

Conquering Cancer



*Supported by Family and
Friends, Patty Gomez Celebrates
Overcoming Breast Cancer*

Written by Patty Gomez &
Photography by Suzi
Issa

In April 2009, I was given probably the scariest news of my life from my doctor. She told me that I was diagnosed with grade two invasive ductal carcinoma – the most common type of breast cancer – with focal lymphovascular invasion noted. Those were pretty big words to comprehend, but I soon realized that my condition was serious and that I needed to act quickly.

A Rollercoaster of Emotions

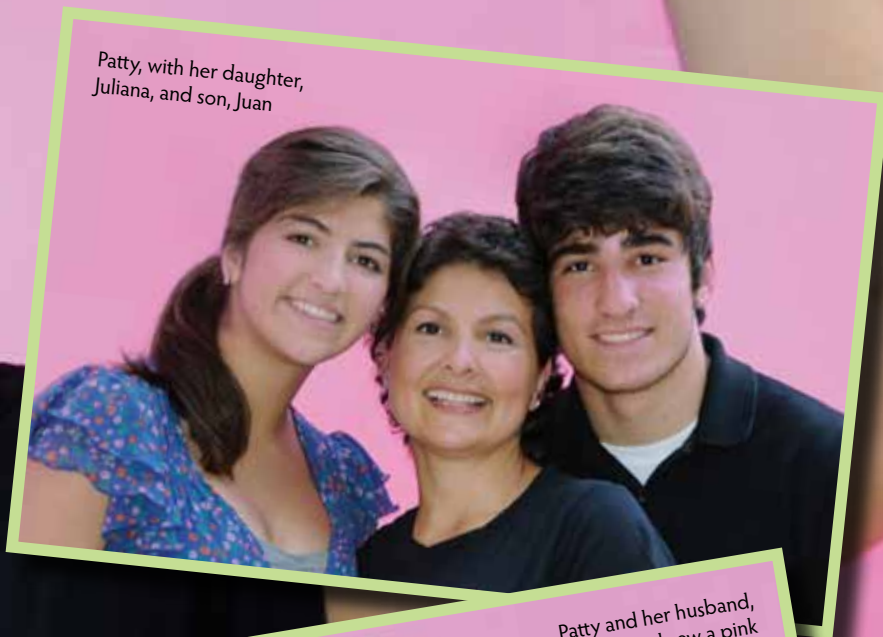
The time of treatment that followed was the fastest rollercoaster ride my husband and I had ever been on. Within two weeks, I met with my breast specialist and my oncologist, had a port-a-cath inserted on the left side of my chest, and received my first dose of chemotherapy. And that was the easy part.

The most difficult part was telling my family of my illness, especially my parents. Even though I am a grown woman and a mother of two, I will always be a little girl to them. But somehow from within, I found the strength to face this difficult challenge with a positive attitude.

Staying Strong as a Family

I included my kids, Juan, 16, and Juliana, 15, in every part of the process after I was diagnosed. From letting them try on my scarves, hats, and wigs, to letting them cut my hair, trying out different styles like the ultimate shave, they were there supporting me every step of the way.

Patty Gomez was diagnosed with breast cancer in April 2009 and immediately began treatment



Patty, with her daughter, Juliana, and son, Juan



Patty and her husband, Juan, threw a pink party to celebrate her recovery

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I let my daughter take the day off from school when I went for my first round of chemo. She stayed with me the whole day. My husband picked my son up for lunch and they came over that day. I never felt alone or sorry for myself, because I had my husband and my kids so close to me during this whole time.

Positive Support from Friends

Not only did I have a wonderful, supportive family, but I also found out that my friends and neighbors are absolutely the most generous and thoughtful people I could ever ask for. They quickly helped out with providing us with dinner, so I wouldn't have to cook on my bad days. The schools let me continue my volunteer shifts whenever I felt strong enough to go. I always had someone to take me to and from my treatments. They would stay the day with me or they would take turns, so I wouldn't be alone, even though most of the time I would go to sleep.

I was showered in flowers and cards when I had my surgery. I would be surprised by gifts at my door, cookie baskets, and chocolates in the mail. My little sister even joined in the Susan G. Koman Race for the Cure in October in my honor and she hardly ever exercises.

Celebrating with the Community

I had my last radiation treatment on Nov. 19. My husband and I wanted to give back to the community and show our appreciation for all they did for us, so we threw a pink party the following Saturday. I was speechless when my best friends in the whole world traveled all the way from Chicago to celebrate with us. I had a wonderful time that night knowing that I had put a pretty heavy load behind me. With so many good friends surrounding me that night, I realized what an amazing and wonderful community we live in.

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I am living proof now that with positive energy, a great network of friends, and a loving family, facing any type of difficulty, such as fighting cancer, is like a walk in the park. **KM**

EDITOR'S NOTE: We would like to thank Patty Gomez for sharing her story of courage and hope. If you have an inspirational story you'd like to share, please email editor@katymagazine.com.

Patty still remembers all the wonderful ways her family and friends supported her during her fight



Patty with her sister, Diana, dad, Ricardo, daughter, Juliana, husband, Juan, nephew, Nico, son, Juan, and mom, Norma



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