



I Miss My Sister!

In 2023, it's estimated among women in the U.S. there will be:

- *297,790 new cases of invasive breast cancer (This includes new cases of primary breast cancer, but not breast cancer recurrences.)*
- *55,720 new cases of ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), a non-invasive breast cancer*
- *43,170 breast cancer deaths*

I don't think any of us understand, until it's too late, just how much we care for and depend on those we love. We only have so much time on this planet to let people know - then in a minute, in the blink of an eye, in one single heartbeat, they're gone, and we're left with the overwhelming doubts of - did they know how much we loved them? How much we needed them? How special they were in our lives? Did they know – REALLY know?

It been 29 years since my sister died of breast cancer at the incredibly too young age of 48. When she broke the news I thought, wow, this sucks. But I never ever had a doubt she would beat it. She had a huge personality. She was the life of the party, the loud and crazy one, with a smile that could light up a room, and a laugh so infectious that people wanted to laugh with her. She was a strong Christian. She was a survivor. She was only 42.

But no matter how much I miss her I refuse to dwell in the grief. If I get caught up in the grief I too will miss out on living my life and Kathy wouldn't have wanted that. I can hear her now telling me to put my big girl panties on and make a difference. **Make a difference to those who may need a push to do their self-exams or to get their annuals scheduled.** Let's face it, there is no dignity in getting the girls smashed but to do so may be the difference between life and death. We need to remember those who have come before us and what we are fighting for - who we are fighting for.

We must be vigilant in this fight. We never know what each day will hold. But I can promise you this: I will do my part. I will not let my sadness keep me from talking about this very real enemy called breast cancer. I will not let my pain keep me from reminding you to get your yearly mammogram (or getting mine as well).

A month dedicated to this disease is great for awareness, but we need to be reminded every day and remember those we have lost.

So, sis, I'm putting on those panties right now. And just so you know, they're pink.

