

Jackie's Story

Having cancer affect me was the furthest thing from my mind. How could this have happened to a 31 year old mother of a 9 year old. May 1995, I really wasn't having any symptoms that my dr. could put to anything in particular. So we did a colonoscopy to make sure there was nothing going on there, normal. Blood work, normal. So he decided I needed a laparoscopy, not normal.

What they did find was OVARIAN CANCER. I was lucky it was still in its early stages. I say lucky because my doctor did not give up and kept working with me, when I really didn't have any symptoms of anything just not feeling well. I was then referred to a wonderful gynecological oncologist who did a total hysterectomy and 6 months of chemotherapy (carboplatin).

The next 17 years were very uneventful, I watched my son grow up, graduate from high school, play college baseball for 2 years and then play for an independent baseball team. A move from Texas to be North Dakota. Life was good.

Fast forward almost 17 years to the date of my first cancer diagnosis. I woke up unable to breath because my asthma was acting up. My family dr. was booked solid, so I went to the walk-in clinic (May 29, 2012) and because of my prior cancer diagnosis he did a chest xray (I seem to have good luck when it comes to drs.) I walked out of the xray room as he was looking at my xray and I could tell something was wrong. He sent me to the ER for a CT scan and breathing treatment.

I was a busy lady for the next week. I had my ER visit, saw my family dr. for follow-up the next day, had a pet scan 2 days later and my family dr. the following week who sent me to an oncologist.

When I met with the oncologist I did not expect the things that I was told. I had stage IV ovarian cancer with mets to the lung, chest wall(bone), base of the spinal column and the right pelvis. We did a couple of biopsies to make sure, because again, no symptoms. Exactly 1 month to the day of my walk-in clinic visit, I had my port-a-cath inserted and 6 days later my first round of chemo.

It has been 17 months since my cancer battle began and at this time, I am cancer dormant. The treatments killed off the original 4 tumors, but I have a couple of lymph nodes which we are watching. This is why they do not consider me in remission.

I know what my prognosis is, but I figure I went 17 years between diagnosis the first time, I can do it again. That is what I am aiming for.

Women if you are reading this and thinking, well why wasn't she having her yearly check ups, (I heard this a lot from people who tried to make me feel like I wasn't taking care of myself) I was, in fact I had just had one in January of 2012.

Women, please be diligent, there is a reason they call this disease the silent killer.