How to present online information to older cancer patients

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Appendix B: Conversational-styled version for the patient script (Chapter 5)

I suffered from lung cancer and was treated with the RFA method. RFA is a minimally invasive method, which means that they approached my lung tumor through a very small nick. A special needle guided by a CT scanner was inserted into my cancerous lung tumor. The needle was connected to an electrical generator which produces electrical currents. And, the electrical currents passing through the needle created heat that destroyed the cancer cells. The treatment was performed percutaneously which means that the needle electrodes are inserted through the skin.

The treatment takes about one and a half hour and will be performed using spinal anesthesia or sedation. Myself received sedation, but that depended on the location of the tumor.

No surgical procedure is without risk, and also this procedure carries risks. Despite all precautionary measures there is always a small risk of thrombosis, a blood clot inside a blood vessel, lung infection or wound infection.

In addition, RFA also carries the risk of other complications. During my surgery for instance, my lung collapsed. This is also known as a pneumothorax and occurs because of a hole that develops in the lung, which allows air to escape in the space around the lung. This is the most common complication. However, because I was sedated, I did not notice anything. A chest drain was immediately inserted into the chest cavity to remove the air. This drain helped to reinflate my lung and gradually expanded to its original size.

Then, other complications can also occur, such as (severe) bleeding, air-leak from the lung, pneumonia, and upper respiratory tract infection. Fortunately, I did not experience any of those.

By taking precautionary measures in the hospital, they do everything in their power to minimize risks. This means that they explain very precisely what will happen in advance. And this was very pleasant, because in this way I knew what to expect.

Note. Underlined portions were added to the conversational-styled version (or replaced the bracketed words).