

Kristin's Story,

Just after my 30th birthday I was scheduling my annual physical and I knew this one would be different, I just didn't know how different. You see, when I scheduled my appointment I decided after hearing another family member (Tammy) had been diagnosed with breast cancer, I needed to schedule my baseline mammogram.

So I went in feeling confident at 30 years old that things would be just fine. It was a Friday. On that Monday I got the call that I needed to come in for another, more specific, mammogram called a spot compression mammogram. Then came the reassurances that 'this happens all the time, especially when you're so young'. The second mammogram was quick and fairly painless. On my walk to the parking lot I got a phone call. It was that fast. 'Kristin, we would like to biopsy that area'. I hate to sound negative, but I knew right then. I took that moment and I cried before I came home to my beautiful girls.

When I met with my surgeon for my biopsy, she was amazed by our family history. My grandmother, four aunts and two cousins had all gone through this awful disease. She wanted me to do genetic testing. So along with the biopsy, I started the process for genetic testing.

My biopsy came back positive for breast cancer. 'Just a small area' she said. But it was there. I remember my surgeon saying on the phone 'what would you like to do, Kristin? you want to do a bilateral mastectomy, right?'. The reality of it echoed in her voice. It was happening. I had decisions to make and it affected me and my girls. Ultimately I decided to do the bilateral mastectomy. With the support of my two amazing girls, my wonderful parents and family, and the best friends a person could as for, I have become a stronger, better person. Because of Tammy and her diagnosis, I went in early enough and was saved from chemotherapy or radiation. Early detection, early cure!

The results from my genetic testing showed that I am positive for the BRCA II genetic mutation. This gives me the knowledge that I need to help my girls in the future. It also helps my oncologist with making decisions regarding my health.

-Kristin