

Stories Of Survival (Part 1)

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Crystal Reidy, a 37-year-old community affairs worker for Maricopa County, first discovered a lump while she was breastfeeding her 6-month-old baby in early 2012. A mammogram later confirmed her fears: she had breast



cancer.

The mother of three had been living a very active lifestyle, even visiting Iraq for the Army National Guard where she also works as a print journalist. She visited the Banner M.D. Anderson Cancer Center where she met medical oncologist Dr. Edgardo Rivera. "I loved that my doctor gave me options," she says. "Our relationship felt personalized, which helped me a lot." Reidy endured chemotherapy before her lumpectomy and reconstructive surgery. She remembered how Dr. Rivera told her to "do her best," and she took those simple but powerful words to heart. Her plastic surgeon, Dr. Randall Craft, was able to use her remaining breast tissue to rearrange the shape of her breasts after the cancer cells were removed. "Crystal is the type of patient who lights up the room with her personality," Dr. Craft says. "Her outlook was positive the entire time." Now, having gone through radiation post-surgery, Reidy feels like she is back to where she was before the cancer started. "Everything that was possible two years ago feels possible now, and I am so thankful for that," she says. Reidy continues to progress at work and focuses on her children, her University of Phoenix dissertation and her health. "Everyone's journey is different," she says. "Do what's best for you; for me, that was staying active and having people in my life, including my doctor, who allowed me to go through my journey as I wanted to."

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