



## Speaking from Experience

### *Bowel Cancer*

#### **Transcript for chapter 6 of 10: Other issues**

**Les** - I'm not wearing a bag whatsoever. As I said, the only drawbacks that I have at the moment is the smaller bowel, which I can certainly cope with. With the nervous system, I haven't been able to have an erection since that. I haven't worried about it - both Molly, my partner, as well - we work around that. There are things that can fix that in due course. It has been recommended to me that you do nothing for the first six months, and if nothing happens, if the nervous system doesn't come back in that way, there are other things to make that work. But I'm more for the natural way - let things come out, if it doesn't work that way then we'll look at other areas.

**Caroline** - Now I've just got adjustments with, you know, going to the toilet more often than I used to. And that's because the bowel is shorter, the colon is shorter - I feel a little bit like a car without an exhaust pipe! So if you've ever lost your exhaust pipe, your car still goes, it still runs. It just makes a lot a noise. It's not quite as efficient as it used to be.

**John and Joy** - Incontinence is a big problem with women. Sometimes it's worse than others.

**Debra** - It has been an eight year long trek, and in that time I've had two other... well, three lots of chemotherapy in that time. I seemed to have a spell of about two and a half years, and then required chemotherapy again. Actually, I had another tumour when Alexander was seven months old and I needed surgery for that tumour, and then a follow up with chemotherapy.

**John and Joy** - Because a woman's body is so closely knitted together, when you take part of the bowel out the bladder is swinging in the wind. And that's virtually what it is. And a lot of women do have that problem, and I'm one of them.

**Debra** - I would just go into a day hospital and have the chemotherapy. It would just be run into a vein over about fifteen minutes. And then I would feel quite ill, but I wasn't far from home so I could manage the drive home. And then I would stay home for the rest of the day. And for me, the symptoms were that I felt nauseated and I really felt as though I was seasick, and that would last until halfway through the next day. And then that next day I could manage to drive and do other things to keep my mind occupied really, and to keep my mind off feeling rather sick. But after that, by the weekends I was fine - ready for the next dose.

**Dennis** - I haven't had any side-effects. I've just been more conscious in myself of my health.

**Paul** - Lifestyle is very important. Your own health, and what you do with your life I think, is the most important thing in life. Value what you've got. It's never too late to change.