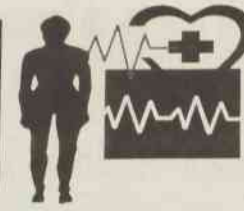




Health Beat



Breast Cancer Threatens Young and Old

By Sharonda Wilcox
Editor



Michelette Lewis, a junior clinical laboratory science major, that thought came close to being a reality.

Michelette noticed a lump in her right breast when she did a self-breast examination in February of this year. Ironically, her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, had just sponsored a seminar about breast cancer awareness.

"I was scared at first, but I didn't try to think the worst," Michelette said. "My mother found a lump in her breast as well, it was tested and found to be benign."

Michelette says that since she was so young there may have been a chance that the lump was benign, but if it was malignant, she was going to keep a positive attitude.

She said she feared the thought of going through surgery because she thought that it may

have left her without one of her breasts, or deformed. She had the support of her mother who had been through the same procedure and who assured her that everything would be fine.

Michelette underwent surgery in May to have the lump removed. It was benign.

She says she gives thanks to her family and friends for their support, but says she wants women to understand how important it is to have breast examinations or perform the exams themselves.

"A lot of females my age don't think about the importance of doing self-breast exams," Michelette said. "It only takes five to ten minutes and young women should start performing them at the age of 18 because it's not an older woman's problem; I was just 20 when I found my lump!"

Michelette is very open about her experience and doesn't mind sharing her story with anyone who has an interest. She wants people to be aware of breast cancer and not to be afraid when they find an abnormality in their bodies.

"Young people can get sick and our health can be affected at times. Just because we're young doesn't mean that we're invincible," says Michelette. *October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Tell someone you know about doing self-breast examinations or ask your doctor on your regular visits to perform an exam.

Women, Be Aware of "Pink October"

By Keisha Leach
News Editor

The upcoming month of October has been dubbed "Pink October" in celebration of the increasing awareness and education of breast cancer. Breast cancer is a deadly disease that kills 44,000 women each year in the United States. There are nearly 184,000 reported cases of breast cancer each year. However, with more and more women becoming educated on how to protect themselves these numbers are drastically reducing.

"A young woman has 1/8 of a chance of developing breast cancer in her lifetime, which is scary when you think about it," says Dr. Gioia Riccio of the Breast Screening Center located in downtown Winston-Salem. "A lot of women tend to think breast cancer means cutting the breast off, but actually there are a lot of treatment procedures available to breast cancer patients."

Some of these treatments include biopsies, fine needle aspirations, lumpectomies, and radiation therapy. There are several detection methods however, the most common is known as a mammogram. Mammograms are low dose X-rays taken of the breasts. It is recommended that all women start getting annual mammograms from age 40 on up. Annual mammograms are extremely useful in the early detection of breast cancer.

Early detection through self-breast exams, education, and prompt treatment has been proven to save thousands of lives. For a woman who feels anything abnormal in her breast, early treatment can help save her life.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

A Blessing in Disguise

By Marcus Mathis
Staff Writer

What would you do if you just found out that you had AIDS? Would you have the strength and courage to live? Or would death become the main topic in your life?

There is an individual among you, who will be referred to as "Shawn", who is HIV positive. I hope that by reading this person's message you will renew your faith in God, and give yourself a different perspective.

Sitting before me is a person who looks just like anyone else. There are no signs of "Shawn's" illness and there wouldn't be any way of knowing that "Shawn" is HIV positive. "Shawn" looks healthy and appears to be in good spirits, but there's more to see than what meets the eye.

"I really didn't feel anything when I found out I was HIV positive," says "Shawn." I knew I was at risk because of my behavior."

"Shawn" was 21 when tests revealed to be HIV positive for the virus, but the virus was contracted at the age of 16.

"When I found out that I was HIV positive I didn't get treatment until I was 22," says "Shawn."

"Shawn" visited Reynolds Health Center where he was directed to Baptist Hospital's Infectious Diseases Control

Center where "Shawn" was found to be infected with the cyto-megella virus of CMV. CMV is a virus that conceals HIV antibodies so that they aren't detectable.

"Shawn" was dating a married man at the time the virus was contracted.

"I assumed he was safe, now I know he wasn't," said "Shawn." It never occurred to me that since he had been messing around on his wife, he would not have done the same thing with me."

Knowing what had happened, "Shawn" was in denial and the reality didn't set in until years later when "Shawn" was taking up to 25 pills every day just to stay alive and well. "Shawn" had finally reached the point where accepting AIDS as a part of an every day lifestyle was now reality.

"All I ever wanted was to be loved. I did like many people do, substituted sex for love," says "Shawn". I just wanted to belong and feel a part of someone or something."

For a while "Shawn" went through life believing that being HIV positive meant companionship was out of the question; that changed. "Shawn" has made numerous friends and is active in many activities on campus. "Shawn" has found that people are more educated about infection and control, but unfortunately there are just as many who don't use protection.

Living with the fact of being

diagnosed with AIDS has been a roller coaster ride of emotions for "Shawn."

"There are days I feel upbeat and positive, then there are times I feel lonely, depressed and suicidal...feeling like no one cares," says "Shawn."

"Shawn" wants people to know that AIDS doesn't just destroy your body, it can also destroy your mind if you let it. It has a way of breaking your spirit and crippling your motivation. The key is to be aware of what is happening, get in touch with your feelings and don't deny them. You can't always be in control of every aspect of your life.

When asked how the illness "Shawn" is dealing with will affect loved ones, sorrow comes over the face of a person that has been upbeat throughout the interview.

"I know my death will bring them sorrow but I know my death was meant to be. I don't carry guilt or shame," says "Shawn". I pray for God to heal the bitterness and anger in my heart."

"Shawn" says that there is a stronger faith in the power of God, and life now is looked at in a different way with living each moment of each day to the fullest.

"I have a renewed faith in God, that's all I can say and I don't blame anyone for what's happened," says "Shawn". This is a result of my own negligence and lustful behavior."

"Shawn" says that people should

understand that living with AIDS hasn't been a disaster but a blessing in disguise.



Obtain check-ups on a regular basis to detect medical problems. Remember, STD's (sexually transmitted diseases)

HIV, Breast Cancer, and many other debilitating illnesses can be controlled, if not cured, when attended to in their early stages. Students often forget that taking vitamins is an important part of their daily food regimen. Many of the diseases listed above can be controlled if the body receives proper nutrition.

A Blessing In Disguise will be continued in our next edition of The News Argus. If you have a story that you would like to submit, send it to
The News Argus Hall-Patterson, Room 318