

Since I submitted my story toward the end of 2009, I was 5 years cancer-free and in the safety zone. So I thought.

In October of 2011 I had a recurrence of breast cancer on my right side. My plastic surgeon noted a surface spot on my scar line that was abnormal. He did a biopsy right there and it came back cancerous. With having a double mastectomy in 2004, chemotherapy and tamoxifen, my risk of recurrence was less than 1%. As I've told others, I'm either damned or really special. This time it involved my lymph nodes so it was stage 2.

I had another mastectomy if that is what you call it when you've already had a mastectomy. We removed the implant and lymph nodes and are reconstructing. My lymph nodes were entangled so we did chemo first to shrink them down and then the surgery. After chemotherapy there were nodes that still came back positive so we proceeded with oral chemotherapy, xeloda, for 6 rounds. I have been doing those every other week and I have one round left starting this Friday, for one week. After that we will start on 28-34 doses of radiation. I'm not sure how that will fit into my day with working and being a single mom! But of course, I will make it happen.

It's been challenging keeping up with working full-time and taking care of my 10 and 12 year old daughters. I have had a lot of help but ultimately us moms still feel the responsibility on our shoulders and still are the ones to figure it all out. I'm exhausted and frustrated and yet blessed and thankful. It's an emotional rollercoaster above the physical toll it takes. I keep reminding myself that I am lucky that we found it and that I am here and strong to fight, again. I am rather pissed though that cancer won't just leave me the hell alone. I was 18 when I was first diagnosed with Hodgkins, then went 12 years to when I was first diagnosed with breast cancer and then made it 7 years to the next diagnosis. I'm done! 3rd time is a charm right?!