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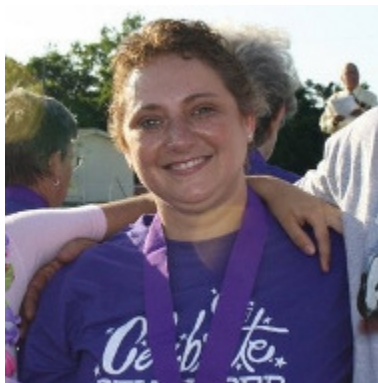
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Stories of Hope

Ovarian Cancer Survivor Finds the Support She Needs

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"I appreciate every day, every smile I see on my children's faces, every laugh I share with a friend."

When Ginger Jordan, 38, found out she had [ovarian cancer](#) she was afraid she'd never be able to return to her job at a vocational high school in Ocala, Florida.

Jordan said, "I remember thinking: 'My life is over. I'm never going back to work and I'm never going out in public. Even if I lived, in my mind, my life was already over.'"

But Jordan did go out in public, and she did go back to work, thanks to the love and care she received from family, friends, co-workers, and students.

Unexpected complication

For years, Jordan suffered with heavy, painful menstrual periods. She sought medical help, but none of the remedies her doctor prescribed worked. The mother of 2 teenagers, Jordan decided in 2010 to have a hysterectomy to take care of the problem once and for all. Jordan's doctor told her he planned to do the hysterectomy vaginally, but warned that if there were any complications, he might have to do it abdominally.

When she came to after the surgery, Jordan found that she had had abdominal surgery. The surgeon explained that when he pressed on her abdomen, he had felt something hard on one of her ovaries. Once inside, he could see cancer on both ovaries and the omentum, which is a layer of fatty tissue that covers the organs. He removed Jordan's ovaries, fallopian tubes, uterus, and omentum.

Weeding the garden

A couple of weeks after the surgery, Jordan went to see a gynecological oncologist. The doctor told Jordan she had [stage III-A ovarian cancer](#). Because the cancer had spread from the ovaries, she would have to have [chemotherapy](#).

Jordan said, "She told me it's like planting a garden. You can pull the weeds, but you still have to spray it with Roundup or you'll have weeds a couple of weeks later. So, every time I went in for my chemo treatments, I was going for my Roundup."

Jordan had 6 rounds of chemotherapy in about 6 months. She lost her hair after her first treatment and said she avoided mirrors because she hated to see herself looking "sick." She said she felt as if her life was put on hold while everyone else was living theirs.

"I had some really rough days, had to have blood transfusions, and there were days when I felt like just giving up," said Jordan. "But I'm no quitter. I held my head high and took it one day at a time."

Finding support

Jordan joined a couple of online support groups and found other patients who were going through what she was going through. She made friends with a woman from Tennessee who received the same diagnosis the same day Jordan did, and went through chemo treatment at the same time. Jordan said it helps to know someone else who is going through the same things.

Jordan's school supports the American Cancer Society's [Relay For Life](#) event. Between

treatments, she returned to work to support the team – raising funds and participating in the walk.

Before going out in public for the first time, Jordan bought a \$300 wig identical to the hair she lost. But she felt so self-conscious, she only wore it once. She bought some pretty scarves to cover her head, but was hot and uncomfortable in the Florida heat. Jordan credits her students with helping her make peace with her appearance:

“My students said, ‘Don’t hide under your hair, Miss Jordan; you’re beautiful. We love you the way you are.’ I finally pulled off the scarf and said, ‘This is who I am’ and went bald.”

Brighter days

After her chemo treatments ended, Jordan’s doctors ordered some scans. They detected no evidence of cancer. She gets a checkup every 3 months.

Jordan said, “I have my life back, but now it’s even better. I appreciate every day, every smile I see on my children’s faces, every laugh I share with a friend. It’s important to keep the faith. Brighter days are ahead.”

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