

Marlys' Story of Breast Cancer

Marlys Berst works at RSHHC in Housekeeping.

Marlys was first diagnosed after going to her physical and getting her yearly screening mammogram in July of 2005. She was 51 years old. They found something suspicious on her mammogram, and she was sent for an ultrasound that confirmed that something abnormal was present. She had a biopsy, and breast cancer was officially diagnosed.

Marlys decided to do a lumpectomy and have 4 rounds of chemotherapy, then 33 rounds of radiation therapy, and be part of a study taking a chemotherapy drug for a year.

At the time, she took only 3 weeks off of work and came back while doing her radiation therapy every week on Fridays. She had a very supportive work place and appreciated her co-workers and boss that helped prop her up during this time by making sure she was assigned to jobs she could do while she was not feeling well during this time. She started losing her hair and decided to shave her head. Her loving husband joined in and shaved his head too! A friend of her sister, that had gone through breast cancer as well, wrote her a wonderful letter of their shared experience, and Marlys was very touched to have the support and information of what someone else went through and how they dealt with it. For a while, Marlys wore a wig, but as months went by she had to make the decision when the time was to stop. Her hair was starting to grow back and had grown in dark with very tight curls. It was definitely something different for her! Looking back at pictures during that time makes her laugh. Her hair did return to normal over time, as you can see from her picture.

Marlys had a family history of breast cancer from her two aunts. One on her mother's side and one on her father's side. As of now, she does not have any other family members with breast cancer but is making sure her daughter is getting her yearly mammograms.



At RSHHC, we are proud to have Marlys as one of our Champions, as she shows how important it is to get your physical and mammogram every single year and how wonderful it is to have a supportive family and co-workers!



 **Regional
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