

## **Angel teams up with Susan G. Komen to Ramp Up Early Detection for Breast Cancer Awareness**

Her breast cancer wasn't detected until it was stage four (the cancer spreads to other organs of the body -- usually the lungs, liver, bone, or brain). In 2006, his Aunt Lisa died at the age of 40 leaving behind a four year old daughter. The next year, 2007, his mother was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer (the tumor measures between 2 and 5 centimeters and possibly spread to the axillary lymph nodes, or the tumor is larger than 5 centimeters but has not spread to the axillary lymph nodes) even though she was told she didn't have the "gene". She is still alive. According to BreastCancer.org, approximately 10% of all breast cancers are associated with an inherited genetic abnormality. The most common genetic abnormalities involve BRCA1 and BRCA2.

The loss of his Aunt and the threat of losing his mother was more than Chris Angel could tolerate so he sprang into action and started doing fundraisers with the Susan G. Komen foundation. Chris' mission now is to make others aware of this horrible disease and to give back.

### **Early Detection is The Key To a Better Survival Rate**

There's lots of controversy as to who should have a mammogram and at what age. According to statistics quoted by Susan G. Komen foundation, nearly 75% of women over 40 years old now receive regular mammograms. In the United States, about 5 percent of all breast cancer occurs in women under age 40.

The stats for survival are pretty scary, but those diagnosed are living much longer with the help of some great doctors and early detection.

Some of the early warning signs are:

- Itching
- Scaly sore or rash on the nipple
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Change in breast size or shape
- Warmth, redness, or darkening (swelling)
- A lump, hard knot, or thickening
- Pulling in of your nipple or other parts of the breast
- Nipple discharge that starts suddenly. A new pain in one spot of the breast

What can you do to protect yourself? Have a check up with your gynecologist or primary care physician and discuss your family medical history. Remember, only you can prevent things from getting out of hand. Learn your body, do self examinations, and watch for the early warning signs.

Breast cancer used to be something afflicting your grandmother's generation, not you or someone close to you; especially not under age 40. Now, if you don't know anybody with the disease, you're lucky. It's the most common type of cancer in the world.

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## Men Too

Chris reminds us that it's not just women who need to watch for early warning signs, but men have also been known to get breast cancer as well.

In the United States about 2000 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year and approximately 400 die from the disease. The symptoms are the same as for women, but there's one difference. Men have a habit of ignoring the warning signs for fear of being embarrassed or worried. If you have one of the symptoms mentioned above, don't wait. The longer you wait, the more you could be shortening your life.

## 100% Proceeds Go To Breast Cancer

Chris wasn't able to do anything to prevent cancer for his aunt or mother, but now he hosts parties like the one I met him at in August at Whiskey Park, Boston. This one was in conjunction with Susan G. Komen and Belvedere Liquors. Approximately 50 people showed up at this first event and all the proceeds went to fighting breast cancer. In September Chris put a team together to walk in Boston's Race for a Cure sponsored by Susan G. Komen. Again, all monies raised by his team went to fighting breast cancer.

I had an opportunity to speak with both his mom and sister who are both very proud of Chris and glad he's doing something positive. They said his aunt Lisa would have been proud of him.

Angel's mom was very surprised when she found a lump, herself, through self-examination. A lot of people feel as though it's not going to happen to them, and she thinks she was one of those people. Two of her classmates from high school were recently diagnosed this year with similar types of breast cancer. She knows other women who found out early enough by having a mammogram. So, again, when you catch it early enough it is treatable, as her sister found out way too late.

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## *It runs in the family*

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*Chris Angels' sister, Melissa Angel, works as a massage therapist and works with cancer patients. She's also looking into an oncology certificate program for massage therapists, specifically to learn how to better treat her cancer patients. Although Melissa is able to do lymphatic drainage massage on any patient now, she wants to get a little bit more education behind what her clients are going through and what would be best for them. "Massages are mostly to de-stress" according to Angel, "and to get that nice touch and feeling good. Relaxed is what they need. Any patient going through cancer should be encouraged to go for either a light flow or a Swedish massage." To schedule an appointment with Melissa, you can find her at Exhale Spa, 28 Arlington St, Boston, 617-532-7000 or reach her by email at [mangel1124@hotmail.com](mailto:mangel1124@hotmail.com)*

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## **Tips to Making it Through Chemo**

Here are a few tips Angel's mom gives to help chemo treatments go easier:

- drink lots of water
- having friends that make dinner for you and your family
- try and stay healthy by taking care of yourself
- positive attitude (biggest thing)

## **An Angel to Others**

Chris Angel is not giving up. People need to get checked out every year, that's what's recommended and he just doesn't want anyone to have to go through what his family went through. His aunt may be in heaven shining down on them, but he's glad his mom is still with them. Chris is going to continue being an Angel to others and put his energy into making people more aware of breast cancer. If you'd like to be part of Chris' team send him an email at [angelucci11@hotmail.com](mailto:angelucci11@hotmail.com).