The Time Between Is... Breast Cancer Survival Guide

June 1, 2017 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

I am a 40+ year old mom of 2 who had regular mammograms just because my insurance paid for them and my doctor recommended them even though I started before the age requirement. I have no family history of breast cancer.

In April 2016, I was called back from a routine mammogram to do additional images and sonogram of the right breast. It was found to be “just” inflammation in the duct, which is common to women and especially women who breastfed as I did for a time with my first child. I got second and third opinions (all local to my small town outside of a major city) and was told it had a 98-99% chance of remaining benign and that there was “nothing there to biopsy”. I was put on a six month return visit plan for mammos.

In November 2016, two weeks before my 40th birthday, when I went back for my 6-month check, there was something there to biopsy and it was cancer. I will write more in the blog about my journey on choosing medical team and more but for ease of information sharing here are my details of my diagnosis:

Breast Cancer Stage 3

Mastectomy Right Breast

Lymph Node Removal 5/25 positive for cancer

Her2 Negative

Estrogen and Progesterone Positive

8 round of chemotherapy once every two weeks -4 AC; 4 Taxol

34 Radiation Treatments

Lupron shots once every 3 months

Daily astrezenole pills

I never felt a lump. If I did not go for regular mammography, I would probably be dead. I went from being 98-99% staying benign in April 2016 to a diagnosis of Stage 3 breast cancer in December 2016 (dx after my surgery).

I am positive I will beat this and I hope to help you feel the same way or perhaps just commiserate together in this new world of cancer and recovery.

Before my breast cancer diagnosis, I was an educator, entrepreneur and executive. I created my own company, The Next Step, and used social media to garner over 2000+ visitors to my site per week www.thenextstep1234.com—I am using some of those same social media lessons to drive site to this website - not for money or for potential customers but to share my story - to get it out of me and in the process to help others who are in the same boat. I read recently that only 4% of breast cancer diagnosis are given to those under 40; I was under 40 when I was diagnosed so I am part of the double club no one wants to join (1st - getting breast cancer at all and 2nd - being younger than normal age of diagnosis.

I hope you are reading this just to find out more about breast cancer and not because someone you know and or love has it and I really hope you do not have it as you read this. If you do though and want to find out more or just connect in real life, send me an email or connect on social media. I live in the NYC area.

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