

AYA NEWSLETTER

Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Program Newsletter

July 2018

Dory's Story

Dory Kashin remembers "complete shock" when she got her cancer diagnosis. At 29, she was established in a busy career as an event planner, enjoying living in Toronto, and in a committed relationship with her boyfriend of two years.

One day while getting dressed, she felt a lump on her breast. Dory had had a scare with basal cell carcinoma (most common form of skin cancer) and during a follow up with her doctor, she asked about the lump. To be safe, her doctor sent her for an ultrasound. Tests confirmed Dory had breast cancer and she was referred to medical oncologist Dr. Eitan Amir at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

"When I was told I had breast cancer I was in complete shock," Dory says. "I didn't really know how to react – it's kind of a numb feeling when you're told. I think when it really hit me hard was when they told me what would happen and that I'd need about nine to 12 months off. Things got real for me at that point – I was pretty career driven and I was in a good spot at my job, so being off for a year was just crazy to me."

Her treatment plan involved surgery – where she chose to have a double mastectomy – and reconstruction. From there, Dory would undergo both chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Dory says her introduction to the Adolescent & Young Adult (AYA) Oncology Program at the Princess Margaret is what helped her navigate many of the personal and professional concerns that came with her diagnosis.

Dory says she remembers one of the early discussions that came with her diagnosis was around fertility, as cancer treatments can have an impact on patients' ability to have children. Prior to starting chemotherapy and radiation, she made the decision to go ahead with fertility treatment. "My boyfriend, now my husband, and I had been dating just over two years when I got diagnosed so it sparked the conversation with him kind of early on in our relationship about, 'are we going to be together long-term? As a young person there were a lot of different factors, like having a family, that I suddenly had to think about sooner than I might have planned to."

Dory met with Laura who gave her an overview of the various resources available to help support her through her cancer journey, such as [Wellspring](#), [Gilda's Club](#), [Rethink Breast Cancer](#), & [Pink Pearl](#). "Initially my biggest concern was finances. I had never been in a position when I wasn't working, so I went to Wellspring and got some help with that. I was also concerned about my relationship with my boyfriend and what that was going to look like, so being connected to different support groups specifically for young people helped me find others who shared similar worries to mine." Dory says she even met one of her now best friends through Gilda's Club and Pink Pearl. Having that one person who has been through a similar experience and "just gets it" has been critical in her journey, she says.

Now 31, Dory has completed her treatment, but will be on hormone replacement therapy for 10 years. She is enjoying married life and she and her husband are ready to start a family. Dory says she has a different perspective on the importance of having balance in her life. "Life after active treatment was a lot harder than I thought it would be – getting back to the new normal, which I think a lot of people feel," she says. "Even having my hair now back to the spot it was before chemo - which I know is just visual – has helped because I don't look in the mirror and see cancer every second. I volunteer a lot more than I used to and I'm trying to fill my time with more positive things – finding what makes me feel good other than just my job and stressing over things. Work-life balance is really important to me now and just focusing on my health."



Dory and her now husband were forced to think about family planning early on in their relationship when Dory was diagnosed with breast cancer two years into dating.



"I'm a very organized person and like to keep busy, so I really liked that the AYA Program helped me find all of these different resources to support me."

MONTHLY COMMUNITY UPDATES

GILDA'S CLUB

24 Cecil St. Toronto, ON
www.gildasclubtoronto.org
416 214 9898



Camp in the City

This is a free day camp program that brings children together whose lives have been impacted by cancer and who are experiencing similar life challenges to foster friendships and provide a caring community that is exciting and fun!

Kids camp: July 9-13
(ages 4-8)

Tween camp: July 16-30
(ages 8-13)

WELLSPRING



4 Charles St E
Toronto, ON
www.wellspring.ca
416 961 1928

Visit online for upcoming program event dates this month: <http://bit.ly/2sGqCdy>

AYA PROGRAM UPDATES

GIVE BACK! PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Fertility Preservation Video Study

We are interested in gaining your feedback on a video we have designed to teach adolescents and young adults about female fertility preservation. This research study is completely voluntary. If you are interested in participating, you will be asked to complete a short survey before and after viewing a short video on female fertility preservation. Feedback gathered from this survey will help us to ensure that the video is effective at meeting your informational needs on fertility preservation. **For more information, email the AYA Program at aya@uhn.ca or call 416-946-4501 ex 5579.** Please note that communication via email is not absolutely secure. Please do not communicate personal sensitive information via email.

UPDATE: AYA CANCER MEET-UPS RESUME IN SEPTEMBER

Please note that AYA MEET-UPS IN JUNE, JULY & AUGUST ARE CANCELLED. The next meet-up will resume on September 27 from 6 to 7:30, Rm 726 on the 16th floor at Princess Margaret.

COMMUNITY EVENTS & UPDATES

JULY 19-23: RETREAT YOURSELF ONTARIO

Retreat Yourself is a program that brings together a small group of young adults dealing with cancer to connect and learn things that can help them live with, through, and beyond cancer. **Young Adult Cancer Canada is excited to bring you to the Ecology Retreat Centre in Mono, ON from July 19-23, 2018!** For more info and to register: <http://bit.ly/2ISVVlc>



JULY 24: #COMETOGETHER BLUE JAYS SOCIAL



Calling young adult (18 to 39 years) cancer survivors and their supporters to join Young Adult Cancer Canada for the Toronto Blue Jays VS Minnesota Twins game on July 24 at 7:07 PM. YACC will be covering your entry to the game (food/beverages not included). **If interested you must email localifetoronto@youngadultcancer.ca by Friday, July 13.** Hope to see you there!

SEPT 24-28: RETREAT YOURSELF ADVENTURE

Retreat Yourself Adventure gives young adult cancer survivors and supporters a chance to tackle survivorship issues while ziplining and hiking in Newfoundland on an Adventure that will push their limits and challenge them physically and mentally. **It will be taking place in Gros Morne, NL from Sept 24-28.** For more information and registration, visit: <http://bit.ly/2tWCYzT>



ON THE TIP OF THE TOES: TREKKING JULY 15—25, 2018

Around you between the ages of 19 to 29? If you are, sign up to attend **On the Tip of the Toes' Trekking Expedition at Mt. Assiniboine and Banff National Park from July 15 to 25, 2018.** This expedition offers 14 young adults in cancer remission to trek with other participants their age living a similar reality. To be eligible you must have been diagnosed with cancer and needed treatments and medical interventions but have ideally completed this and is currently in remission for less than 5 years. **Applications are due on June 1, 2018.** To register and learn more, visit: <http://bit.ly/219L8uq>

HELPING WOMEN WITH METASTATIC CANCER



Melanie's Way is an organization that helps women with metastatic cancer by creating a personalized experience, a "wish" that brings them and their loved ones joy and creates memories. To learn more about the program, visit www.melaniesway.com

SURVIVE & THRIVE EXPEDITIONS

Join Survive and Thrive on any of their outdoor summer expeditions including:
July 28 to August 3: Canoeing at Lake Superior
August 16 to 21: Rock climbing in the Canadian Rockies in Canmore, Alberta

Visit www.surviveandthrive.org for more information on how to apply!



SURVIVE & THRIVE
Cancer Programs