

August 19th, 2005 . . . Patricia was diagnosed with breast cancer

This marathon runner could not run away from her diagnosis.

A week before she would run a marathon in San Diego, CA that would qualify her for the Boston Marathon, Patricia discovered a lump in her breast. She kept this secret from her family and friends, choosing to focus on the race at hand.

The eventual results of her lumpectomy revealed Invasive Lobular Carcinoma In-Situ. Following numerous medical tests and procedures including MRIs, CT scans, bone scans, and bilateral biopsies, Patricia's cancer was determined to be in an early stage. She took control of her medical destiny. "I was not going to let anyone dictate my treatment without me being fully informed," says Patricia. "After my initial diagnosis, I sought second and third opinions at Stanford and the University of California San Francisco medical centers regarding adjuvant therapy."

Patricia surrounded herself with health care professionals who were compassionate, caring, and patient. "My doctors and their staffs were generous with their time and expertise. They answered all my questions. I stayed as long as I wanted at each appointment until my questions were answered and I was satisfied that I understood each and every aspect of the disease and my prescribed treatments. I knew I was in good hands."

After a second lumpectomy, Patricia was able to forego chemotherapy and begin radiation treatments. These lasted for 2 months. She continued running while receiving radiation, often going 8 miles before an 8 am radiation appointment. There seemed to be no side effects other than slight fatigue. She worked strenuously to balance her daily activities so that she could continue her training regime – Patricia still had her eye on the Boston Marathon.

Four weeks before the Boston Marathon, Patricia experienced the excruciating pain of having two upper cervical joints go into severe spasm. She was out of commission, having thrown her neck out and being flat on her back in debilitating pain. "My body was not as convinced as my mind that I was as healthy as I thought. I was devastated to be missing the Boston Marathon. I petitioned the Boston Athletic Association who very graciously approved my participation in the Marathon the following year, exempting me from qualification requirements."

Supporting Patricia through her diagnosis, procedures, and treatments were her family and friends. “I feared cancer and dying from it, but I wasn’t going to let it stop me from living my life, whatever life with cancer was going to look like. I had a few tears and moments of being melancholy, but my focus soon shifted to dealing with this hurdle and getting to the other side of it as quickly as possible. Only once did my former husband ask me if I was scared of dying. While I admitted that this prospect had occurred to me, I wondered if I really didn’t have a healthy enough fear of cancer or that I was truly in denial about having this disease.”

The following year, Patricia, was back to her active self, and motivated to fight breast cancer. A team of walkers comprised of her friends and co-workers participated in a 60 mile, 3 Day Walk for Breast Cancer that took place in Phoenix, AZ. \$10,000 was raised in a quest for the cure.

To celebrate her 50th birthday that same year, Patricia ran the New York City Marathon “with 38,000 of her closest friends.” Finally, in April of 2007, she ran her Boston Marathon, a shining accomplishment for someone who stared down breast cancer, and then ‘*ran*’ away from it.

About Patricia

Born and raised in northern California, Patricia lives in Sonoma County. She enjoys an active life of marathon running, yoga, reading, travel and cooking. Patricia has worked as a paralegal for over 15 years. She is active in a variety of philanthropic causes with her local hospital’s foundation.