

## HEALTH BY *Kate* Get Checked: Early Detection Is Key



Like the cancer patient shown, Lisa Hendey made the best of a bad situation.

**FaithandFamilyLIVE.com** blogger Lisa Hendey recently added a new title to her already impressive life resume: cancer survivor. In Fall 2008, the wife, mom, and founder of *CatholicMom.com* was diagnosed with DCIS, a common form of non-invasive breast cancer, after a routine mammogram and subsequent biopsies.

"I was blessed beyond measure that mine was caught early and successfully treated with surgery and seven

weeks of radiation treatments," Lisa says. "Conduct routine self exams and please do not neglect your annual physicals and mammograms." The American Cancer Society recommends women 40 and older have a yearly screening mammogram. In addition, performing monthly breast self-exams starting at age 20 can help you become more familiar with your breasts so that you're more likely to detect any changes.

But breast cancer vigilance isn't just about scheduling your mammogram. It's about taking charge of your overall health. "My experience and interaction with cancer survivors has left me more passionate than ever about encouraging my fellow moms to do all they can to care for themselves both spiritually and physically," Lisa says.

This means noshing on healthy food, regularly breaking a sweat, getting enough sleep, and reducing stress — all of which have been shown to slash your cancer risk.

If you or a loved one is faced with a breast cancer diagnosis, remember that perhaps the best weapon in your cancer-fighting arsenal is hope. Lisa adds, "During my treatments, I took the opportunity to seek both physical and spiritual healing by attending daily Mass and being in the presence of the Eucharist as frequently as possible. Our Catholic faith affords each of us such wonderful hope and solace in times of difficulty."

## FITNESS



Jenifer Walsh, now ...

**HOMEWORK:** Share your weight loss success story with *Faith & Family*. See page 6 for contact information.

## Spinning Helps Mom Fight MS

**NAME:** Jenifer Walsh

**HOMETOWN:** Cheshire, Connecticut

**FITNESS PROGRAM:** Daily spinning, or indoor cycling, classes

**WEIGHT LOSS:** 4 1/2 inches from her hips, 2 1/2 inches from each of her legs, and 25 pounds

When Jenifer Walsh started taking spinning classes two years ago, she wasn't worried about achieving the look of an all-star athlete. She just wanted to keep moving.

In 1998, Jenifer was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a disease of the central nervous system that can lead to mild to severe symptoms such as dizziness, tremors, loss of vision, and paralysis.

Once an avid exerciser, MS has made even walking more difficult for Jenifer. "I now walk with a limp," says the wife and mom of two. "My right side has been affected, and I have a drop foot. That means no more running, step aerobics, racquetball, or golf."

But there's one place Jenifer can still comfortably work up a sweat. "I have such a hard time walking, but when I get on a bike I feel so comfortable," she says. "I just consider myself very blessed to be able to work out every day. I look down at my legs on that spinning bike sometimes and can't believe they're my legs."

Her toughest endurance test happens not on a bike but in her daily life. "The challenge is when I get off that bike and have to continue with my day. My Catholic faith has played a big role in keeping me going," says Jenifer, who was recently named the state spokeswoman for Connecticut for the 2009 *Travelers Walk*, a fundraising event that benefits the *National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut*. "I have a sign taped in my car that says: 'I may have MS, but I'm still in the game of life.' That's my motto. I will not give in to this disease."

— Visit Kate at [KateWicker.com](http://KateWicker.com)



Jenifer, then.

PHOTOS: TOP: WOMAN, RIBBON, SHUTTERSTOCK; DIET PHOTOS COURTESY OF JENIFER WALSH.