

I had been having mammograms every six months for a year and a half or so to track some benign lumps in my left breast, so when I headed to the Women's Center in September of 2016, I wasn't worried. When the receptionist asked if I wanted to have the new 3D mammogram that provided better diagnostics, I said yes. When the staff said I needed an ultrasound, I still wasn't worried, that happened each time. This time though, they wanted to look at my right breast.

When the radiologist came in, and looked at the ultrasound, I could tell the difference immediately. Instead of a wait and see plan, the doctor wanted to schedule me for a biopsy the next day. When I came in for the biopsy, they scheduled me with a breast surgeon to get the biopsy results. I think I knew then that I had cancer, and I was worried.

I worried about being too sick to be me. I worried about dying and not being around to see my son grow up. I worried about not being able to work. I worried about losing my hair.

At each milestone, my worry eased some. Starting chemotherapy and realizing I was able to continue my life, albeit at a slower pace. Losing my hair and making a fun time out of it with a mohawk and colored hair spray. Getting the pathology report after my bilateral mastectomy and hearing that there was no lymph node involvement and no evidence of disease.

Cancer made me worry so much, but it also made me realize what an amazing community I had around me. Parents at my son's school who offered to help. Cards, notes, and calls from old friends and colleagues sending me their prayers and thoughts.

After my surgery, I found the ladies at Linked by Pink and a whole new community. These ladies are here to answer the odd questions, encourage when the going is hard, pray when there's a worry or scare, and laugh at some of the craziness.

~ Misty Chambers
Erie, PA