

SURVIVOR :: Cindy Lavender



Breast cancer survivor Cindy Lavender (right) with her daughter, Kristin Hudson

Cindy Lavender marked the 15th anniversary of her breast cancer diagnosis at Palmetto Health in January. She was diagnosed with stage three lobular breast cancer in 2003 and received a second opinion from Duke, but her prognosis was not good. Doctors at Duke told Cindy she would only live nine months to two years with treatment. Her breast cancer had spread to 24 of 25 lymph nodes.

Cindy was treated at Palmetto Health, and the late Isabel Law served as her “nurse navigator.” Isabel helped Cindy find resources and comfort after her treatment and surgeries. As the first nurse navigator at Palmetto Health, Isabel educated and advocated for Cindy throughout her treatment experience.

Cindy said Isabel was an “angel” and that Isabel’s encouragement and education guided her to be strong and to help others through their own journey.

-IT TAKES A VILLAGE-

“I remember saying it takes a village,” Cindy said. “Support was critical.”

Her husband, Tommy, showed her how strong they could become when faced with adversity. He led her through the most difficult times, staying up for nights studying information and reaching out to friends to start a domino effect of support, prayers and food.

Cindy continues to empower herself and other women today.

She writes notes of support and is a prayer warrior for her friends who now face cancer. Cindy also participates in Walk for Life and Famously Hot Pink Half Marathon, 5K + 10K to celebrate breast cancer survivors with her daughter, Kristin Hudson, event director for Palmetto Health Cancer Centers.

“Exercise, even if it’s walking, whenever you can,” Cindy said. “Rest when you need to, but keep moving. It takes a village, but you are stronger than you think and you can keep going forward.”

-MY “POLLYANNA” ATTITUDE-

Cindy said that her smiling and positive attitude served her well.

“My ‘Pollyanna’ attitude is probably annoying, but I was determined to have my life back,” Cindy said. “I encourage you to be your own advocate and learn as much as you can. Knowledge is powerful.”

In addition to Cindy’s inner strength, she says she’s grateful for the support of her family, friends and Palmetto Health for being there for her when she needed them the most.

“I knew that my village was there for me every step of the way. How blessed I am!” Cindy said.

Cindy has served on the Palmetto Health Cancer Centers Board and is a member of the Foundation’s Atrium Society, which helps fund state-of-the-art technology to detect breast cancer and expand cancer genetic counseling.

“I know that Palmetto Health has worked to give our community the best equipment and knowledge,” Cindy said.

On Oct. 13, 2018, thousands of people will come together to celebrate breast cancer survivors like Adrienne and lift up those who are being treated. Join us!

Register: WalkForLifeColumbia.org

Walk for Life and Famously Hot Pink Half Marathon, 5K + 10K
a Palmetto Health Foundation signature fundraising event,
benefiting Palmetto Health Breast Center

Saturday, Oct. 13, 2018
Spirit Communications Park | Columbia, S.C.
#WalkForLifeColumbia | #FamouslyHotPinkHalf

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