

THE BEST OF THE BLOGS | THE MOMENT NO WOMAN WANTS TO EXPERIENCE

'I have a lump in my breast'



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The headline for this post can make women sick to their stomach with fear. For some, it begins a long and painful journey. It's the beginning of the end for some.

And I thought this right before we left for our family trip to Pensacola.

I am not very good about checking for lumps in my breasts. It's one of those things that I always mean to do, but I forget and put it off. But, for some reason, I checked them one recent day.

And I found a lump.

I paused, my fingers frozen on my breast. Was that a lump? No, couldn't be. Go back. Check again. There

it is. A lump. It's small. But it's definitely there. I went to bed. The next morning, I checked again. A lump. In my breast. I have cancer. I'm going to have my breast removed. I'm going to die. I don't want to die. What will my family do without me? I'm getting ready to retire in a year. This is not fair. God, please don't let me die.

I called my doctor immediately. She saw me the next day.

Where is it? Show me. Does it move? Is it painful? Does your breast hurt? The sentences ran together as my heart pounded with fear. Right here. Feel it? Yes, it moves. Yes, it's painful. Yes, my breast hurts.

Apparently, it's a good thing if it moves, if it hurts. These are all signs that it may be a cyst. She reassured



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me. She smiled and told me not to worry, to go on vacation, not to worry, she was sure it was a cyst, not to worry and let it ruin my vacation. But when I got back I would have a mammogram and ultrasound just to be sure. Not to worry.

So I went on vacation.

And I was having way too much fun to worry. But once in a while, it would pop back into my mind. When my grandson cuddled in my lap in his wet bathing suit and the ocean purred in the background and my nieces and my daughter laughed, I would

think: I don't want to die; I want to see him grow up, play sports, go to the prom.

We had planned a Disney cruise for our family in two summers and I thought I don't want to die. I want to go on that Disney cruise.

I went for my mammogram and ultrasound (on Monday).

I put on makeup and fixed my hair extra cute because if you have cute hair, you can't have cancer, right?

I slipped on a darling summer sundress and strappy sandals because nobody in a darling summer sundress and strappy sandals has cancer, right?

I had the mammogram and the ultrasound, and the technician went to get the ultrasound guy. I wasn't sure if that was a good thing or a bad thing. Did everyone see

the ultrasound guy, or just those who have cancer?

He came in, smiled and shook my hand. I wondered if he did that because it was bad news. Hey you have cancer, but it's nice to meet you, or good news, you had no cancer.

He said I had no cancer.

My breasts were completely clear. I would see my grandson go to the prom because I don't have cancer. I could plan that Disney cruise because I don't have cancer. I could go home and plan dinner because I don't have cancer. And my life could go on just as it had.

If you don't check your breasts, start. Every single day. If you find any irregularity, call your doctor. Immediately.

I know you have plans for your life. Just like me.