

BIKE-A-THON

BRIDGE TO THE BEACH



SUNDAY,
JUNE 11,
2017



Survivor Profile: Natalie Hoffmann

Natalie Hoffmann received her cancer diagnosis on February 15, 2016: metastatic thyroid cancer. The same day, she got the long-awaited email congratulating her on winning the Broad Street Run lottery. Everything in her life suddenly seemed uncertain, but she felt sure of one thing, "I'm never going to be able to run in April."

On February 21, Natalie met Mark Feinman, chair of the Bike-a-thon steering committee, at the Greater Philadelphia Endurance Expo. Her surgery was scheduled for the next day. She quickly brushed past the Bike-a-thon table toward another vendor, fearing an emotional reaction at seeing the American Cancer Society name. But her husband — who never believed cancer would slow her down for long — stopped and insisted that she stop too. By the time they left, Mark had convinced them to pencil in Bike-a-thon next to the Broad Street Run on their family calendar.



Natalie completed her treatment on March 27 and felt full of gratitude as she trudged soaking wet to the Broad Street Run finish just a few weeks later. She was a runner first and had only taken up cycling in the past few years, so her first Bike-a-thon posed a whole different challenge. She wanted so much to finish the race for herself, for her caregivers, and for the many people in her world who had been impacted by cancer.

"I was never sure I could go the whole distance until after I made the turn onto the century loop. It was then that I knew I could, and would, finish the 100 miles. I felt strong, emotionally and physically," she recalled of the June 12 event. Seeing Mark again at the ride's endpoint brought the experience full circle. "It's been an incredible journey from the surgery in March — unable to do anything but the most basic functions — to Mark and everyone on the boardwalk 100 miles later."

She is looking forward to becoming a volunteer member of the Bike-a-thon steering committee. Her multifaceted perspective as a survivor, as a one-time caregiver for her father who is now a 15-year survivor, and as an endurance athlete makes her an especially valuable and welcome asset to the event.

Read more about the detection and treatment of thyroid cancer on the American Cancer Society's [website](#).