



Genesee County Health Department

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Re: National Breast Cancer Awareness Month- Survivor Story

My survival story began ironically during National Breast Cancer Awareness month, October of 2010. It's now October 2015 and I continue to tell my story of survival because I know there are plenty of women out there, like me, who need to know about Genesee County Health Department's Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Navigation Program (BCCCNP). My name is Jennifer Tash and I am a breast cancer survivor!

Like any other Saturday sleep-in morning, I woke up from a wonderful restful night's sleep. I sat up, arched my back, stretched my arms straight up into the air and let my arms go limp and free fall to the bed. As my arms fell towards the mattress, my right hand lightly brushed against my breast and felt what I thought was a lump. I couldn't believe it! I didn't want to believe it! At that moment, I don't know what frightened me more -- The fact that I found a potential cancerous lump on my breast, or the fact that I didn't have health insurance.

Two weeks after my discovery, I came to terms with the fact that I didn't have health insurance and I need to do something, and do it fast! I gathered my inner strength and made the decision to look for help. I have to say, I was very fortunate in my early on-line research because at the top of my internet research results was the Genesee County Health Department. Staring at the computer screen, I thought, how about that! I didn't even consider the Genesee County Health Department.

Within days the BCCCNP scheduled me for a mammogram and ultrasound. They even scheduled my surgery. I also learned that not only does BCCCNP provide women with screening services if an abnormality is found; BCCCNP will help with diagnostic services. They offer free clinical breast exams, mammograms, pelvic exams and Pap smears to women 40 and older who qualify.

Better Life Through Better Health

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If the diagnostic test comes back positive for cancer, BCCCNP will enroll women in Straight Medicaid within 24-72 hours to help her cover the cost of treatment. And, BCCCNP does not stop there! BCCCNP will assist women with insurance by helping them overcome any barriers that can impede access to cancer screening services. BCCCNP also provides preventative breast and cervical education, too!

For example, did you know with regular screenings, breast cancer is more likely to be detected at an early stage, when it is most treatable? Mammography is one of the best tools available to detect breast cancer early. A mammogram can detect breast cancer two years before a lump can be felt. Yearly mammograms are recommended beginning at age 40. Clinical breast exams are also recommended once a year starting at age 20 along with monthly self-breast exams.

For more information, or to see if you qualify, please contact the Genesee County Health Department at 810-237-4545.

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