

## Darlene Smith

My name is Darlene Smith and I was diagnosed with stage 3B breast cancer in 2003 at the age of 45. The news was devastating and my heart was broken. Cancer entered into my life unwelcome, uninvited, and unexpected. Cancer not only affected me but also my husband, children, and all who knew and loved me.

I quickly learned that I had choices to make - I chose to fight this thing called cancer with every resource that I had at my disposal. I underwent 19 months of treatment that included chemotherapy, radiation, a double mastectomy, reconstruction, several blood transfusions, and lymphedema.

I decided to allow God to use this experience in my life to help others. I participated in my first Komen race at a critical time in my life. My body was weak and broken and the Chattanooga Komen race showed me that others in the community cared the other survivors in our community as well as myself. The Chattanooga Komen Affiliate has provided support, education, and funding for area breast cancer services not only for me but also for other survivors in our community for 15 years. The Komen Chattanooga affiliate has been a blessing for my family and me and continues to bless our community.