

ME, MARY AND A NUTRIBULLET

By Stephanie Kilroy



When I had my double mastectomy in September of 2012, the plan was for my cousin Mary to come and take care of me. In my head, I had the perfect scenario of how this was going to go. She would make me soup and tea and nurse me back to health as we watched Downton Abbey. We would laugh together as we cast the members of our family (my family is British) in an imaginary version of the show - a version that would have to air on HBO because of our family's penchant for profanity.

Well, the viewing of Downton Abbey and the casting of our imaginary show happened, but the "taking care of me" part fell by the wayside because sadly, Mary got sick the day after she arrived.

Now, Mary is NOT the type to suck it up and suffer in silence while still tending to me, so suddenly... I was the one taking care of her. In her infirmity, Mary was yelling at me to "make the tea!" whilst sharing every detail of her chronic explosive diarrhea. Because my family is British, Mary saying, "make the tea" is not just every day tea making. When you are British, tea is an event, not a beverage. You need the right water, the right tea bag and the right cup. While I should have been in bed, recovering and being served the aforementioned tea, I was hobbling down the stairs with drains coming out of me as Mary shouted, "Don't go in there!" because she had turned my bathroom into a toxic waste zone. It was not relaxing.

It was just before this time that I had become obsessed with my NutriBullet.

I wanted to eat cancer-fighting foods, so I started researching and drinking these foods in the form of smoothies and shakes. Stuff like kale, acai, berries, flax seed - anything that could be considered "cancer fighting" - I would throw into this puke-green shake and not just drink it, but like it and crave it.

Since I had already hobbled downstairs with my drains neatly tucked into my sweatpants, I decided to make myself a shake. I made an extra one for Mary that was sure to combat her gastrointestinal situation, but Mary didn't like it. She said, "Yuck!" in the same way a 3-year old says "yuck" when presented with peas or liver and onions. She wanted her tea, and asked if I could I also run to the store and get her a bagel with lox and cream cheese spread "very, very thin"?

FITNESS FLYER



I decided I didn't need Mary's "help" after all. She left later that day, and I was alone again with my NutriBullet...a much more qualified nurse than Cousin Mary.

It turns out that the magical diet that the doctors want you to eat when you are fighting cancer is the same diet for any other person to keep healthy. It's what you should eat when you are pregnant, when you have diabetes, when you want to lose weight, when you feel good or are depressed, if you need to fight autoimmune disorders, are too stressed, have heart disease, or ANYTHING. This magical healthy diet is as follows:

Eat real food. Eat nothing processed and nothing greasy. Eat lean proteins like fish and chicken, eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, and consume only low amounts of alcohol (if you must). Go heavy on the greens and light on the bacon. Eat more fruits and less Cheez Whiz. It's not rocket science. Cheesesteaks, french fries, ice cream and Margaritas are not on the Cancer Menu.

I took the nutritional information very seriously and ate like a crazy health food lunatic to get me ready for chemotherapy because I knew it was going to suck. Oddly, during chemo-time, I could ONLY eat the recommended foods as everything else made me sick. I ate so many greens that my friends nicknamed me "Sprout". Avocadoes became a staple; I would eat them with a spoon. I told my doctors and nurses, about my new eating habits, and they said, "You are listening to your body." I don't know why it wanted avocadoes, but it did.

My chemo nurse told me to drink a ton of fluids to wash the drugs out, so I drank as many as I could handle. Regular water tasted putrid because when you go through chemo you get an odd taste in your mouth, so I gulped flavored club soda and coconut water and my precious NutriBullet shakes. My food staples were carrot muffins, salad with salmon on top, and grapefruit.

I have to tell you, just writing this makes me want to eat that way again, as I currently struggle to zip my jeans after a summer filled with hot dogs that I gobbled down at cookouts and Phillies games. Hot dogs that obviously had to be eaten with crab fries dipped in melted cheese and washed down with a cold beer.

But listen, if you are going through chemo and you need a hot dog to get you through, by all means eat hot dogs in moderation.

You want wine? Have it. IN MODERATION.

You want ice cream? Go for it! But yes, you guessed it, in moderation.

Follow the chemo diet just as you should in regular life. Otherwise, you'll end up like Mary, screaming "Don't go in there!" as your sad little cousin drags herself and her stitches out of bed to get herself some kale.

PROJECT: PFC MISSION STATEMENT

The caring partner displaying this information is a proud member of Project: PFC. Our mission is to provide the simplest, most delicious foods to everybody everywhere. We select natural, whole and minimally-processed foods, drinks and supplements free from all artificial junk, yet rich with nature's goodness. Using current research and educational materials, we're making the world of nutrition "Simple Again".
Eat Well. Live Well (and Long).

Stephanie is a Breast Cancer Survivor, blogger and all-around goofball. She lives fast, plays hard and loves well.

<http://theverybreast.wordpress.com>