



Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group



Newsletter December 2017 Issue 222

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2017 Christmas Celebration

Please join us on **December 13th** at **St. Michael's Church** for our annual Christmas celebration. All the fun begins at **6pm**. We don't have a formal meeting just an evening to enjoy each others company and the season. The **cost is \$20** per person and is open to survivors and patients only. If you would like to participate in the Secret Santa gift exchange bring a wrapped gift valued up to \$15.00.

We also encourage you to bring a nonperishable food item that will be donated to the Children's Aid Society Youth Cupboard. If you would like to attend but don't have the money to come, please let us know. We have a fund to help with that. To RSVP contact 475-0025 or bcsg@tbaytel.net.

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Thunder Bay
Breast Cancer
Survivors Forum



Next Meetings

December 13th &
January 10th, 2018

6:00 pm at
St. Michael's Church
on Red River Road

Friendly Reminder

Just a friendly reminder that the January support group meeting will take place **Wednesday, January 10th, 2018** at St. Michael's Church starting at 7:00 PM. There will also be no newsletter for January.

Living Your Best Life

This list is from Jacqui Thompson-Dodd's opening keynote speech "Living your Best Life" at the Living Well Beyond Breast Cancer conference held in Memphis Tennessee October 6-8, 2017.

She begins by saying: "many people describe breast cancer as engulfing every aspect of your life, and long for the time when they can get back to "normal". But how? It can be stressful trying to restore life as it was "BC"- before cancer. Living your best life means letting go of the unrealistic expectations of "getting back to normal" and building a way forward that accommodates the changes cancer brings."

Jacqui's List:

1. Love yourself
2. Self care is not selfish
3. It's OK to say No
4. Beware of OPS "other people's stuff"
5. Transform your thoughts. Transform your life
6. Laughter is strong medicine
7. Some days will be hard- be kind to your self
8. Fitness starts with what you eat
9. Find new ways to get moving
10. Forget the dishes and go to bed



More about Jacqui's speech and the 2017 Living Beyond Breast Cancer Conference check out their website: <http://www.lbbc.org/conferences/2017-living-beyond-breast-cancer-conference/session-resources>

Recruitment Drive - We Need You!

The Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group Steering Committee meets once a month to plan events such as the Christmas party and wind up, and to plan the meetings including topics and arranging for guest speakers. We also work with our newsletter coordinator to pull together information for the monthly newsletter. Our steering committee is now a group of 4 and we need 7 to share in the planning and organizing. At this time we are reaching out to members who feel they may be in a position to give back to others by joining the committee in order for us to be able to continue to bring these opportunities forward. If you are interested please let us know by emailing bcsg@tbaytel.net



YSC Summit - February 23-25, 2018 in Orlando, Florida

Connect with empathetic friends—new and old—who understand what you're going through.

Discuss your unique questions and concerns – like dating after diagnosis, navigating your career or managing fear and anxiety – with survivors, co-survivors, and healthcare providers. Learn about the latest research and treatment updates from leading oncologists and researchers.

Join us at the 2018 YSC National Summit for three days of fun, empowerment, workshops, support, and mingling with people who get it.

Who Should Attend?

- Young women diagnosed with breast cancer
- Young women living with metastatic breast cancer
- Co-survivors* and friends
- Healthcare providers
- Patient advocate leaders
- *If you offer the crucial emotional, physical, financial or spiritual support that a young woman needs, you are a co-survivor.

What's in Store?

Check out the schedule and FAQ pages for the latest info. This year we are offering a half-day retreat for attendees living with metastatic breast cancer.

In addition to the informative conversations, you'll have a chance to get to know your fellow attendees in a fun and relaxed environment when you join us for the dinner & dance party and multiple coffee breaks throughout the weekend. So make sure you bring your party shoes and we'll see you in Orlando!

How Much Does it Cost to Attend?

Register by January 1, 2018 and pay an early bird rate of just \$145. Registration fees are \$175 after January 1st through February 16th and \$200 onsite.

For more details go to <https://summit.youngsurvival.org/>

Improving your body image after your mastectomy

Source

Struggling with body image is an age-old tradition for women. We can be so critical in how we see ourselves. Too fat, too skinny, bad skin, bad hair...every woman has one aspect of their bodies that they do not like or wish they could change. Add getting breast cancer to the mix and all those insecurities get amplified. Our breasts are such an important part of our identity, even if they are the focus of our insecurities. They represent femininity, sexuality, beauty and motherhood. So, it's no wonder that about half of women with breast cancer struggle with body image after mastectomy¹.

A mastectomy - the life-saving yet cruelly disfiguring surgery many women undergo to stop the growth of cancer in their breasts - can leave you feeling like less of a woman. "I don't feel nearly as feminine as I felt before," says Naomi Pickersgill, a breast cancer patient living in Stratford, Ontario who had a mastectomy in 2015. (Read her story [here](#).)

These feelings are hard to avoid and completely understandable. You have a hard time fitting into your old clothes, or buying new clothes – and don't even mention the word bikini! It can affect your sex life and your confidence. Accepting your new body will take time but it can happen.

Using a breast prosthesis or having reconstruction can often improve self-image. You're better able to fit into your clothes and it can help you feel more like your old self. But these options aren't perfect solutions. A prosthetic or reconstructed breast will never live up to the real thing so many women still struggle with their body image.

Talk it out. Share how you're feeling with your circle of support. Find someone who will be supportive and understanding of your feelings and insecurities. This might be your partner, a friend, a relative or someone at your support group who's faced similar struggles. If you're finding that you're having difficulty connecting with someone or are starting to experience feelings of depression or anxiety, ask your doctor for a referral to a counsellor.

Face it head on. Research suggests that if you look at your scars soon after your surgery, you may cope better and be more accepting of your body². But looking at your scar for the first time can be emotional and every woman is different. Don't feel pressured and choose a time when you are ready.

Fake it till you make it. Even if you don't feel confident about how you look try to have a positive outlook. When you're getting ready for the day, tell yourself you look good, even if you don't believe it. Replace a critical thought with a positive affirmation: "I look great today!" It sounds trivial but experts say that it can help.

Take your time. It won't happen overnight but give yourself the time and space to accept your new body. Your scars will begin to fade and become less visible. And gradually regaining your regular schedule of work, leisure and exercise will help to make you feel more like yourself.

As a society, we are becoming more open to discussing our body image and challenging the perception of an ideal body. Reminding yourself that you are not the only person feeling this way can help you feel a little less alone.

Cauliflower Casserole with Mixed-Seed Crust

Source

The cheesy-seedy crust that tops this healthy cauliflower casserole recipe evokes everything bagels. Serve for the holidays or as a hearty side dish with roast chicken.

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon unsalted butter, plus 4 tablespoons, divided
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 cups whole milk
- 2 large heads cauliflower, cored and cut into 2-inch florets
- ¼ cup finely sliced chives, divided
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 1/3 cups finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (3 ounces)
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 1½ teaspoons caraway seeds

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Coat a 3-quart broiler-safe casserole dish with 1 teaspoon butter.
2. Melt the remaining 4 tablespoons butter in a large pot over medium-high heat. When the foaming subsides, reduce heat to medium; add garlic, ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add flour, whisk to combine, and cook, stirring constantly, until no flour smell remains, 2 to 3 minutes. Gradually whisk in milk, whisking between additions, until the mixture is smooth. Bring to a lively simmer. Cook, whisking, until thickened, about 2 minutes. Add cauliflower, 3 tablespoons chives and cayenne (if using), folding to combine. Transfer to the prepared pan and smooth the top.
3. Bake until the cauliflower is tender and beginning to brown, 35 to 40 minutes. Remove from oven.
4. Position a rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler to high.
5. Combine cheese, sesame seeds, poppy seeds, caraway seeds and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl. Sprinkle on the casserole. Broil until the cheese is melted and the top is golden, about 2 minutes. Serve topped with the remaining 1 tablespoon chives.

Butterfly Story Fund

The Butterfly Story fund is now accepting applications! Looking for ways to thrive as a survivor but need a little financial help? The Butterfly Story is here for you! Want to attend the Luncheon of Hope, We-Did exercise classes or another great event? Fill out an application and it will be considered for funding. It can be challenging to ask for help sometimes, but please know the applications are kept in the strictest confidence! If interested, please check out the application form [here](#) OR email thebutterflystory@hotmail.com OR contact Michelle or Shannon to discuss privately.

Upcoming

Christmas Party

December 13th

St. Michael's Church at 6:00 PM

YSC Summit

February 23-25, 2018

Orlando, Florida



Network News

Don't forget to check out the Spring 2017 edition of Outreach News brought to you by the Canadian Breast Cancer Network.

Click here to check it out!

Next Meeting
December 13th &
January 10th, 2018
6:00 pm at
St. Michael's Church
on Red River Road

For Support and Encouragement



As fellow support group members, we would be happy to hear from you.

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(807) 475-0025 (Voice Mail)
bcsg@tbaytel.net
breastcancersupporttb.com

Sharing the Journey

Along your journey you have found support and encouragement from our support group. If you have two hours to spare a month, we encourage you to consider becoming a Steering Committee Member. The wisdom gained from your experience can help us strengthen the group and will help to ensure the continued success of the Breast Cancer Support Group. Call a Steering Committee Member at 475-0025 to learn how you can take part or email bcsg@tbaytel.net.



www.cbcn.ca



**Breast & Hereditary
Cancer Support**

www.willow.org
1-888-778-3100



**Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Foundation**

The Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group gratefully acknowledges the funding support of the Northern Cancer Fund of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation. All gifts made to the Foundation stay in Northwestern Ontario to benefit its residents.

healthsciencesfoundation.ca



Supportive Care
(807) 684-7310
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(877) 696-7223
No Referral Needed