

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Finishing Life Well: Cori Zavada, J.D.

Screen, Baby, Screen!

A year ago this past June, a loved one approached me about a concern she had; an indentation in her right breast. I asked if she had ever done a self-breast exam and she said “no”. I proceeded to do one for her and as soon as my fingers made contact with her skin I could feel the lump.

At the time, we were in a remote area of Michigan and I knew our health care resources were limited. I had her go to the closest walk-in clinic to get a full breast exam and to have orders sent to a health care facility that could address what I knew was going to be a long healthcare journey.

Within days (unheard of in health care) she had a mammogram which led to an immediate ultrasound and subsequent biopsies.

Ultimately, multiple tumors were found. She has since gone through chemotherapy, a double mastectomy, and radiation. At this moment she is considered to be in ‘remission’.

Throughout this process she discovered she is a carrier of the BRCA 2 gene. At the age of 26 and the mother of a toddler, her life has changed forever. I share this story to encourage every woman to start performing self-breast exams by age 20, and if anyone has a family member that has a history of breast cancer and/or carries a BRCA gene, no later than age 25 they should begin appropriate recommendations for screenings and undergo genetic testing.

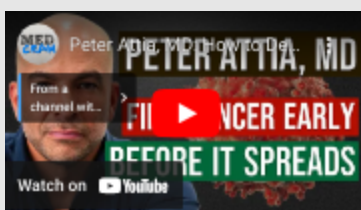
Prior to this, I had never heard of a 26 year old being diagnosed with breast cancer and the lesson here is that we can never underestimate our risk.

Finish Life Well,
Cori

VezaHealth’s partnership with a board-certified breast imaging radiologist has allowed plan participants peace of mind by reviewing their breast imaging and providing education and resources through our remote second opinion program.

One participant had undergone a prophylactic mastectomy and was advised by her local physician she could choose the type of imaging she wanted for her follow up preventative care. The screening and frequency should have been based on evidence-based radiology guidelines. By having this second opinion she can now make the best choice for her continuum of care.

Education is key in knowing what is best for you and your healthcare needs. If you are interested in learning more please contact us.



A recent Peter Attia, MD podcast on how to optimize cancer screening.

If VezaHealth is part of your health plan, we are available at no cost to you. If not, please have your HR Director contact us today!

The VezaHealth newsletter is not medical advice. Only seek medical advice from a qualified physician.