bleeding, pain, or itching of the anus.
- Discharge from the anus.
- Swollen lymph nodes in the anal or groin area.
- Unusual bowel movements or a change in shape of your fecal matter.

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