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A Breast Cancer Question

If you're a long-time reader, you know Paula had breast cancer that was successfully treated about 18 months ago. We've been through the process, so we know there are no easy answers when it comes to cancer treatment. The same is true for what to do after treatment. This week, I'm going to talk about a question someone recently asked me about post-cancer treatment for breast cancer. The question applies to Paula as well as the person who asked the question, and I think it may help any woman faced with the same question.

A long-time reader had breast cancer two years ago. Because she was beginning menopause, her oncologist recommended that she begin a medication called letrozole that blocks estrogen receptors. That's a typical approach for women who've had estrogen-positive breast cancer; Paula is taking it, and her mother was part of a clinical trial many years ago. Both days the reader took it, she had severe migraine headaches. She has battled migraines for a long time and they had ceased, so the last thing she wanted was to take a medication that brought them back. She decided the medication wasn't worth it and told her oncologist she wasn't going to take it.



She asked me what I think of the medication and whether she should take it or not in light of the side-effects. That's her decision. What I could do was lay out the information so she fully understands the options. That's what I did and I'm going to do the same for you this week, aided by a just-published study on the long-term effects of letrozole and reducing breast cancer reoccurrence. We'll look at the study on Thursday.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGUV FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** **Straight Talk on Health**

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