LS: My Story as a Patient and Advocate

By: Fabia Brackenbury

Fabia Brackenbury of the Association of Lichen Sclerosis and Vulval Health said, I have been living with lichen sclerosus for over 20 years. It was a contributing factor to the loss of my 30 year marriage. The challenges never end. You go into old age with this condition. A woman deserves an Indian Summer, not a Winter of Discontent. A much higher profile needs to be established for vulval disease, not only amongst medical professionals but also researchers and the media. My own campaign for awareness started well with media interest but over the years has been dropped in favour of other health issues. Those who suffer, long to enjoy the high profile that is seen in other conditions and never more so than those with vulval cancer.

So many women say to me, ‘why did I get this cancer, at least if I had breast cancer, I could talk to people about it’. If awareness equality was possible, women may feel more able to come forward and seek help. Awareness and education for everyone is essential if we are to improve the lives of the small girls who are diagnosed as young as two years old with lichen sclerosus and will live a life sentence of shame, despair and uncertainty. Paul Farmer, a well respected medical anthropologist says ‘The idea that some lives matter less is the root of all that is wrong with the world.’

Collaborative efforts amongst patient advocates, doctors and medical offices and health awareness non-profits are other ways that LS and vulvar cancers can be brought to the forefront of society. Bridge for Pelvic Pain, a non-profit based in Colorado Springs, CO and The Association for Lichen Sclerosus and Vulval Health, a charity based in England, are working together to bridge the gap for education and awareness for these conditions across the continents. Together we can be the voice for those silently living with LS and vulvar cancers.

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Stem Cell Therapy to Treat Lichen Sclerosis

By: Elliot Lander, M.D., F.A.C.S.

The patient had her first SVF procedure in August 2014. The best follow up picture of the internal lichenous lesions was 2 months later in October, during a routine post-op followup visit. Her second procedure was in April 2015, 8 months following her first procedure, and the same f/u photo image didn’t come out well. We have only included the before and 8 month after f/u images of the external labia for comparison.

(Photos of a patient who had our “3 pronged” approach to LS. Patient image permission via California Stem Cell Treatment Center.)

Dr. Elliot Lander: At The California Stem Cell Treatment Center, we have a world class cell therapy treatment for Lichen Sclerosus (LS) that combines the best of what regenerative experts around the world are doing but is actually more comprehensive. Our 3 pronged approach has been highly effective:

1. Autologous SVF stromal vascular fraction (contains stem cells and growth factors) derived from an outpatient mini liposuction which removes 2 ounces of fat from around the waist under local anesthesia. Fat is processed into SVF (which is added to PRP) and then injected directly into the affected LS areas.
2. Autologous SVF is also deployed systemically as an intravenous therapy for immune-modulation to “re-boot” the immune system. A systemic therapy is imperative since LS has auto-immune features.
3. Topical growth factors (cell signaling molecules that influence the repair of skin and collagen) are applied twice per day to the affected areas for several months after treatment. These “AQ” peptide growth factors are FDA approved for topical use and are available without prescription from physicians.

Some centers of excellence are doing 1 or 2 of these but not all 3. If patients follow the regimen, they should get durable improvement from one treatment but occasionally second treatments are required.

Elliot Lander, M.D., F.A.C.S. is the Co-Founder and Co-Medical Director of the California Stem Cell Treatment Center. Dr. Lander regularly presents his work utilizing Regenerative Urology techniques at conferences throughout the U.S. He is a Board Member of Bridge for Pelvic Pain. For more information visit: www.stemcellrevolution.com