Young women also at risk for breast cancer
25-year-old breast cancer survivor shares her story

After finding a suspicious lump in her breast at age 24, Betsy Barefoot quickly received a diagnosis many in their 20s rarely think about. She shares her story of going through a scary journey at a young age.

My name is Betsy. I am 25 years old and I am from Louisville, Kentucky. I want to share the story of my breast cancer journey with you.

In March 2016, I found a marble-sized lump in my right breast. Thankfully, it was close enough to the skin for me to feel. I didn’t think much of it, but I eventually told my mom, who sent me to get an ultrasound.

I had both breasts examined via ultrasound in April. It turned out that I also had something in my left breast, even though I could not feel it. The right side was a little abnormal-looking, but because of my age and no family history of breast cancer, the doctors did not have any reason to suspect cancer. To be sure, they had me come back for a biopsy.

I received the call that set all of this into motion on April 19, 2016. The lump on the left side was benign, but the one on the right side was cancerous. Specifically, it was stage 1A invasive ductal carcinoma, measuring about 1.4 centimeters.

On May 19, 2016, I had a bilateral, nipple-sparing mastectomy with a sentinel lymph node biopsy. Eventually, I will have reconstruction surgery. During the surgery, my awesome team, C. Matthew Brown, M.D., and Brian P. Thornton, M.D., Ph.D., removed all of the cancer and found that no nodes were affected. Recovery from the mastectomy was, surprisingly, not that bad. The tumor was sent off for further testing.

My results indicated that chemotherapy was the best next step. Because of my age, I had to think about the possibility that chemotherapy might cause infertility. So before starting chemo, I decided to undergo a procedure to retrieve and freeze eggs from my ovaries for future use. The outcome was disappointing, with only one egg retrieved, and complications led to internal bleeding. Thankfully, I did not have to have emergency surgery to stop the bleeding, nor did I need a blood transfusion.

I started chemotherapy in June 2016. Like a lot of women (and men) who are told they need chemo, my first thought was about losing my hair. During my treatment, I used Penguin Cold Caps and was able to keep almost all of my hair! It has thinned quite a bit, but it is really only noticeable to me. Keeping my hair was important for so many reasons, and if anyone is facing chemo, I highly recommend the cold cap therapy. It was so, so worth it!

My treatment will continue for the next five years in the form of hormone therapy. I will continue to see my oncologist frequently during that time.

Now that I am done with chemotherapy, I hope to continue to find ways to give back to the breast cancer community and support the women and men facing this disease. My journey certainly was not easy, but sadly, I actually think I did have it easy. Larger tumors, positive lymph nodes, metastasis, harsher and longer chemo regimens, infertility — there are so many ways things could be worse for me, and I will never forget that.
September 2017

The Norton Cancer Institute Resource Centers will be closed Monday, Sept. 4, in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

Yoga Nidra: Peaceful Meditation
Sept. 7 • 5:30 p.m.: registration and light refreshments • 6 to 7:30 p.m.: guided meditation
Norton Health & Wellness Center
1000 Dupont Road

Yoga Nidra is an ancient meditation technique for stress relief and relaxation. You will release muscle, emotional and mental tensions. Yoga mats will be available. Bring a small pillow, blanket and towel to roll up under your knees. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Thriving Thursdays: Art Therapy Studio
Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28 • 1 to 4 p.m.
Medical Towers South, Suite 161 • 234 E. Gray St.

Explore a new visual art medium, facilitated by a licensed art therapist. All ages are welcome, no experience is needed and all supplies are provided. Free valet parking is available one block away at Norton Cancer Institute, 676 S. Floyd St. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Norton Cancer Institute’s Celebration of Courage
Sept. 8 • 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Norton Children’s Medical Center
4910 Chamberlain Lane

You are invited to an event honoring patients, families, caregivers, Bike to Beat Cancer riders, volunteers and all those who join in the fight against cancer. The night includes dinner, live music from Junction Creek, inflatables, games and activities for kids in the Norton Children’s Cancer Institute “Just for Kids” Zone. Call (502) 629-1234, option 2, to register or visit NortonHealthcare.com/Courage.

Prostate Cancer Presentation
Sept. 11 • 5:30 p.m.: registration and dinner • 6 to 7:30 p.m.: program
Norton Healthcare Pavilion, Cranmer Auditorium
315 E. Broadway

This program will provide information on erectile dysfunction and urinary incontinence. Patients with a diagnosis of prostate cancer who are experiencing one or both of these symptoms are encouraged to attend. Partners and significant others are welcome. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Improving Neuropathy Through Exercise
Sept. 11 • 6 to 7 p.m.
Norton Health & Wellness Center • 1000 Dupont Road

Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy is the most common side effect of chemotherapy. Learn ways to improve neuropathy through exercise in your hands and your feet. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Essential Oils for Beginners
Sept. 14 • 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Norton Cancer Institute Pat Harrison Resource Center • 1206 Spring St., Jeffersonville, Indiana

Explore the many uses and benefits of essential oils. Class size is limited, and registration is required. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Norton Cancer Institute Resource Centers

Norton Audubon Hospital campus
Norton Medical Plaza West – Audubon
Suite 300
2355 Poplar Level Road
(502) 636-8308

Norton Healthcare
downtown campus
Medical Towers South
Suite 164
234 E. Gray St.
(502) 629-5500

Norton Healthcare – St. Matthews campus
Norton Medical Plaza 2 – St. Matthews
Suite 111
3991 Dutchmans Lane
(502) 899-6888

Southern Indiana
Norton Cancer Institute Pat Harrison Resource Center
1206 Spring St.
Jeffersonville, Indiana
(812) 288-1156

Norton Cancer Institute and Norton Healthcare provide the region’s most comprehensive community screening, education and wellness programs. From heart disease to cancer to menopause, screening and wellness events are held throughout the community and most are free. For a complete list of screenings and wellness events offered by Norton Healthcare, visit NortonHealthcare.com/Calendar or call (502) 629-1234.
Thriving Thursdays: Art Therapy Studio
Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 • 1 to 4 p.m.
Medical Towers South, Suite 161 • 234 E. Gray St.
Explore a new visual art medium, facilitated by a licensed art therapist. All ages are welcome, no experience is needed and all supplies are provided. Free valet parking is available at Norton Cancer Institute, 676 S. Floyd St. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Norton Cancer Institute eighth annual Bra Party
Oct. 5 • 6 to 8 p.m.
Sawyer Hayes Community Center, E.P. “Tom” Sawyer State Park • 2201 Lakeland Road
The ultimate support party is an opportunity to mingle with other survivors, your health care team and maybe make a new friend. Enjoy food and door prizes or express yourself by decorating and bedazzling a bra or T-shirt. You may bring one female guest. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Fatigue: Taking Your Life Back After Cancer Treatment
Oct. 17 • 5:30: registration and light refreshments
6 to 7:30 p.m.: program
Norton Medical Plaza I – Brownsboro • Community Room, Suite 301 B • 4950 Norton Healthcare Blvd.
Learn about fatigue as a side effect of cancer and what steps you can take to have more energy. Participants will receive resistance bands and instructions on how to use them at home. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Breast Cancer Basics: What Women Need to Know About Breast Cancer
Oct. 24 • 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Clark Memorial Hospital • Conference Center, Lower Level • 1220 Missouri Ave. • Jeffersonville, Indiana
Complementary therapies
Art, massage, reiki and music therapies are available for cancer patients and their caregivers. Call (502) 629-HOPE (4673) for an appointment.

Nutritional counseling
Complimentary one-on-one nutritional counseling is available for cancer patients and their caregivers. Call (502) 629-HOPE (4673) for an appointment.

Young Survivors’ Day Out
For breast cancer survivors diagnosed at age 45 or younger. Free. For details and upcoming activities, call (502) 629-3136.

Gentle Yoga
First and fourth Mondays of each month
11 a.m. to noon
Wednesdays • 11 a.m. to noon
Norton Health & Wellness Center
1000 Dupont Road
Bring a mat. Call (502) 899-6888 to register.

Wednesdays • 6 to 7 p.m.
Clark Memorial Hospital, Louis Kratz Health & Wellness Center • 1319 Missouri Ave. • Jeffersonville, Indiana
Bring a mat. Call (812) 288-1156 to register.

Wednesdays • 6 to 7 p.m.
Norton Medical Plaza I – Brownsboro • Community Room, Suite 301 B • 4950 Norton Healthcare Blvd.
Bring a mat. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Guided Meditation
Mondays • 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Norton Medical Plaza 2 – St. Matthews • Joan Riehm Community Room, third floor, 3991 Dutchmans Lane
Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Ovarian Awareness of Kentucky (OAK) Support Group
Fourth Monday of each month • 1 to 2 p.m.
2300 Hurstbourne Village Drive, Suite 900
For details, contact info@OAKKY.org, visit OAKKY.org or call (502) 708-1625.

Prostate Support Group
Second Monday of each month • 6 to 7 p.m.
Medical Towers South, Suite 164 • 234 E. Gray St.
For men who are in treatment for or who have had prostate cancer. Call (502) 629-5500 to register.

Tai Chi for Health
Tai Chi is slow, relaxed fluid movement that relieves tension and frees your energy. Dress comfortably.
Mondays • 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Norton Health & Wellness Center • 1000 Dupont Road
Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Thursdays • 3 to 4:30 p.m.
Norton Cancer Institute Pat Harrison Resource Center
1206 Spring St. • Jeffersonville, Indiana
Call (812) 288-1156 to register.

Breast Cancer Support Group
Third Tuesday of each month • 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Norton Medical Plaza 2 – St. Matthews, Suite 111
3991 Dutchmans Lane
For women diagnosed with breast cancer. Call (502) 899-6888 to register

Lymphedema Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of each month • 5 to 6 p.m.
Norton Medical Plaza 2 – St. Matthews, Suite 111
3991 Dutchmans Lane
Call (502) 899-6684 to register.

Sickle Cell Support Group
Last Tuesday of each month • 6 to 7 p.m.
Medical Towers South, Suite 160 • 234 E. Gray St.
For people with sickle cell and family members. Light refreshments. Call (502) 629-3421 to register.

Parent and Caregivers Support Dinner
Fourth Wednesday of each month • 5 to 7 p.m.
Norton Children’s Hospital • Valvano Room, 7 West
Dinner and sharing with other caregivers of children with cancer. Call (502) 629-5500 to register.
Bike to Beat Cancer: Team AYA
Sept. 9 • 8 a.m.
Norton Children’s Medical Center
4910 Chamberlain Lane
Join our team in the Bike to Beat Cancer. Ages 15 to 39. Bring your family and friends. Stationary bikes are available. Call (502) 899-6838 for information or to register.

Teen Warriors: The Hunger Games Exhibition
Sept. 10 • 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Frazier History Museum • 829 W. Main St.
See items in seven galleries from “The Hunger Games” movies and hang out with other teens, ages 15 to 18, affected by cancer. Parents and siblings are welcome. This event is limited to 15 people. Registration is required. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Waterfront Wednesday
Sept. 27 • 6 to 10 p.m.
Waterfront Park • 1001 River Road
Join us on the Big Four Lawn for a free concert and to meet others, ages 15 to 39, affected by cancer. You can find us at the Norton Cancer Institute tent. Parents of those under age 18 must be present or sign a release. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Slam Away Stress
Oct. 13 • 7 to 9 p.m.
Kart Kountry • 315 Joe B. Hall Ave. • Shepherdsville, Kentucky
Take swings at the batting cages with other cancer survivors, ages 18 to 39. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Teen Warriors Family Night: Louisville City FC
Oct. 14 • 7:30 p.m.
Louisville Slugger Field • 401 E Main St.
Join us for an evening of professional soccer and hang out with other teens, ages 15 to 18, affected by cancer. Parents and siblings are welcome. This event is limited to 20 participants. Registration is required. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.

Wanderlust 108
Oct. 22 • 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Waterfront Park, Great Lawn • 1001 River Road
Join our Thrivers team, ages 18 to 39, at Wanderlust 108, a celebration of healthy living. Come together for a mindful triathlon consisting of a 5k run/walk, outdoor yoga and guided meditation. Registration is limited to one AYA participant plus one guest. Registration is required. Call (502) 629-1234 to register.