



LifeSteps health coach inspired Trane employee to seek options

Armed with sound information, Jeanine Whitney became empowered to confront a fierce opponent. By learning about various breast cancer treatments, Jeanine made an informed decision about her own condition and began her battle against a serious disease.

Jeanine is an employee of the Trane Commercial Systems plant in Rushville, Ind. Following a routine mammogram in 2005, she learned that she had a cancerous lump in her breast. Her doctor recommended an immediate mastectomy (removal of the entire breast and surrounding tissue).

Jeanine Whitney gave specific permission to share her story.

Exploring her options

Jeanine had two weeks before the surgery to decide. She wanted to do the right thing to beat the cancer, but she was uneasy with the prospect of losing her breast. So when Peggy Clements, a local human resource representative, mentioned LifeSteps health coaching, Jeanine saw the opportunity to learn more.

"I needed to understand just what was happening to me. I just wasn't comfortable with the one choice I was given," Jeanine said.

During her first call, Jeanine met Paulette, a LifeSteps health coach, who immediately assured Jeanine that there were treatments she could discuss with her doctor. Paulette mentioned an alternative known as a lumpectomy, in which only the cancerous area of the breast is removed. The doctor would be able to determine if this procedure was appropriate for Jeanine. Paulette mailed out a video and some booklets, all of which helped Jeanine understand the pros and cons of mastectomy and lumpectomy.

"I spent six to eight hours that next weekend reviewing all the materials," Jeanine said. "I wasn't ready to lose my breast. Now I had the information to work with my doctor to make my decision."

She later discussed her preference to seek a lumpectomy with her oncologist (doctor who treats cancer), and he confirmed it was an option in her case. She proceeded with the lumpectomy, and received radiation therapy for seven weeks as another precaution to fight the disease. From her surgery and throughout the radiation treatment, Jeanine continued to seek support from her health coach. For example, Paulette would suggest additional questions to ask the doctor and even provided nutritional tips to help Jeanine reduce the nausea that followed the radiation.

Encouraging results

Since the original surgery, Jeanine has undergone other surgical procedures. She continues to meet with her oncologist regularly to monitor her condition. The news is very encouraging.

Jeanine's relationship with her health coach endures. Paulette makes a note of Jeanine's doctors' appointments and calls her regularly to check progress. "She still gives me support," Jeanine said. "I know she really cares about me."

Spreading the word

Jeanine says she is grateful to American Standard for providing health coaching services and other LifeSteps resources. She wants other American Standard employees and spouses to learn the following from her experience:

- **The value of LifeSteps health coaches:** “This is a free resource that helps you make critical decisions about your health. The service is priceless. After all, how can you put a price on emotional support?”
- **You *can* work with your doctor to determine your treatment:** “A health coach can explain procedures and suggest questions that you can ask your doctor. That will give you the courage to speak up and explore all your options *so you can decide* how to proceed.”
- **Talk with your doctor about the frequency of mammograms:** “Women, be sure to schedule your mammograms according to your doctor’s advice. If you are man, make sure the women in your life receive one regularly. The technology can save a life.”

Need help with a health condition? Want to get more from your next doctor’s visit? Just need support? Call a LifeSteps health coach at **1-877-LIFE-123**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Personal health information provided to a LifeSteps health coach is protected by federal and state privacy laws and will not be disclosed to American Standard Companies except as authorized by law for administration of the company’s group health plans.