



# The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation

## The Greater Richmond Affiliate

### Young Women and Breast Cancer

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Young women CAN and DO get breast cancer. In fact, one in every 229 women between the ages of 30 and 39 will be diagnosed with breast cancer within the next 10 years. Here are some additional startling facts about breast cancer in young women:

- Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in young women ages 15-54.
- More than 11,100 women under age 40 will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and more than 1,100 will die.
- There are more than 250,000 women in the United States age 40 and under currently living with breast cancer.
- Young women's cancers are generally more aggressive and result in lower survival rates.
- The five-year survival rate for young women with breast cancer is 82 percent, which is lower than their post-menopausal counterparts.
- Young women with breast cancer struggle with many issues that their post-menopausal counterparts don't face, including: the possibility of early menopause, pregnancy after diagnosis, generally more advanced cancers at diagnosis, and higher mortality rates.
- As the incidence of young women with breast cancer is much lower than in older women, young women are an underrepresented population in many research studies.

While breast cancer in young women accounts for a small percentage of all breast cancer cases, the impact of this disease is widespread. But, despite the fact that breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women ages 15 to 54:

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- Many young women and their doctors are unaware that they are at risk for breast cancer.
- There is no effective breast cancer screening tool for women 40 and under.
- Young women are often diagnosed at a later stage than their older counterparts.
- There is very little research or educational material focused on issues unique to this younger population, such as fertility, pregnancy, genetic predisposition, the impact of hormonal status on the effectiveness of treatment, psycho-social and long-term survivorship issues, and higher mortality rates for young women, particularly for African-Americans and Latinas.
- Young women diagnosed with breast cancer often feel isolated and have little contact with peers who can relate to what they are experiencing.

Source: [www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

**Young women are encouraged to become advocates for their own health and to become educated about breast health and breast cancer.**

**We hope the information supplied in this newsletter will inspire you to action!**

### Survivor Spotlight



**Susan Lloyd** – Survivor and Affiliate Volunteer

*In this issue we are launching a special feature, "Survivor Spotlight," to highlight the inspiring stories of heroines in our midst.*

**Susan Lloyd** of Mechanicsville was just 29 years old

and four months post-partum when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. The first-grade teacher in Hanover County is now 34 and mother to five-year-old Abbie and eight-year-old Mason.

**Is there a history of breast**

#### **cancer in your family?**

At the time (of the diagnosis), no one in my family had had breast cancer. Since my diagnosis, my maternal aunt has had breast cancer twice. Not only did I not have a family history, but I did not drink, I did not smoke, I

exercised. I was the picture of a healthy lifestyle!

**How did you find your cancer—through BSE, clinical BSE, mammogram? Are you a believer in the importance of early detection?**

I remember lying in bed

## What Area Young Women Are Doing for the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Three undergraduates at the University of Richmond are doing their part in the fight against breast cancer. Colleen Carney, a 22-year-old from Midlothian, Virginia, Lindsey Zanchettin, 22 and a native of Charleston, South Carolina, and Katie Cartmell, 21, from West Chester, Pennsylvania have dedicated spare time and energy to outreach and fundraising efforts.

Colleen has been fundraising for months for Avon's 3-Day Walk for Breast Cancer and has raised over \$6000. She is personally motivated—her mother is currently in remission following a bout with the disease. Colleen's goal is to close in on \$8000 by June. And she is looking beyond this year to a long-term partnership with the 3-Day Walk, hoping to exceed \$10,000 goals in future go-arounds. A student inside and outside of the classroom, Colleen recognizes "The importance of informing people about breast cancer, knowing that you may have helped someone learn more about early detection, and the power of support systems - both with donors and the online community of other walkers."

Lindsey has been an active volunteer with the Komen Foundation's Greater Richmond Affiliate, speaking at health fairs and other events on local college campuses, and is gearing up for her second Breast Cancer 3-Day walk in Philadelphia. Lindsey's best friend's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer six months after her husband died of skin cancer. At the time the young mother had two children under the age of 7. She fought and survived, and her story had a profound impact on Lindsey. Lindsey is a firm believer that advocating for women's health issues and encouraging women to help themselves are critical to the fight against cancer of all types. "I have realized how widespread this disease really is. I have been lucky enough to not have someone in my family diagnosed with breast cancer, but I am of a shrinking number who can say this. It was ironic, if that's the right word, yet right before the walk my grandmother was diagnosed with lung cancer so I walked for her last year. (Good news-her grandmother is doing well). I am able to approach her experience with a more sensitive and educated mind through my experiences with the Breast Cancer 3-Day and the Komen Foundation."

Katie, who is also participating in Avon's 3-Day Walk for Breast Cancer and volunteers for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, grew up with Komen as a household name, walking in races on Mother's Day with her mother and close friends. Sadly, Katie's mother lost her fight with breast cancer when Katie was in high school. Katie now walks because her mother cannot. According to this strong young woman, "So many more women, and men and children, are affected by this disease than I ever thought were while I was growing up. No one else in my school appeared to have a close connection to the disease, and may have only thought about it when my mom passed away, but at these walks you see the survivors and the celebrators, and you hear about those who are no longer with us from those celebrating their memory. You see the close connection made by this disease and no matter how tragic the reason, these walks bring people together to lift the human spirit and to give us hope that we can do something. Aside from continuing to walk in any event that I can, my dream job is to be the president of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation when I grow up. Right now, I have chosen a different path, but who knows where I will find myself in 20 years?"

With talented young women like these working toward a cure, the sky is the limit!

## Survivor Spotlight, Con't.

one night and just grazed my hand over my chest and felt a raised area. I was nursing at the time, and assumed it was related to that. However, over the next week or so, it really didn't change as I nursed, and it started to worry me a little. I called my OB, who had me come in, and she immediately sent me to a surgeon for an ultrasound, "just to be sure." The surgeon I saw did an ultrasound and told me it appeared to be a fluid-filled cyst. He told me he would drain it right then, which he attempted. However, a week later when it was back, I was still concerned. I called him and told him of my concerns, and a week later, I was back in his office again. I will never forget his words to me. "You are 29 years old, with no family history of any problems. You need to relax. HOWEVER, if it really bothers you, I will remove it." I told him it did bother me, and I wanted it out of my body. A week later, I had outpatient surgery, and three days later, he called to tell me it was cancer. Because of my experience, I am not only an advocate of the importance of early

detection, but also of being an advocate for your own health and peace of mind.

### ***How did your illness and treatment affect your everyday life? What are life lessons you have gleaned from this experience?***

I was the mom of an infant and a toddler, so needless to say, lying down and giving up was NOT an option for me. This disease affected my life in so many ways. First of all, I NEVER say "that won't happen to me" because I lost that sense of invincibility. I do not take life for granted, and I try to never put off until tomorrow what I can do now. I do not look back at mistakes I've made, but rather take my life lessons and move forward. I'm always looking for a new challenge to undertake. During this time, I also learned how different people handle this disease in different ways. People who I believed were my closest friends absolutely could not handle it, and people I thought were just acquaintances became near

and dear to me. I worked full time through my chemo and radiation because it was important to me that my first graders and co-workers saw me living with this disease, not letting it hold me back.

### ***This is a rare opportunity to reach out to other young women about breast cancer. What would you like to say to them?***

While I do not want anyone to live their life in fear of this disease striking them, I do want younger women to realize that it could happen to them. I was one of those younger women who sort of ignored news or articles about breast cancer because I thought it was a disease that only affected older women, or people that did not live a healthy lifestyle. This is a disease that affects us all, regardless of race, age, or age.

### ***What advice or message of hope would you give to someone who has been recently diagnosed?***

Your life will never be the same. But the time will come when you don't think of this disease as a monster. I honestly think of my breast cancer as a gift. I am not the same person I was, and some days, I do miss that person, but generally, I love who I've become because of this disease. Educate yourself about this disease, clinical trials, and treatment options. Although this sisterhood is not one you wanted to join, please let your co-survivors help you to be strong when you feel like you can't do it. One of the most powerful, eye-opening, life-changing moments of my life came in November of 2002 when I attended a national conference for women under forty affected by this disease. I was the ONLY one I knew under 40 that had gone thru this, and to walk into an auditorium filled with over 500 women my age was a powerful experience and allowed me to know immediately that I am not alone in my fight.

## Breast Health Basics

### Breast Health

#### Basics:

- Breast tissue begins just below the collarbone and extends from the armpit to the breast bone and down below the bra line.
- Menopause causes the loss of some breast tissue, and a shifting in the size and shape of the breast.
- Not all lumps are malignant (cancer)

#### Warning Signs:

See your doctor if you notice any of the following changes in your breast

- Lump, hard knot or thickening
- Swelling, warmth, redness, or darkening
- Change in the size or shape
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Itch, scaly, or sore rash on your nipple or other parts
- Pulling in of your nipple or other parts
- Nipple discharge
- New pain in one spot

#### Risks:

- Being a woman
- Getting older
- Drinking more than one alcoholic drink per day
- Overweight after menopause or gaining weight as an adult
- Birth Control for 5 years or longer
- Having your first child after 30
- Having no children

- HRT for 5 years or longer
- Exposure to large amounts of radiation
- Having first period before 12
- Starting menopause after 55

### Mammography

- Best tool to detect breast cancer at its earliest - most treatable stages
- If you have insurance, most plans cover the procedure

#### Recommendations:

- Annual mammogram beginning at age 40
- Clinical breast examination at least every 3 years starting at 20 and annually beginning at 40
- Monthly BSE starting by age 20
- Women under 40 with a family history of breast cancer or other personal risks should consult with a medical professional about risk assessment and when to begin mammography.

Visit "About Breast Cancer" at [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) for more information.



### Breast Self-Exam (BSE)

**Why:** To aid in early detection of possible malignant tumors.

**When:** Just as your period ends (or at the same time each month if you do not have periods)

#### How:

**Step 1:** Lying down, use the pads of the three middle fingers on your left hand to check your right breast - pressing with light medium and firm pressure in a circle without lifting your fingers off skin. Feel for changes in your breast, above and below the collarbone and in your armpit. Repeat with left breast using right hand.

**Step 2:** In front of the mirror, look for any changes in breast in these four positions

- 1) hold arms at your side
- 2) hold arms over head
- 3) press hands on hips and tighten chest muscles
- 4) bend forward with hands on hips

## Too Young For Breast Cancer: Anger & Activism, The Story of Randi Rosenberg and the Birth of the Young Survival Coalition

Randi Rosenberg was just 32 when she got the terrible news in 1998. But the diagnosis came a full year later than it might have.

The tumor had actually been found the year before, felt during a routine gynecological exam. But because Rosenberg was so young, the doctor wrote it off to the lumpiness typical of young breasts and did not refer her for a mammogram.

"My first thought when she said to me, 'Don't worry, you're too young [for breast cancer],' was, 'Yeah, of course I'm too young,'" Rosenberg recalls. "And I didn't give it another thought, which is what most young women would do. It's just not on our radar screen."

Some months later, during a physical with another doctor, Rosenberg pointed out the lump, which had grown noticeably. Concerned, that doctor sent her for an

immediate mammogram. When it came back clear, she recommended a sonogram. Rosenberg, juggling her work as a marketing consultant and an active social life, didn't get around to it for 6 months.

When at last she had the ultrasound, it showed something suspicious. A core biopsy confirmed the diagnosis: stage 2 invasive breast cancer.

"When I was told it was actually breast cancer, I was furious," Rosenberg says. "I felt discriminated against, that because I was a young woman, I was discounted."

She channeled that anger into activism. With other young women who had been through breast cancer, she helped create the Young Survival Coalition (YSC), ([www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)) a non-profit advocacy group dedicated to the specific needs

and concerns of young women with this disease. Rosenberg is president, a volunteer position.

"All of the anger and frustration that I felt when I was navigating my own breast cancer journey really lit a fire in me," Rosenberg says. "I believe with every cell of my body that this work needs to get done and that's what keeps me going."

Breast cancer is considered rare in younger women; only about 5% of cases occur in women under 40. Still, more than 215,000 women in the U.S. are expected to get invasive breast cancer in 2004, which means about 11,000 of those cases will occur in women under 40.

The YSC works to increase the amount of research done on breast cancer in younger women, and to provide age-appropriate resources and support for these

women during and after treatment. The organization lobbies researchers and legislators and collaborates with other cancer-fighting groups, including the American Cancer Society (ACS). YSC members volunteer with ACS Reach to Recovery programs across the country, and the group has worked with the Manhattan/Bronx office of ACS to develop a book and video for young breast cancer survivors called "You Are Not Alone."

"The good news is, the world is a very different place today than it was 6 years ago if you're a young woman with breast cancer," Rosenberg says. "It required a loud voice saying these are very real issues."

*Adapted from:*  
ACS website, article dated 10/1/2004

**The Greater Richmond Affiliate  
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer  
Foundation**

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Phone: 804-358-7223  
Web: [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) or  
[www.richmondrace.org](http://www.richmondrace.org)



## Mark Your Calendars!!!

**Komen Richmond Race for the Cure®**  
May 13, 2006

**Yoplait Save Lids to Save Lives®**  
Through May 15, 2006

**Wacoal Fit for the Cure**  
May 19, 2006 at Belk in Charlottesville  
10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**Survivor Luncheon**  
September 29, 2006

**Lee National Denim Day®**  
October 6, 2006

## Get Tied to the Cause! 2005 Limited Edition Lilly Pulitzer Silk Scarf

Purchase for \$30.00 (suggested retail price \$35.00)  
in the Gift Shop at the May 13 Richmond Race for the  
Cure® or online at [www.richmondrace.org](http://www.richmondrace.org)!



## Yoplait Save Lids to Save Lives®

Yoplait is in the ninth year of its Save Lids to Save Lives® Breast Cancer campaign and has raised over \$10 million to date for Komen. Your organization can participate by saving pink lids from March 15, 2006 through May 15, 2006. Yoplait will donate 10¢ per lid up to \$1.5 million to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation for each pink lid received.

If you wish to participate in the Yoplait Save Lids to Save Lives® program, please contact [jadams@richmondrace.org](mailto:jadams@richmondrace.org) or call 804-796-RACE. We will send you a Save Lids Save Lives® collection box and Pink Lid collection envelopes so you can start today!



**Honor a loved one with a tribute donation:** This Mother's Day, pay tribute to the memory of a loved one or honor the courage of a survivor. Make a donation in recognition of a special mother and a personalized card will be sent to her or her family to notify them of your gift. Make a tribute today by calling 804-358-7223 or online at [www.richmondrace.org](http://www.richmondrace.org).

## Resource Corner

Here are some suggested books and websites from local survivors.

Please share your own favorites with us!

*Why I Wore Lipstick to My Mastectomy*  
by GERALYN LUCAS

*Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book*  
by Susan M. Love et. al.

*Medicine, Marathons & Miracles*  
by Kathy and Roger Cawthon

[www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

(organization for women under 40 affected by breast cancer)

The Greater Richmond Affiliate continues to grow! And as we grow, so does our yearlong involvement in the community!

This means that more volunteers are needed to manage, organize and lead our committees, our new programs, and our long range planning efforts.

If you would like to learn more about opportunities available to display your talents and contribute to the community, please contact us today!

## We Need You!

To join our new Speakers' Bureau, email us at:

[speaker@richmondrace.org](mailto:speaker@richmondrace.org)

For other volunteer opportunities which include the newsletter, 2006 Survivor Luncheon, Grants, Fund Raising, Finance, Office Support and MORE, please call (804) 358-7223 or email us at [info@richmondrace.org](mailto:info@richmondrace.org).

There are many possibilities for you to be involved!

Make it YOUR personal goal to get involved with the Greater Richmond Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation TODAY!