
GIRLFRIEND'S GUIDE TO NAVIGATING BREAST CANCER FROM THE TUMAN BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION



You've been diagnosed, now what?

You had your scans, you got your diagnosis, what's next? First of all, just BREATHE. You are not alone in this, you are NEVER alone in this. Whether you have a support system in place or not, there are so many resources to ensure that you have others walking alongside you.

This is a **cliff's notes** version of what to expect and steps to take after your initial diagnosis. This is based on experiences from other fighters who have walked the walk. This is **NOT** meant to serve as medical advice, but to help guide you along your first steps in this journey. Please consult your medical professional before taking any steps!

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Diagnosis

Your official diagnosis will range from:

- Invasive Ductal Carcinoma
- Non-Invasive Ductal Carcinoma
- Lobular Carcinoma
- Carcinoma In Situ

You may also have a diagnosis that defines the type of tumor present and if there are hormonal receptors present:

- Triple Positive (HER2+, ER+, PR+)
- HER2-, ER+, PR+
- Triple Negative (HER2-, ER-, PR-)



Medical Team

You will have a FULL medical team that will be in charge of your treatment plan.

Breast Surgeon

The first member of the team you will meet with is a Breast Surgeon. Your Breast Surgeon represents the first line of defense for most breast cancer patients. She will have your results from your scans so that she knows your exact diagnosis and how to approach your treatment plan.

Your Breast Surgeon will give you surgery options – [Mastectomy](#) (single or double) or [Lumpectomy](#). If you choose mastectomy, you will also start thinking about your [reconstruction options](#) (remain flat, have reconstruction with implants or have DIEP flap reconstruction). She will refer you to a plastic surgeon whom she trusts and works with intensely on her cases.

Typically, your surgeon will be the one to refer you to an Oncologist as well IF it is needed and based on your diagnosis.

Plastic Surgeon

Your Plastic Surgeon would be your next team member. Your Plastic Surgeon will help you weigh the options for reconstruction which is all very patient specific.

This is where you will get detailed information on Reconstruction with implants OR Flap Reconstruction. Each option is very personal and you will have to be vocal and choose the option that is right for YOU!

Oncologist

As mentioned, you could also be referred to an Oncologist. Your Oncologist will be the one in charge of your chemotherapy treatment plan. There are SEVERAL types of chemotherapies for Breast Cancer and are dependent upon the initial diagnosis of your tumor and can last from 3-6 months or more. Your Oncologist will serve as your

Breast Cancer Medical Team

Breast Surgeon

Plastic Surgeon

Oncologist

Radiation Oncologist

medical provider during your entire journey through chemotherapy and will manage not just your chemo treatment but any other illnesses that arise.

You will have VERY close contact with your Oncologist as well as their nurse. Their nurse will be your first line with any issues that come up and a great person to remain in contact with.

Radiation Oncologist

Your Radiation Oncologist is one of your final team members. If it is determined that you need radiation after surgery, your Radiation Oncologist will assess and prescribe your treatment plan. You will meet with them to determine the number of treatments and how to reduce side effects. Your Radiation Oncologist will meet with you prior to radiation therapy, check in with you during, and again once you have finished.

Sequence of Treatments

There are different sequences of treatment which all depend on different variables such as stage, grade, hormone receptor, oncotype, etc. So just as a synopsis here are some potential plans:

Breast Surgeon⇒Surgery⇒Hormone Blockers

Breast Surgeon⇒Surgery⇒Radiation⇒Hormone Blockers

Breast Surgeon⇒Surgery⇒Chemotherapy⇒Radiation

Breast Surgeon⇒Surgery⇒Chemotherapy⇒Radiation⇒Hormone Blockers

Breast Surgeon⇒Chemotherapy⇒Surgery⇒Radiation⇒Hormone Blockers

The hospital where your Breast Surgeon is affiliated should assign you a Nurse Navigator to help you navigate the process of care. If you are not assigned one, make sure to ask!! They can be EXTREMELY helpful in the journey.

“Nurses are amazing and your first line for any issues that come up.”

**– NATALIE TUMAN,
SURVIVOR & FOUNDER OF
TUMAN BREAST CANCER
FOUNDATION**

Here at the Tuman Breast Cancer Foundation, we want to support you through your breast cancer journey. This support comes in a lot of forms, but our most important is prayer. We are lifting you up and praying for your healing. Beyond that we are here for information, tangible support and more. We sincerely hope that we can help in some small way during your journey.

“Perhaps you were born for such a time as this.” Esther 4:14

*Always in my prayers,
Natalie Tuman*