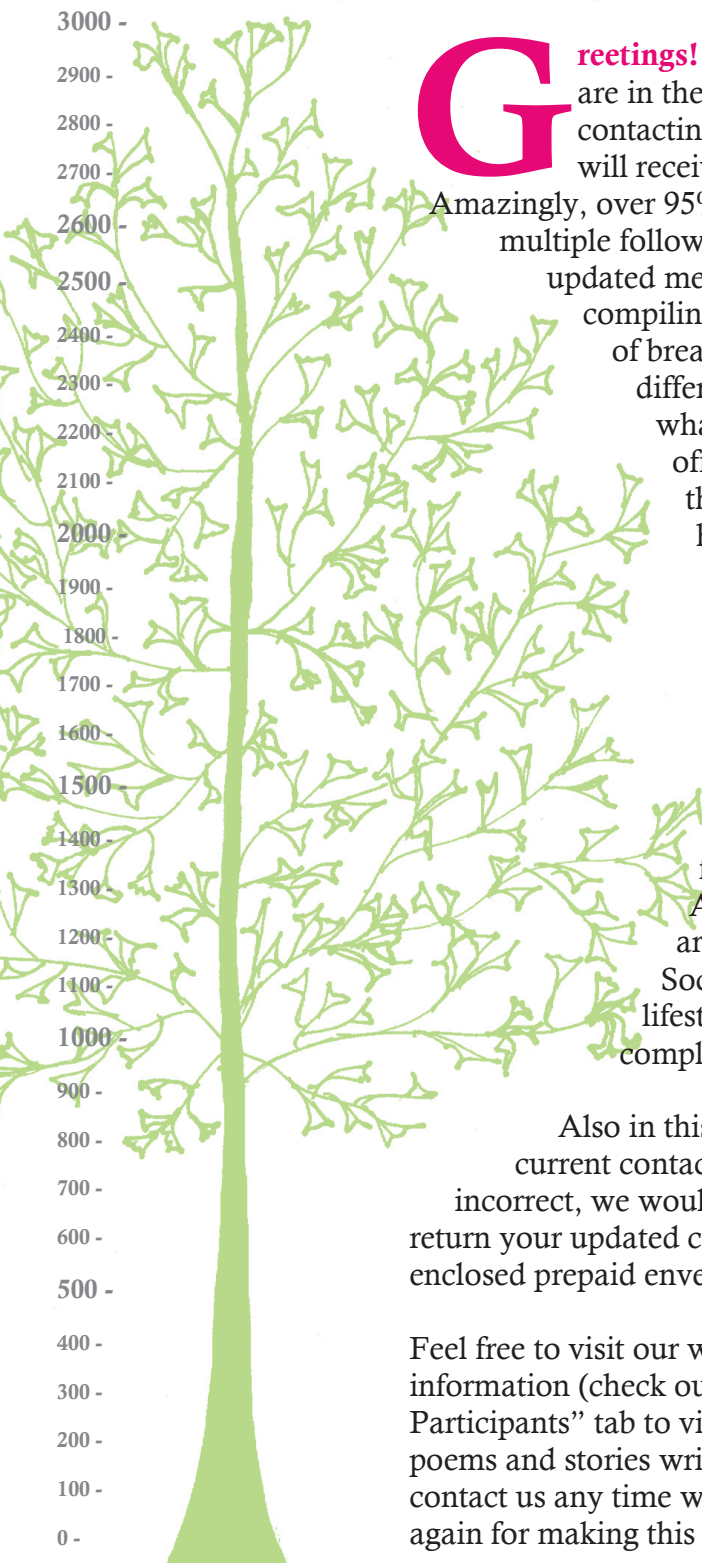


CBCS Newsletter

For Study Participants

Phase III: The Jeanne Hopkins Lucas Study



Greetings! After four years in our study, you are in the “home stretch!” We won’t be contacting you by phone at this time, but you will receive a follow-up call in about a year. Amazingly, over 95% of our participants are completing multiple follow-up calls and providing us with updated medical information. We are compiling this data to understand what types of breast cancer are prevalent among different age groups and races, to learn what types of treatments are being offered, and to observe what outcomes those treatments are providing. We hope to have news about our findings to share with you towards the end of the study.

Please accept this newsletter with our thanks for all your help with this important research. Our “Survivor Diaries” section continues to be a favorite, based on feedback from participants. Additionally, there is an interesting article from the American Cancer Society highlighting some important lifestyle changes to consider after completing treatment.

Also in this mailing, there is a form listing your current contact information. If any of it is incorrect, we would be most grateful if you would return your updated contact information using the enclosed prepaid envelope.

Feel free to visit our website (cbcs.web.unc.edu) for more information (check out “Recent Events” under the “For Participants” tab to view the CBCS Living Tree entries—poems and stories written by study participants). Please contact us any time with questions or concerns. Thanks again for making this study the best it can be!

An epidemiologic population-based breast cancer research study at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center funded through the University Cancer Research Fund and the National Cancer Institute

“Beauty, grace, strength, and persistence...”

Follow-Up Issue #5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Lifestyle Changes After Breast Cancer Treatment	2
Survivor Diaries	3
CBCS Spotlight: Nicholas Taylor	4

Study Contact Information

UNC-Chapel Hill
LCCC-North
1700 MLK Blvd, Rm 332
CB # 7294
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7294

Phone: 1-866-927-6920 or
Email: cbcs@unc.edu
<http://cbcs.web.unc.edu>

Recruitment Progress. By October 2013, 3000 women were enrolled. Our ginkgo sapling has grown into a beautiful, full-grown ginkgo tree. Thanks for your participation!

LIFESTYLE CHANGES AFTER BREAST CANCER TREATMENT

You can't change the fact that you have had cancer. What you can change is how you live the rest of your life—making choices to help you stay healthy and feel as well as you can.

Making healthier choices

For many people, a diagnosis of cancer helps them focus on their health in ways they may not have thought much about in the past. Maybe you could try to eat better or get more exercise. Maybe you could cut down on the alcohol, or give up tobacco. Even things like keeping your stress level under control may help. Now is a good time to think about making changes that can have positive effects for the rest of your life. You will feel better and you will also be healthier.

Eating better

Eating right can be hard for anyone, but it can get even tougher during and after cancer treatment. Treatment may change your sense of taste. Nausea can be a problem. You may not feel like eating and lose weight when you don't want to. Or you may have gained weight that you can't seem to lose. All of these things can be very frustrating.

If treatment caused weight changes or eating or taste problems, do the best you can and keep in mind that these problems usually get better over time. It helps to eat small portions every 2 to 3 hours until you feel better. You may also want to ask your cancer team about seeing a dietitian, an expert in nutrition who can give you ideas on how to deal with these treatment side effects.

One of the best things you can do after cancer treatment is put healthy eating habits into place. You may be surprised at the long-term benefits of some simple changes, like increasing the variety of healthy foods you eat. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet, and limiting your alcohol intake may lower your risk for a number of types of cancer, as well as having many other health benefits.

Rest, fatigue, and exercise

Extreme tiredness, called *fatigue*, is very common in people treated for cancer. This is not a normal tiredness, but a "bone-weary" exhaustion that doesn't get better with rest. For some people, fatigue lasts a long time after treatment, and can make it hard for them to exercise and do other things they want to do. But exercise can help reduce fatigue. Studies have shown that patients who follow an exercise program tailored to their personal needs feel better physically and emotionally and can cope better, too.

If you were sick and not very active during treatment, it is normal for your fitness, endurance, and muscle strength to decline. Any plan for physical activity should fit your own situation. If you haven't exercised in a few years, you will have to start slowly – maybe just by taking short walks.

Talk with your health care team before starting anything. Get their opinion about your exercise plans. Then, try to find an exercise buddy so you're not doing it alone. Having family or friends involved when starting a new exercise program can give you that extra boost of support to keep you going when the push just isn't there.

If you are very tired, you will need to balance activity with rest. It is OK to rest when you need to. Sometimes it's really hard for people to allow themselves to rest when they are used to working all day or taking care of a household, but this is not the time to push yourself too hard. Listen to your body and rest when you need to. Keep in mind exercise can improve your physical and emotional health.

How exercise can improve your physical and emotional health

- It improves your cardiovascular (heart and circulation) fitness.
- Along with a good diet, it will help you get to and stay at a healthy weight.
- It makes your muscles stronger.
- It reduces fatigue and helps you have more energy.
- It can help lower anxiety and depression.
- It can make you feel happier.
- It helps you feel better about yourself.

SURVIVOR *Diaries*

Submitted by E.T., Wilson County, NC

Faith and Integrity

Cancer anyone? No thank you! I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010. I was surprised and shocked, then broke down. I cried unto God with my voice and he heard me. He delivered me from all my troubles and strengthened my soul and I asked “Why me?” I later thought, “Why not me?” because I’m only human like anybody else who gets cancer. Luckily, the lump in my breast was discovered early with a self-breast examination and I’m doing just fine now. Thanks to God Almighty!



Submitted by A.C., Johnston County, NC

Lovin' It Natural

In March 2011, I was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer. This cancer came out of nowhere because there were no genetic factors or family history. This type of cancer is also known to be very aggressive. After visiting several doctors and further testing, it was decided that I needed to have a lumpectomy with the removal of several lymph nodes. The surgery removed all the cancer but I still needed several chemotherapy and radiation treatments—I was not ready for that!

I heard so many horrible stories about chemotherapy: the sickness, the weight loss, the strong medications, not to mention—the hair loss. I think I was okay with the thought of being sick, but the thought of losing my hair was very emotional for me. I loved my hair (though it was not as healthy as it needed to be) and I had to lose it. Sure enough, three weeks after my first treatment, my hair started to come out. Within five days, my hair was gone! Nothing! No strings! No frizzles! Hair that took years to grow only took days to lose! Yes, I did cry!! I didn't know where to start, or what I needed to do to get it back. Wigs became my best friend during the remainder of my treatments.

All through my treatments I taught myself how to stay healthy by focusing on eating, taking care of myself, and learning things that I needed to do to ensure that I had a good recovery. We all know that chemotherapy and radiation take a lot out of you.

I was told that there was a chance my hair wouldn't come back. If it did, my hair would be weak and frail for the first year or so because of the strong chemotherapy medications. I didn't want that! I began a long research project on how to help my hair come back healthier and stronger than it was before my cancer. I also noticed a big difference in my skin. It was darker and very dull. I knew that I was sick, but I didn't want to look sick! That's when I made up my mind: I had to go through this, but I was going to come out a better me, inside and out.

Since I've gone through cancer, I have been able to create my own natural hair product line. These natural products provide nutrients for healthy cell growth. My product resulted in my hair growing back stronger, flawless skin, and stronger body. One day I hope to offer these very same products to other cancer patients. It's been nearly two years since my breast cancer diagnosis. I feel great and my hair has grown back thicker and longer than it was before my cancer. Thanks CBCS for all your support!



CBCS Spotlight

Nicholas Taylor



Nicholas' Role in CBCS: Nicholas worked on CBCS as a graduate research assistant and earned his PhD in UNC's Department of Epidemiology. He was responsible for procuring CBCS participants' tumor tissue from hospitals throughout North Carolina. Participants' agreement to release tumor tissue to the Carolina Breast Cancer Study is vital to learning more about important genetic differences between breast tumors.

Nicholas' Story: Nicholas joined the Carolina Breast Cancer Study in 2008 after enrolling in the Department of Epidemiology at UNC. Before coming to North Carolina, Nicholas received his Masters in Epidemiology at the University of Florida and was already engaged in cancer research with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. He decided to further his education at UNC and pursue more focused research on breast cancer by working with the CBCS. After graduating, he left North Carolina to pursue a post-doc position in cancer research at the Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa, Florida, near his hometown.

Nicholas' concentration in breast cancer research stems from a long family history of the disease and a deep interest in understanding genetic risk factors associated with its development. In 1995, Nicholas' mother died of breast cancer after a two-year struggle with the disease. The impact of losing the center of his family compelled him to pursue a career in research. Nicholas' research focuses heavily on the genetic components that initiate and perpetuate the development of breast cancer. The crucial blood and tumor tissue samples needed to do such research are contributed by the courageous women in the CBCS; without your samples, this study would not be at the forefront of breast cancer research.

Nicholas' Message: "Thank you! Your participation in the CBCS will further our understanding of breast cancer development and progression in profound ways. With your help, we'll put an end to this devastating disease."

Thank you for all your help with the Carolina Breast Cancer Study. We'll be in touch next year. In the meantime, please contact us with any address or telephone changes:

Mail: Carolina Breast Cancer Study
 UNC-Chapel Hill, LCCC-North
 1700 MLK Blvd., Rm. 332
 Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7294
E-mail: cbcs@unc.edu
Phone: 919-966-9439 or 1-866-927-6920