

## Devon, 15, acute myeloid leukemia

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	15
<b>Current Age</b>	31
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Leukemia, Acute Myeloid (AML)
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy Bone marrow or stem cell transplant using your own tissue
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Single
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?

I became a cancer survivor in November of 1989 when I was diagnosed with AML leukemia. At that time I was not close to anyone that had cancer. Mine had a 30% survival rate, but we decided early on that my chances were 50/50. I was going to live or I was going to die. I went through a year of chemotherapy and then I went into remission, catching up with school and friends. Gaining energy, growing hair, at 15 years old I just wanted to blend in. Then I relapsed. Our last treatment option was a bone marrow transplant. My only sister was not a match so we harvested my own bone marrow and treated it with high doses of chemotherapy. My family had ups and downs, and we found out how loved we were. My sister was 7 and never came home to an empty house, a grandma or aunt was always there. Neighbors made food and dropped it off at our house. People donated blood for me. Classmates had fundraisers. The financial burden is huge; we capped our one million-dollar insurance plan. My father changed jobs. My mom stayed with me at the hospital eating my food trays and sleeping in a chair next to my bed. People I did not even know sent cards and presents. Some sent money and others prayed for me. I know I would not be here today if it wasn't for friends and the kindness of strangers.

### How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?

Because I was so young I did not know if I would be able to have children until I started trying. Then it quickly became clear that cancer had taken one more thing. How did it impact my desire? It made me want a baby more than ever before.

### Can she and her husband now become parents? Why or why not?



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**Cami, 25, lymphoma**

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	25
<b>Current Age</b>	29
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	T-cell lymphoblastic lymphoma
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Radiation therapy to the abdomen (trunk including chest or back) Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Yes

**Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was married and a new mother to a 9 month old baby girl when I was diagnosed. I had to be life-flighted 3 days after my diagnosis. We had to sell our home and move in with my sister in order to cope with the enormous burden of cancer, chemotherapy and radiation. I endured 8 cycles of high dose inpatient chemotherapy, 22 days of mediastinal radiation, and then 2 years of maintenance chemotherapy. I truly missed seeing my daughter grow and develop from 9 months to 18 months of her life. I cherish her, my husband and my family more now than ever. The cancer experience has defined who I am and my husband and I have grown more and developed more character in the last 4 four years than all the previous years of our lives. I am truly grateful that the trials in my life have brought the blessings in my life to the forefront.

**How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

I always knew I wanted more children after my daughter, but I never thought my ability to be a mother again would be threatened. The thought that I might not be able to conceive again made me want another child even more.

**Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

I was started on chemotherapy 4 days after my diagnosis in order to save my life. I had a life threatening pericardial effusion so I was started on chemotherapy the day after I was life-flighted to the hospital; so while the chemo was dripping into me, my doctor along with a fellow came into my room and told me that the chemotherapy would make me sterile. That was basically it; I was told I couldn't have more children.

**After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings. I**

was crushed. The ultimate affirmation of womanhood is being able to carry a child; and my whole plan for life was flipped upside down. As soon as I started feeling better all I could think about was if we could have another child.

**Can she and her husband now become parents? Why or why not?**



## Diane, 30, breast cancer

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	30
<b>Current Age</b>	34
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Breast Cancer
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Yes

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

When I was diagnosed, I had a newborn baby. I was trying to adjust to motherhood and nursing when I found out I had a tumor centimeters from where my baby was taking nourishment. It changed my life forever because I never felt comfortable enjoying my daughter's early life. I thought I was dying and thought I would miss everything.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

At first, I assumed we would adopt because we were told not to consider a future pregnancy by the surgeon. Later, my oncologist said we could discuss future pregnancy in a couple of years. I felt robbed.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

My oncologist told me the A/C chemotherapy I needed offered me a 30% chance of losing my fertility. I was not worried because the younger you are, the less likely your fertility would be compromised. Since I was only thirty, I felt less afraid of becoming infertile. I would not have forgone the treatment because my daughter was only 4 months old and needed me.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings. I**

think having cancer, enduring surgeries, and suffering through chemotherapy is enough. Cancer makes a person feel different. Having children is a normal part of life and being denied that, in addition to the treatment, could be just too much for some to bear.

### **Can Diane and her husband become parents again? Why or why not?**



## Jacira, 18, neuroblastoma

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	18
<b>Current Age</b>	19
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Neuroblastoma
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Needed</b>	Radiation therapy to the abdomen (trunk including chest or back) Radiation therapy to the pelvic area (below the navel, above the thighs) Chemotherapy Bone marrow or stem cell transplant using your own tissue
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was in high school when I was diagnosed and I had been with my boyfriend for 2 years. He stayed by my side through it all and just before my treatments he proposed to me of course I said yes. We are still together today and we are trying to get a family started.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

The future?? I am ready now.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

I actually couldn't speak about it very much with anyone because all I would do is cry. Not being able to have children has affected my life more than the cancer itself has.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings. I**

was devastated and I still am. Now that I want to try to start a family I don't know where to start.

### **What can Jacira do to preserve her fertility?**



## Claudia, 36, colorectal cancer

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	36
<b>Current Age</b>	36
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Colorectal Cancer
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Needed</b>	Surgery to remove pelvic organ (bowel) Radiation therapy to the pelvic area (below the navel, above the thighs) Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

My husband and I were married approximately five years when I was diagnosed with colorectal cancer. We had been contemplating starting a family. Because the tumor in my rectum at time of diagnosis is large, the doctors want to rush forward with neo-adjuvant (pre-surgical) chemo and radiation (to pelvic area). The radiation will undoubtedly affect the possibility of my conceiving or bearing any children. My husband and I are currently consulting with a gynecological oncologist about what we can do to preserve my fertility.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

The topic of fertility was not raised by my doctors - perhaps because of their sense of urgency in wanting to get my treatment started. I brought up the subject - because it was important to me and I never entertained the thought that my cancer might end my life.

### **What options for fertility preservation are available to Claudia?**



**Patrick, 31, acute myeloid leukemia**

<b>Gender</b>	M
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	31
<b>Current Age</b>	36
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Leukemia, Acute Myeloid (AML)
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy Bone marrow or stem cell transplant using tissue from a donor
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

**Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was married for 8 years and was well within my career. I was very healthy and did not even have a general doctor; I was Superman! When I was diagnosed, I was 31 years old and not a parent. My treatment started within the first 24 hours of diagnosis. The last thing on my mind was fertility.

**How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

After I was nuked we started to think about the future as parents and the future looked grim due to the amount of chemo I had undergone. After my 2 induction treatments of chemo and a failure to get into a remission, I was told the only hope for survival was a stem cell transplant from my brother. It was just before my bone marrow transplant that I had a consult with a fertility specialist.

**What advice did Patrick likely receive about his fertility options and what he could do to become a parent?**



## Thomas, 34, testicular cancer

<b>Gender</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Current Age</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	<b>Testicular</b>
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	<b>Post-Treatment</b>
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	<b>Surgery to remove pelvic organ (testicle)</b> <b>Chemotherapy</b>
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	<b>Married/Partnered</b>
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	<b>Married/Partnered</b>
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I had already graduated from college, and started my career three months prior to my diagnosis. I have learned that we all need to get involved in cancer issues generally and cancer related fertility issues specifically. My diagnosis changed my life from the aspect that I was no longer just a person, but I was a statistic. I was a father before cancer and would urgently like to provide my son with a sibling. The worst part of my diagnosis and treatment was watching my son (who turned two during my chemo) and wife taking care of me when I was so used to taking care of them. Since that time I have vowed to be a voice for cancer survivors. I am saddened that so many people not only have to go through cancer and the treatments required just to overcome this disease and be able to live, but also have to worry about whether or not they will ever become parents.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

My wife and I were getting ready to try to have a second child the month I was diagnosed. We put that on hold and I banked sperm prior to my chemo thinking it would be there if we needed it. When it came time to consider using the sample, I found that there was no sperm in the sample to begin with. I have since found out that testicular cancer patients can be infertile up to two years prior to diagnosis. Banking sperm isn't always a sure fire way of ensuring you will father more children in the future. My oncologist told me that I still had one healthy testicle.

### **What options are available to Thomas to enable him to become a parent again?**



## **Maria, 16, acute lymphocytic leukemia**

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	16
<b>Current Age</b>	16
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Leukemia, Acute Lymphocytic (ALL)
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Radiation therapy to the brain Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Single
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Single
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was a sophomore in high school; diagnosed three days before my 16th birthday. As with all cancer diagnosis, my life forever changed. Friends dropped away and I learned to survive with my own strength.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

Since I am only 16, being a parent never entered my mind. I have never even had a boyfriend at this point in my life! However, I can see how parenting can become a big issue now as I have learned about the life altering effects chemo will have on my body/reproductive system!! My parents really want me to think about my future as a mother. We are discussing what to do right now. I need to make a decision within the next month, or my chances at future fertility could be gone.

### **What options are available to Maria as a teen-ager to ensure her future fertility?**



## Rachel, 24, sarcoma

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	24
<b>Current Age</b>	24
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Sarcoma
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Surgery to remove pelvic organ (bowel) Radiation therapy to the pelvic area (below the navel, above the thighs)
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Single
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I am 24 years old, working full time and single. I was very surprised to hear my diagnosis, especially because a friend of mine had been diagnosed a few months earlier with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. My diagnosis further reinforced what I always knew to be most important - health, love, family, friends. It will also add daily health issues as a result of surgeries and radiation. Most importantly, faced with infertility issues, it brought up more anger that I am already facing something challenging, and now I have to think through infertility issues.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

My biggest dream in life is to be a mother. It was very hard to hear at the age of 28 and being single that due to my treatment, I may be faced with infertility issues. However, after much thought, I also came to the realization that for me, the most important thing was to BE a mother - and that one way or another I could make that happen. I hoped it would be my own biological child, but regardless, I would be a mother. At the time of diagnosis many of my friends had or were having children, and that was especially hard for me to see.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

My radiation oncologist shared with me her concerns about the radiation hitting my fertility organs. I then spoke with a Reproductive Endocrinologist. She told me that I had a few options. The only problem was I didn't have a boyfriend and wasn't ready to choose the father of my baby. I need to start my radiation in a few weeks and the thought of choosing the father of my child is very overwhelming to me. I only have a few days to decide what to do based on my cycle, and I am thinking "how will I ever make this decision." After much thought and prayer, I realized that one way or another I would be a parent.

### **What options does Rachel have to become a parent in the future?**



**Lindsay, 22, tongue cancer**

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	22
<b>Current Age</b>	23
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Tongue
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Single
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

**Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was a recent college graduate, aggressively pursuing my career and hoping to meet prince charming. Cancer changed everything - it stopped me in my tracks. I was forever different, and in some ways for the better.

**How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

If anything, cancer made my desire to become a parent stronger. Cancer made me stop and think about what was really important in life. For me, central to a successful, happy life was children. I didn't just want to survive. I wanted to survive - and go on to achieve my goals and dreams, including having a family.

**Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

My oncologist was not forthcoming with this information until I asked about it. Luckily, I was told I had enough time to do something about it. However, I was irate that more information was not readily available about cancer-related infertility and that my doctor had no idea what to tell me or where to refer me. For me, the prospect of infertility was more devastating than cancer. Cancer was treatable, infertility was permanent.

**What can Lindsay do to insure her ability to become a parent?**



## Scott, 23, acute lymphocytic leukemia

<b>Gender</b>	M
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	23
<b>Current Age</b>	27
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Leukemia, Acute Lymphocytic (ALL)
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Radiation therapy to the brain Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was 23 and in the best shape of my life. I was a professional ski bum in California and was skiing every day. I came back from a multi-day backcountry ski trip and felt like I had cold but the cold would not go away. Then my neck started to swell up with lumps in my lymph nodes. Had the biopsy collected from my neck and what do you know I had ALL. Moved home to southern California and was treated at a local cancer center. Two years after remission I moved to Colorado to attend college and received a BS in Environmental Biology. Cancer was a wake-up call for me and made me realize how important life is. I was the first in my family to receive a college degree in Science. I now work as an Environmental Scientist in Colorado and ski, bike, and fish as much as I can.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

Being 23, I was not really thinking about the future of being a parent. But I knew that someday I would like to be a father.

### **What advice was Scott offered to insure he could become a parent in the future?**



## Karina, 22, smooth muscle tumor of uncertain malignant potential

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	22
<b>Current Age</b>	26
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Smooth Muscle Tumor of Uncertain Malignant Potential
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Surgery to remove pelvic organ (bowel, uterus)
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?

I found out I had a large tumor in my abdomen less than a month after getting engaged. I was only 22 and I had been on birth control up to that point. I wasn't ready to have children, but I also wasn't ready to lose the option either. After the tumor was removed and biopsied I had to make the very difficult decision to have a hysterectomy, due to the tumor being extremely rare and unpredictable. Trust me, that's not the type of decision you want to make when you are trying to plan a wedding and plan a future with your soon-to-be husband.

### How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?

Survival is important, but so is quality of life. I always felt the calling to be a mother and now I struggle on a daily basis with not being able to carry a child. It solidified the fact that I definitely wanted to be a mother. You really don't realize how important something is to you until you are forced to part with it. Fertility is something a lot of women take for granted. But the truth is, it's not something we're guaranteed.

### Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?

At first when the tumor was removed, before we realized exactly what it was, I was told I may have trouble conceiving in the future. I was going to see a fertility specialist. But when the diagnosis came back and I had to decide on the hysterectomy, I asked an entire panel of doctors whether I could have a child, and then have the surgery during a C-section, but they were against it. The nature of my tumor was uncertain and potentially deadly if it came back. It would be unfair to have a child, only to find myself with an untreatable cancer and leave it without a mother.

### What options does Karina have to become a mother?



## Latisha, 29, leiomyosarcoma

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	29
<b>Current Age</b>	30
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Leiomyosarcoma
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was married, with no children and no concrete plans about starting a family at that time. I was at the beginning of a law career -- finally settled at a great firm, doing interesting work and very focused on getting established there.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

The prospect of the loss of my ability to have children with my husband, whom I had been with for many years, was very upsetting. We had spent the previous few years in graduate school and building for the future, but having a family together was always a future goal.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

I was in the hospital preparing for, having and recovering from extensive surgery for about 10 days. Very close to the time that I was to be discharged, an oncology fellow asked my husband and I if we understood that the chemotherapy that we had been discussing and planning on might leave me infertile. His remarks were very casual, and there was definitely an assumption that this was a side effect that was obvious or should have somehow been anticipated by us.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings.**

The whole experience was already so overwhelming. My cancer was in my stomach and I was only 29, it NEVER occurred to me that if I was to survive that I might not be able to have children. It was something that totally came out of left-field, even though I had been meeting with doctors, psychologists, nurses, nutritionists, etc. for many days. The prospect of making it through and then not having children to share that with seemed a bit like a death -- a cut-off from the future. My husband and I needed to move into immediate action upon learning that we had options for preserving my fertility. We actually felt so lucky that I had a window of opportunity post-surgery, the financial means and the knowledge to protect our future ability to have a family.

### **What options did Latisha and her husband have to become parents?**



## Julie 15, rhabdomyosarcoma

### Gender

Age at Diagnosis 15

Current Age 22

Primary Cancer Rhabdomyosarcoma

Current Treatment Stage Post-Treatment

Cancer Treatments Received Radiation therapy to the abdomen (trunk including chest or back)  
Chemotherapy  
Bone marrow or stem cell transplant using your own tissue

Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis Single

Current Relationship Status Single

Parent at Time of Diagnosis No

### Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?

I was entering my sophomore year in high school at the time I was diagnosed, right before my 16th birthday. It is hard to articulate how it has impacted my life at such a critical stage of development - some of the effects must be so subtle that it is hard for me to recognize them or to tease them out from everything else that I have experienced over the course of my life. I know that in some ways it has made me a more cautious person, mostly in ways related to my own health and well-being. I notice any small change in my body and do worry (though I try not to do it excessively) about many things: recurrence, secondary cancers, my splenectomy and immune system, etc. However, there are many things I probably would not have been motivated to do as quickly, or at all, had it not been for the constant voice in my head - "just do it, you've had cancer, you know better than anybody that you only live once"! And I definitely would not have worked in the cancer advocacy field or probably be attending the same graduate program had it not been for my cancer experience. So it really is a mixed bag - a lot of health and social challenges, coupled with a heightened ability to appreciate life and recognize/take advantage of opportunities.

### How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?

Honestly, at the time, I didn't really think about it very much. As a teenager, I was more concerned about boys and losing my hair. I was not crazy about kids at that point in my life, and I remember telling myself that "that's okay; I didn't really want kids anyway". That was obviously a good defense mechanism at the time and it took a while to start acknowledging to myself what a profound loss it is. I spent some time convincing myself that I didn't want children, because I thought that the option wasn't available to me. I also deliberately avoided looking into the future, or entertaining the crazy notion that I would be alive to have children one day. I became an expert at living for the present and denying that I might have to confront my own future and the health implications of cancer treatment at some point. I do of course want children, and as my outlook eventually expanded over the years it came as a huge relief that it is a possibility after all!

### What fertility options were available for Julie prior to her cancer treatment?



## Adrian, 40, carcinoid tumor

<b>Gender</b>	M
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	40
<b>Current Age</b>	45
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Carcinoid Tumor
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment, possible chemo
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Surgery to remove tumor
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was expecting my first child (a girl) and getting ready for a wonderful baby shower. My poor wife was thrown into a spin at 7 months. We had to face so many issues at the best time of our lives. My personal experience and the fact that I worked for a Specialty Pharmacy which Focused on Fertility helped me immensely. As I helped other parents while we were going thru similar situations I asked myself where would these people turn to? How could they know to ask questions? You now know what it is like to face your mortality and how important it is to have family.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

Well as you can see it was a one, two punch so it impacted me immediately. When I was diagnosed I remember looking at a Parenting magazine afraid would I even be around to be one.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

Well I was already in the fertility field so I had a better idea than most as I attend most of the conferences.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings.**

It really brings your mortality into perspective. We're not going to live forever and we should treasure our children and our families. I am now looking into a genetic study on us and whether we should be concerned to have another child. Don't let someone tell you what to do. You must immerse yourself in what is going on. Don't fear the unknown, embrace it and act like you're going back to school, because you are.

### **What can Adrian do to insure he can have another child?**



## Giovanni, 30, germ cell tumor

<b>Gender</b>	M
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	30
<b>Current Age</b>	39
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Germ Cell Tumor
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Post-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I had been dating my girlfriend of 3 years. We were living in different cities until about 7 weeks prior to my diagnosis. I had finished attending school full time while working full time; that was my schedule for 3 years and I was very run down. My girlfriend and I were elated to be in the same city and excited about my newfound free time. The diagnosis changed my life by challenging my entire world view. Previously I believed that life was all good, that suffering was something people brought on themselves. Following treatment I went into a depression and had to reconstruct my entire world view to make sense of everything and to be able to move forward in life.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

Like everyone, it was my assumption that I would be a parent. Our first visit to the oncologist let us know that this assumption would be challenged. Parenthood was not my priority at the time; however, as I was more concerned about this very rare and aggressive cancer I had to fight first.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings. I**

knew that I'd be a parent in one way or another. It was not my main focus at the time because my cancer was very rare and very aggressive, requiring me to be treated with very aggressive chemotherapy following a very invasive surgery. It wasn't until my girlfriend and I decided to be married, some 3 years later, that we returned to the issue of fertility. Loss of fertility does not mean loss of ability to become a parent. Investigate reproductive technology and adoption as options. And do not assume that because you are not fertile today, you will never be fertile unless there is specific medical reason for it (like, you no longer have the organs required). Time is a great healer.

### **What options were available to Giovanni and his wife to enable them to become parents?**



## Swetha, 29, breast cancer

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	29
<b>Current Age</b>	34
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Breast Cancer
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Pre-Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Waiting to start Chemotherapy
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Long-term relationship
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	No

### **Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was working in a professional job and was five months into a dating relationship. My treatment had implications on both. I underwent chemotherapy which had implications on my fertility. I have been told by my team of doctors that I carry the BRCA1 mutation.

### **How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

It did not change my desire, only my ability.

### **Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

My 5-month boyfriend and I were not ready to discuss children. Also, fertility preservation could have delayed my treatment by several months, which could be dangerous due to the aggressiveness of my tumor.

### **After learning about the possibility of cancer-related infertility, please share your thoughts and feelings. I**

became depressed but determined to keep a positive attitude, knowing that I would do whatever I needed to do to have children, assuming I survived the cancer. I would advise other survivors to strongly consider fertility preservation and talk to a lot of doctors because there still is not a lot of data on what impact chemotherapy has on young women's reproductive systems.

### **What options does Swetha have to preserve her fertility for the future?**



**Katie, Head and neck cancer, 30**

<b>Gender</b>	F
<b>Age at Diagnosis</b>	30
<b>Current Age</b>	30
<b>Primary Cancer</b>	Head and Neck Cancer
<b>Current Treatment Stage</b>	Waiting to start Treatment
<b>Cancer Treatments Received</b>	Radiation therapy to the brain
<b>Relationship Status at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Current Relationship Status</b>	Married/Partnered
<b>Parent at Time of Diagnosis</b>	Yes

**Where were you in life when you were diagnosed and how did it change your life?**

I was 7 months pregnant with our second child when I was diagnosed with a large tumor in my head. I had the first of many surgeries to remove the tumor when my son was 1 month old. I am sad that with all the treatments/recoveries that I missed out on a lot of his infant-hood, but I plan on being here for the rest of his life! How does cancer change your life? Well, that is a question that many people write novels on just to answer that question. Nothing brings you closer to your faith and God then becoming so completely dependent upon Him. Like any cancer survivor, every day is a celebration of life, and I have my 2 little kids to help remind me when I forget. So often cancer issues are focused on geriatric issues, although we may be in a minority, we have much different issues when we are diagnosed with cancer at a young age. My husband and I agreed that we both wanted more children beyond our current two, but we quickly learned that might not be a possibility.

**How did it impact your desire to become a parent in the future?**

At the time I was just so concerned about the baby I was carrying and being alive for him and my daughter- I couldn't think much beyond that. We felt at first like we should be content to be in remission- were we just being greedy to ask for more? Well, I hope and pray not!!

**Did someone speak to you about the possible effects of cancer treatments on your fertility?**

Yes, a little. I was told by one doctor that there would be no effect, while another (my neurosurgeon) listed all the possible outcomes; from losing the ability to speak, losing function of one side of my body to losing my fertility.

**What fertility preservation options are available for Katie?**

