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Cancer survivor tells her story

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By: Becky Price | For the Washington County News
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Washington County -- Holly Miller was diagnosed in October 2009 with stage three ovarian cancer at the age of 32.

"I went to my gynecologist for my yearly checkup and I got the normal question. 'So, is there anything new going on that we need to discuss?' I mentioned that I had been extremely tired, like drop-dead fatigue kind of tired, and that my monthly periods had been out of whack. My period being abnormal was nothing new to me though. I had always had that issue."

Miller's gynecologist recommended a routine pelvic ultrasound saying it was "probably nothing."

But the ultrasound tech said, "there's your tumor."

"I have never been hit in the gut like that very second," said Miller.

Her doctor was there when she awoke from the surgery that would remove the tumor along with her right ovary.

"She sat tearfully by my bedside, telling me she had to remove my right ovary and fallopian tube," Miller said. "She then proceeded to explain they had sampled eight spots up into my abdomen and all eight had come back cancerous. My husband and I quickly decided on a hysterectomy. Having no children, this was one of the most difficult decisions I had to make."

According to the Mayo Clinic signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer include: Abdominal pressure, fullness, swelling or bloating; Pelvic discomfort or pain; Persistent indigestion, gas or nausea; Changes in bowel habits, such as constipation; Changes in bladder habits, including a frequent need to urinate; Loss of appetite or quickly feeling full; Increased abdominal girth or clothes fitting tighter around your waist; A persistent lack of energy; and low back pain.

Like other forms of cancer, the symptoms of ovarian cancer are often mistaken for more common illnesses.

After undergoing surgeries and surviving a nasty infection and eight months of chemotherapy, Miller is today almost two years clean.

"This Aug. 12, I will be two years clean! I do consider this my 'canceriversary'," she said.

C-TREC is a fundraiser that is dear to Miller, not only because of her own cancer fight but to further educate and support other cancer survivors.

"I became part of the C-TREC fun after my boss, Russell Johnson, started a team within our office in support of me. Our team has nearly doubled in size in two years and knowing that they are riding not only in support of me but to raise money for cancer research makes my heart happy," she said.



Credit: For the Washington County News

Holly Miller was diagnosed with stage three ovarian cancer when she was 32.


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