

Survival and Hope Life After Cancer



Kimmy Lefler Coffel, 39
DIAGNOSIS: CERVICAL CANCER

The Basics:

- **Resides:** Apple Valley
- **Occupation:** Proctor for Helendale Unified School District.
- **Family:** Three children – Cole Lester, 13; daughter Taylor Coffel 11; son Judge Coffel, 10
- **Hobbies:** Volleyball coach for TMS Middle School in Helendale, former dance instructor.
- **Philosophy:** I follow my gut, my intuition. The Lord gave us an intuition to follow.

Kimmy Lefler Coffel says her cervical cancer diagnosis “was pretty horrific.”

“I had a couple of months where my period was kind of rough. I was thinking ‘my lower back hurts really bad, why are my legs hurting?’ I just took another Ibuprofen.”

“I started to get sick and I was, ‘Ugh, I never get sick, I never get sick.’ But I literally couldn’t stop throwing up.”

Coffel underwent a series of tests at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

“Loma Linda said, “Not only do you have cancer, but you are pregnant.”

“The pregnancy is what made me get so sick so fast. The baby wasn’t receiving what he was supposed to be receiving because my body couldn’t process the baby and the cancer at the same time.”

“I had multiple appointments where they were doing biopsies – their protocol included two more major biopsies. When those results came back, I was 20 weeks pregnant.”

Coffel was told she had to have an emergency hysterectomy in order to save her life.

“I asked the doctor, ‘is there any way I can wait until he’s healthy enough?’ He said, ‘absolutely not, do you want to die?’ He looked at me, my mom and my dad and



said, ‘you, my girl, you have a guardian angel. He was sent here to save your life.’”

“I had surgery Nov. 7, 2013, Coffel said. Her baby, who was very underdeveloped, was named Hunter.

“They came into my room (two days later) on Saturday. This woman comes in with long red hair and an angelic voice, she was soft speaking, and she said, ‘We have Hunter.’

“I thought there was miracle and he lived. But that is not what happened. They had preserved him for me so I could meet him.

Coffel’s relationship with the baby’s father did not survive their tragedy. “We did the cremation together,” she said. “He has ashes, I have ashes” She left the hospital with her baby’s ashes, a bracelet,

his clothes and a photo book. She had her arm tattooed: November 7, 2013.

Fortunately, Coffel did not require chemotherapy or radiation. During her healing process, she relied on her faith for strength.

“I thought, ‘I can’t do this on my own. I need the Lord to raise me and help me heal and figure out how to do this.’”

Healing has taken time. “It’s been five years, and sometimes it feels like it was yesterday. I feel like what my heart tells me, and my head, and my gut are all finally on the same page.”

Coffel thinks she is destined to speak out to others about her journey. “I have had to go through this rough, tragic season so I can reach out to other women, to help them come through, to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

“Not only do you have cancer, but you are pregnant.”

I feel that is what it is all meant to be.”

Coffel’s journey with cancer has changed her outlook “bigtime. I know it’s a cliché, but I have learned to really live for the day. Tomorrow is not promised. Who knows what is going to happen tomorrow?”

“My friend Amber Sanchez said in a video for Today’s Woman Foundation -- Bundles of Hope, “find joy in whatever it is you are doing. If it’s chemo, radiation, traveling, find joy in whatever you are doing.”

Amber lost her battle with cancer on May 5.

“We just had my best friend’s funeral. She passed away from breast cancer. I was the one she called ‘her light.’”

Today’s Woman Foundation posted a memorial video for Danielle Amber Sanchez on its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/todaywomanfoundation/videos/181530572105829/>

Coffel just returned from High Desert Church retreat at Twin Peaks Calvary Chapel held May 18-20. “My weekend was phenomenal,” she said. “They did a tribute for Amber.”

Coffel never joined a support group. “I just battled through it, that was it,” she said.

“I went to a Relay for Life last year, but it started raining at the event, and a lot of people canceled at the last minute.

“I was going to speak. I still walked, but the rain started

Caregiver Perspective



Kimmie Lefler Coffel’s cancer diagnosis “knocked the wind out of me; it took me to my knees,” her mother Sandy Lefler said.

“She passed out on the doctor’s shoulder when she heard the diagnosis. I just said ‘Jesus, take the will.’”

“I did everything for her. I changed all her bags, her tubing. I took a 15 -minute course just before they released her from the hospital. I never left her side for nine days. I told my husband I might as well try to be a doctor because I learned so much so quick.

Lefler thinks sharing the battle with cancer has brought her closer to Kimmie.

“Kimmie was a pretty stubborn kid. I never thought she and I could bond like that because she was a little hellraiser.

“I love the relationship we have today. It was definitely God’s work.”

Lefler says anyone facing a cancer diagnosis should be proactive. “Don’t wait. Act accordingly. If a doctor says ‘now’, now is now. Don’t wait unless you want to give up on life.”

coming, so we left. I am interested in doing it again or speaking somewhere else, just see where it takes me.”

The prospect of a recurrence of her cancer “never really has been a worry of mine. I know it all happened for a reason. I have never questioned it,” she said.

Coffel believes she will find a way to reach out and help others, but “I pray I would never have to see someone in my shoes: knowing they were going to lose a baby and possibly their life.

“If I had to (counsel them), the Lord would give me the words to let them know: We can’t always know why we go through what we are going through.”



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JUNE 16TH – 6:00pm - 7th Annual Cancer Awareness Night - Yardbird Game - Adelanto Stadium Every Tuesday - Journey thru Cancer Workshops - schedule available www.hdcancerconnection.com
The American Society provides a 24 hour service to answer questions about diagnosis, insurance, local support and resources along with providing a listening ear and guidance: www.cancer.org or call 800-227-2345

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