

 **The Breast Cancer Club™**

Dear friends and family,

I want to share with you the news that I am facing breast cancer. Below is how I will approach it and how I would like to communicate about it. Thank you so much for caring for me and supporting me.

My diagnosis is:

- High risk** (elevated risk of developing breast cancer, for which I will be taking preventative measures)
- Ductal carcinoma in situ** (Cancer that began in the milk ducts and has not spread outside the ducts. Accounts for about 20% of all breast cancers.)
- Invasive ductal carcinoma** (Cancer that began in the milk ducts and has spread to nearby tissue. Accounts for about 75% of all breast cancers.)
- Invasive lobular carcinoma** (Cancer that began in the milk producing glands of the breast and has spread to nearby tissue. About 10% of breast cancers are ILC.)
- Inflammatory breast cancer** (A type of invasive ductal carcinoma that blocks vessels in the skin of the breast, causing swelling, redness and pain. Accounts for 1-5% of all breast cancers.)
- Triple negative breast cancer** (A type of invasive ductal carcinoma that does not have any of the receptors usually found in breast cancer and thus can't be treated with common treatments like hormone therapy and targeted therapy, leaving chemotherapy and immunotherapy as the primary options. Around 10-15% of breast cancers are triple negative.)
- Paget's disease of the breast** (A rare form of breast cancer that affects the skin of the nipple. Most people with Paget's disease also have ductal carcinoma. Around 1-4% of breast cancers are Paget's Disease.)
- Angiosarcoma** (A very rare soft tissue cancer that begins in the blood or lymphatic vessels in the breast. Represents 0.1-0.2% of breast cancers.)
- Phyllodes tumor** (A rare tumor that starts in the connective tissue of the breast rather than the ducts or glands. Less than 1% of breast tumors are Phyllodes tumors, and most Phyllodes tumors are benign, although they can be cancerous.)
- I prefer not to say.**

The cancer is in:

- One breast
- Two breasts
- N/A (I am high risk)

The stage is:

- N/A** (I am high risk)
- 0** (The cancer has not spread outside the original location)
- I** (The cancer has spread outside the original location but is small and has not spread to lymph nodes or has spread only to the sentinel, or first, lymph node.)
- II** (The cancer is larger than stage 1 cancer and/or has spread to a few lymph nodes)
- III** (The cancer is larger than stage 2 cancer or is growing in nearby tissues or has spread to many lymph nodes)
- IV** (The cancer has spread to other parts of the body, like the liver, bones, lungs or brain. This is also called metastatic breast cancer.)

This staging is:

- clinical/preliminary (based on exams and scans only; before surgery)
- pathological/final (taking into account what was found during surgery)

My treatment :

- has not yet been determined
- has been determined and includes the following: (check all that apply)

- Lumpectomy** (date, if known _____)
- Mastectomy** (single ___ / double ___) (date, if known _____)
- Reconstruction** (date, if known _____)
- Radiation** (number of treatments, if known) _____ (beginning _____)
- Chemotherapy** (number of cycles, if known) _____ (beginning _____)
- Infusions** (describe: _____)
- Targeted therapy**
- Clinical trial**
- Hormonal therapy**
- Medications**
- Alternative treatments** (explain)
- A hospital stay** (date, if known _____)
- I **will not** be treating my breast cancer.

I will be receiving my treatment at _____ (name of facility)

I will be away from work or other activities for _____ weeks.

I have a family history of breast cancer:

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I am BRCA+ positive:

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

My treatment will cause me to lose my hair:

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I discovered my breast cancer through:

- A routine mammogram
- A lump or changes in the appearance of my breast
- Symptoms elsewhere in my body

I have a(n) (check all that apply):

- Amazon Wish List

- Caring Bridge
- Meal Train
- GoFundMe
- Signup Genius
- contact person _____

- I am comfortable with everyone knowing that I have breast cancer.
- I don't enjoy receiving flowers. They make me sad because I associate them with sickness or death.
- I would rather talk about anything other than cancer so I can feel normal.
- I don't want to talk about my cancer because I don't want anyone to feel sorry for me.
- I don't like pink ribbons or "breast cancer pink."
- It makes me feel good to be called a warrior or a fighter or to be told I'm strong.
- I like to hear other people's cancer stories.
- I would like others to wait until I mention my cancer before bringing it up or asking how I'm doing.
- I do not want people to talk about my cancer with my children.
- I do not feel like laughing or joking.
- I'm pleased each time someone reaches out to see how I'm doing.
- I feel overwhelmed if I have texts and calls to return.
- I expect to keep a normal social schedule while I'm in treatment.
- I expect to keep a normal work schedule while I'm in treatment.
- I do not want to discuss the choices I've made regarding my treatment. My decisions are final.
- It's important to stay positive no matter what.
- I want to be kept in the loop on social events even if I do not feel well enough to attend.
- I want to be kept in the loop at work even if I am taking time off.