

About us  
Our Mission

At Pfizer Oncology, we believe it's our responsibility to help support and inspire those who have been affected by cancer. Because cancer doesn't discriminate, it can affect any of us. No matter age, income, race or location. That's why Pfizer developed **This Is Living With Cancer™**, a program developed to support all people in their cancer journey. We offer tools to help people living with cancer live life beyond their diagnosis.

basic page image





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[Judi] There's nothing you can control in your life in terms of circumstances, absolutely nothing.

But you can always control how you respond to them.

[soft music]

[Billy] When you do what you enjoy doing, then you never work a day in your life.

[Lindsay to Patient] Hold this under your tongue.

[Lindsay] I told my family that I was gonna be a nurse when I was five years old, and I never changed my mind.

[Fred] It's risky to not be yourself. That's the real risk of knowing what you should be doing with your life and not doing it.

Because then I was literally risking my life, because I wasn't living it.

[Judi] I was born to be creative. So it's important for me to always be creative, one way or another, because it's how I breathe.

You got to breathe.

[Sachi] To be in the ocean is breath, it's life, it's breathing. If I'm not in the ocean I'm not myself. It's just raw and wild out there.

All you know is that what comes next might kill you, but you learn how to keep your mind and body calm in those situations-and turn it into something magic and beautiful.

And I think that's how I've tried to approach this diagnosis.

When my mom was 45, I was 15 years old and a sophomore in high school. She was diagnosed with stage four ovarian cancer.

I mean, it was a lot different back then. So in my junior year when I was 19, she passed away.

So I have this gene that has been killing my family for generations.

And at the exact same time it made a tumor in my mom, it was making a tumor in me.

I decided to have a double mastectomy with reconstruction and a total hysterectomy.

I'm gonna have to stay out of the water for four weeks. I need to be in the ocean.

The ocean allows you to escape those dark corners of your mind and connect to something that's larger and more powerful than yourself.

I think the hardest part about cancer is not knowing what's gonna happen next.

[beeping]

[Lindsay] I am actually an oncology nurse. I had my second child in April and was following up on some symptoms after pregnancy.

She was about five months old when I was diagnosed. It's rectal cancer. It's definitely an eye-opener from the start.

I mean, my patients were one of the first things that popped into my head.

Something I used to tell my patients is like, "Oh, this is just gonna be a phase in your life." And I would try to use that to be encouraging.

Now I worry that that was just trivializing it all.

There is a little bit of a story behind the bell-there was a three-time cancer survivor who donated the bell to us. It's signifying what's next.

It's kind of the beginning of the next phase. It's an alarm clock.

Time to wake up, get back to life. I'm gonna ring the crap out of that bell someday.

[Nurse] And one, two, three. So Lidocaine to numb it up.

[Fred] If they can only inject my heart with that. One of the hardest things at first is to look at that sign: "Oncology", "Hematology."

And it's a lot different than seeing a sign that says "gas", "food", "lodging", "cocktails", "pizza."

It's a whole 'nother world. And you're doing it in a whole 'nother language.

[Judi] When I first was diagnosed, I was very depressed about it. I truly believed that if I had a year I was lucky.

Because my cancer is stage four. Thyroid cancer. And what I thought that meant was I was on the way out.

I've since learned it doesn't mean that.

It just means it's incurable, and it just means you have to keep finding different ways to fight it, and treat it, and try to hold it back.

[Billy] If you get a cancer diagnosis, it's kind of like a shot across the bow that, hey, you aren't gonna be here forever.

And if there's some things you want to do, you better get busy doing it.

But the funny thing about that is is that we're all in the same boat-it's just that I've been alerted and you haven't.

[Fred] I've had testicular cancer twice and esophageal cancer once.

I had it first when I was 28. And then last July, found out that I had esophageal cancer. I go, "Again, the odds, the odds."

People always ask me about the gloves, boxing gloves. They go, "Are you a boxer?" I go "No, this is a fight."

People on that highway of life-every six months to a year I have to pull up to a tollgate, and I'm in a CT scan, and I wait for the results and wait for that gate to come up so I can get back on the road.

And I just have to hope that when I go to the CT scan that it's a happy ending of continuance.

[Lindsay] Your mind immediately goes to your children after being diagnosed with cancer.

You wonder, am I gonna be able to lift my daughter up after surgery, am I gonna be able to cook them dinner and get them up in the morning?

[Lindsay's Husband] One of the first things she said to me after we learned of her diagnosis was, "You didn't sign up for this."

And that ripped my heart out.

[Lindsay] [crying] I think birthdays are a lot more special now. I think it just means a little bit more.

It means I'm not the age I was diagnosed at anymore, and so that even feels different. Like now I'm 34.

I always have been diagnosed at 33, and I feel like it was just a little bit of a mental leap. Like it's on to the next year.

But we're really looking forward to the after-chemo party in five weeks.

[soft music]

[Judi] I think it's important to do things for the first time, no matter how old you are.

I'm 68 and I'm still doing things for the first time. I am so passionately involved with beauty and art that I am able to put my illness out of my mind.

I don't even think about it. Kind of late in life to start oil painting at 67, but it's turned out really well.

I also write spoken word and poetry.

Marching swiftly to and fro, sell it high and buy it low.

Make a dollar, go spend three, that's the life for you and me.

Retirement planning, tax receipts, backyard landscape fantasies.

Birthdays, anniversaries.

And I think I directed my first film a year ago.

Now you just keep bowing. And so let's try that again.

Now, I am an artist in residence for a professional dance company out of Denver.

It's the joy of my life. It's my true passion. It opens on the 11th of August. So we're getting darn close, we're only eight weeks away, I think.

[Announcer] So today we have with us the inimitable, the wonderful gentleman and scholar, Mr. Billy Foster.

[Billy] Thank you for having us. I started to look around-I didn't recognize the person you described. [laughing]

I have renal cell carcinoma. I think music is a healing force.

My mind has to be occupied with what I'm doing.

And so it can't be occupied with thinking about I have cancer, I'm occupied in creating this music.

She has a built-in piano player and I have a built-in singer, so-

[Billy's Wife] That's why I married him.

[Billy] [laughing] She's been a tremendous help to me.

I couldn't have made it through this thing without her. And she goes to all my appointments.

[Wife] You got to give me a kiss. That's a good one.

And they say, "He looks good, Billy looks good."

But see, they didn't see the other side when he was severely ill.

[Billy] I can remember playing through sick times.

But just like everybody else, you play through them. [piano music]

[beeping]

[Sachi] Monday morning I'm going to fly with my daughter to Panama City.

I'm really looking forward to just being in the ocean with my daughter.

[Fred] Perhaps tomorrow I can kind of get the verdict. You're sitting there. Is the jury in?

And you look and now you're looking for that oncologist and you're hoping they're smiling.

You know the results could be devastating.

And I'm not looking forward to finding out that I might have to go through chemo again, or that cancer could have possibly spread.

[Interviewer] So what are you doing tonight?

[Fred] I'm gonna tell some jokes. Talk about I'll be up to the stage and I'll tell people I had a CT scan and try to come up with a CT scan joke, and then I'll ask for their support.

I'll say, "You know I'm going for the scan tomorrow, I'm going for a result, and I would appreciate your support."

[Announcer] Bring up your next comic. Please welcome the very talented, Fred Reiss.

Come on up Fred.

[audience clapping]

[Fred] Thank you, thank you. My name's Fred Reiss. I'll start to tell you a little bit about myself. I'm a three-time cancer survivor.

[audience cheering]

Thank you, thank you. When I was going through chemo I was pale, I was bald, and no one felt sorry for me 'cause they thought I was a vegan.

[audience laughing]

I almost died three times to say that joke, give me a break. Where are your souls, people, where are your souls?

Man. I don't feel I have cancer when I'm on the stage. I'm completely Fred.

I'm no longer the guy who has cancer-I'm the guy who's talking about cancer.

And the thing that was incredibly satisfying about it is instead of people saying I was just funny they would come out of the shows and they were emotionally moved, and I inspired them, which I never anticipated.

[Comedian] Lost my mother to cancer, father, sister-so many people. So anybody that's still here-

[Fred] Thank you.

[Comedian] God bless, man.

[Fred] God bless you.

[Sachi] I think what happens when you go through this is you're just forced to face death, and facing death forces you to evolve.

You know, it's just about being at peace with what's inevitably gonna happen with all of us.

[Judi] And sometimes you just have to sit with it. It's real: the pain is real, the challenges are real, the fear is real.



You do have to find a new normal. I laugh with my doctors. My husband and I have a found a way to be honest with each other.

He was verklempt. He was about to lose his best friend here.

We had no idea it was gonna happen.

And at a certain point I had to say, "Buddy, I got to be able to cry when I feel like I need to cry. I got to be able to face this, 'cause I don't have the energy to pretend so that you don't hurt."

And he had to figure out how he was gonna deal with losing his precious girl, 'cause that's who I am.

[Fred] And I look up at the sky and talk to the great unknown, and I go, "I'm making a difference. I learned, I'm making a difference.

You've got to let me stay. You've got to let me stay-I want to stay. I'm making a difference. That has to count for something. It's got to mean something."

[Lindsay] So we're headed to my work-that's where I go every day. And something about today is I'm also going to get my chemo treatment.

And it's actually my last chemo treatment.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't nervous, but regardless, today's gonna be a celebration.

[beeping]

[Lindsay's Son] Why are you sitting there?

[Lindsay] 'Cause I was gonna get ready to get my special medicine.

[Son] Is it your last medicine?

[Lindsay] It is my last medicine. Do you want to push the start button on my last medicine?

[Nurse] You see this little blue button right here.

[Son] Yeah.

[Nurse] Okay, we're gonna hit that, okay. Can you reach it?

[Son] Yeah.

[Nurse] Okay, and go. [beeping]

[soft music]

[Lindsay] You're gonna help me ring a big special bell?

[Son] Yeah. Super duper loud.

[Lindsay] No matter what my future holds, this signifies accomplishing this first battle. [beeping]

[Husband] Mama's done.

[Lindsay] Yay.

[Husband] Mama chemo over. [clapping]

[Lindsay] Okay ready, can you say thank you, everybody?

[Son] Thank you.

[Lindsay] Thank you everybody for coming. Let's ring the bell.

Put your hand on it. Ready, one, two, three. [dinging] [clapping and cheering]

[Fred] I have to walk in here and get a verdict. Wait and hope that she comes in smiling.

And then if she's not, then see where I go. You know, if something spread or I have to go through chemo again. [knocking]

[Doctor] Hey, hello, how's it going Fred?

[Fred] Good, good. I'm semi-optimistic. You're smiling.

[Doctor] Yeah, I'm smiling.

[Fred] Alright, okay. [laughing]

[Doctor] Yeah no, the scan looks really good. It looks good. So, yeah. No, I'm very, very pleased.

[Fred] I'm excited for the opportunity to know that I'm gonna be around.

[Fred's Partner] Hi baby.

[Fred] Hey.

[Partner] Congratulations. How you doing?

[Judi] When you've been diagnosed with stage four cancer you have this laser-like focus on living, on the moment that you're living in.

On the potential for joy and beauty and love. And all of those things, courage and grace and kindness.

All of those things get very, very real. And in some ways it's a blessing. It wakes you up.

We're gonna gather up all the positive energy and we're going to bring it to us, and we're going to release it with a, "Yes!"

[All] Yes!

[Judi] Follow me.

[All] Yes! Yes!

[Judi] One more.

[All] Yes!

[soft music]

[Sachi] I lost my mom, my mom lost her dad.

You know I don't know how far back there's been death at a young age, which means a kid suffering.

I feel very fortunate to be this first generation that is living.

Getting in the water for the first time after four weeks of being out because of surgery-it's just a feeling of peace.

Playing with Nami in the ocean just makes me feel whole again.

Nami means wave in Japanese. She's my lifelong wave.

[Lindsay] It doesn't end. You're changed now.

Nice hit, buddy! Run, run, run! That way, first base. Long way.

It doesn't go back to normal, there's a new normal.

You're doing everything you can today, and then you're gonna do everything you can tomorrow, and it just continues.

[Billy] The future for me is more music, more writing, more teaching, and so I'm pretty optimistic about the future.

[Wife] With me.

[Billy] With Renee.

[Fred] Look at this, I'm walking. I made it, I made it.

And I'm walking for other people.

You know what, I have to be that punch. Cancer is like Apollo Creed-he's coming after me.

So I have to be there to punch every second of every minute of every hour of every day for the whole time I deal with cancer.

And I'm saying that I'm giving these gloves to you too. Thank you for having me here.

[audience cheering]

Thank you, thank you.

[Judi] It's the best time of my life. I know what's at stake. I know what's possible, what's valuable. And I know what my priorities are.

And living every day with no regrets is one of them.

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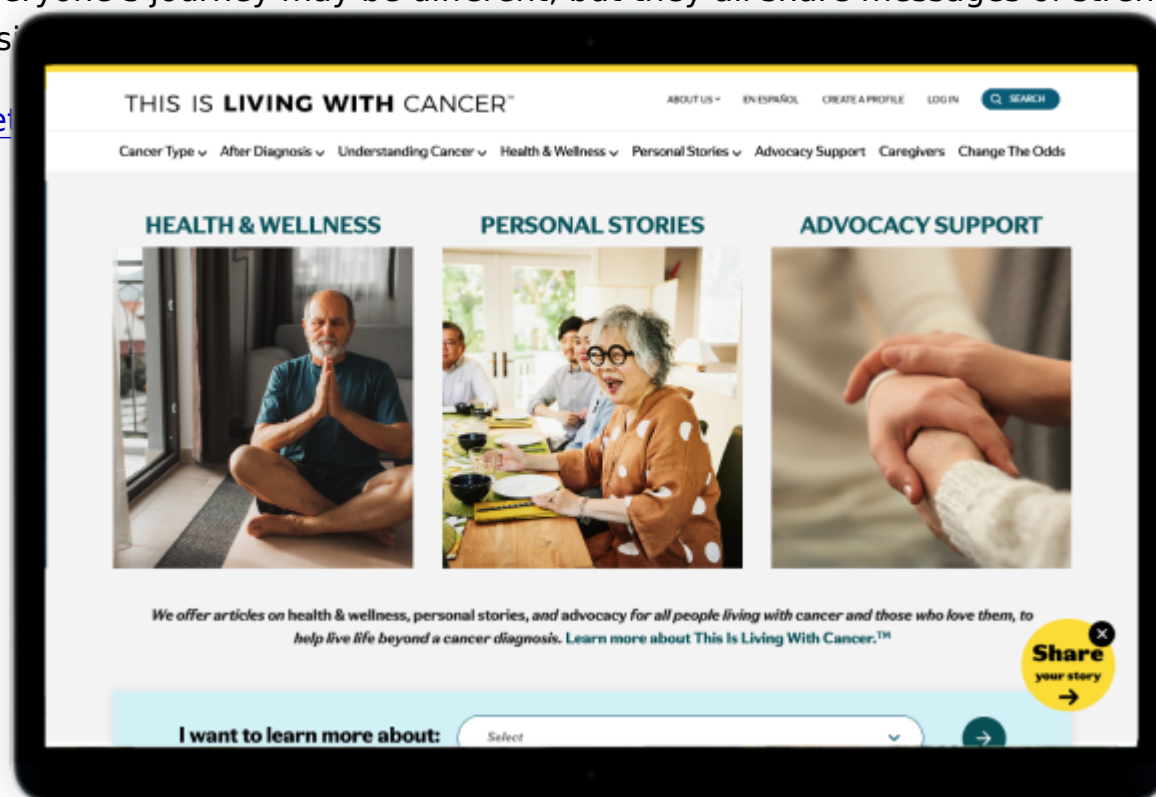
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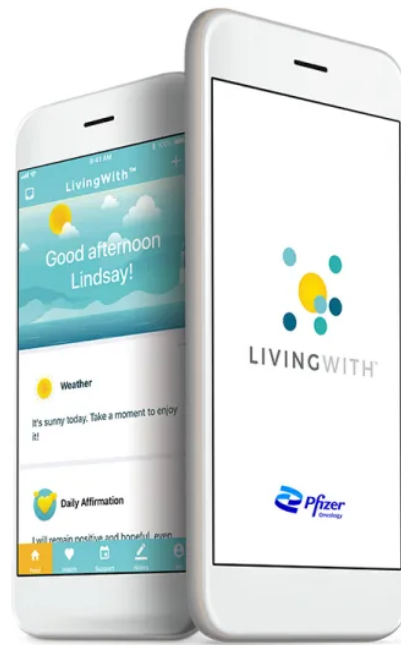


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