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Erin McKinney, Survivor and First-Time Tour de Pink Rider



In 2014, I was told I had breast cancer. I was 32 years old, married just 10 days before. A few weeks before our wedding, I felt the mass in my breast and my OB/Gyn told me I could wait until after the wedding to look at it. We went to the doctor 36 hours after we were married and three appointments later, I had cancer.

Over the next three weeks, I learned about breast cancer at a breakneck speed. Throughout high school and college, I was independent and resourceful. As a law student, I learned to collect and absorb as much information in the least amount of time possible. I believe all of these experiences prepared me to face cancer that month, and definitely what led me to Young Survival Coalition. I quickly found YSC's website, and the Newly Diagnosed Navigator. I created a binder, and the questions and information within became my guide at each appointment, at every moment of doubt and confusion...and then, I met Dr. Corinne Menn and Jamie Pleva-Nickerson.

These women make YSC proud! They shared their life stories with me and make me feel humbled and strong. They continue to provide an example to me of living with our diagnoses with more poise and grace than I ever thought possible, with side orders of sarcasm! I rocked my way through each step because of Corinne, Jamie and YSC. I am going to take on this 211 mile bike ride, just as I took on cancer, because I'll have these superstars by my side.

My sister, Lauren, will be riding with us too! She signed up two months after her own prophylactic mastectomy. After my mastectomy, my family was shocked to find the BRCA2 mutation in both of us. My

cancer gave Lauren knowledge (= power!) and enabled her to have surgery before it could ever affect her life the way it has affected mine. **This is the sweetest of my cancer silver linings.**

Another silver lining? The LIV-sponsored bike I'm receiving! I have many incredible friends, family and even strangers supporting my \$15K fundraising goal already, but I also have a wine tasting event and a cut-a-thon at my favorite hair salon in the works for this summer, so hopefully, I can surpass that goal!

Tour de Pink is not just a bike ride to me. This event is a chance to honor my sister, Jamie, Corinne, Kim, Rebecca, Avery, Felicity and all the other young women I have met who are my gifts from breast cancer. And finally, I hate exercising, so this must be LOVE for YSC!

Share your story with us, [here](#).

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