

# HEALING TESTIMONY – 2006

HEATHER MISHELLE CHRISTOPHER BOYD

## Diagnosis and Shock

In July of 2005, I signed up for a new, health insurance plan our company offered us. If we chose this plan, the company would deposit \$1,000 into our account to use. In January of 2006, the company where I worked announced it was being sold. I did not know if I would have a job for very long, so I decided to use the \$1,000 and get a physical checkup, and as many health tests as I could (even though I had never been sick before and had always had my yearly physicals).

I asked the family doctor for a physical exam, blood work, and a heart test. The doctor also performed a breast exam and said all was fine. At that point, the Holy Spirit impressed me to ask "I'd like to have a mammogram performed", and I explained that I had this extra money in my insurance account. (Health guidelines say that a woman does not need to get a mammogram until the age of 40, unless they have a family history. I was only thirty five years old, and had no family history of breast cancer.) The doctor signed me up for the mammogram.

A few weeks later I had the mammogram performed at a local hospital. All seemed well, but then the hospital called. They were only interested in performing another mammogram on my right breast. About fifteen minutes later, they informed me they would like to perform an ultrasound on my breast. I said "Okay". During the ultrasound, I saw a large image on the computer screen. It looked like the shape of a thumb (magnified of course), but oddly shaped. I asked the technician where this was, and when I tried to feel it, it just felt like a muscle. About thirty minutes later, a radiology doctor came in and said they would like to perform a needle biopsy immediately. Things were moving so fast, that was hard to comprehend everything. Three biopsies were performed. The doctor said they would have the results by tomorrow.

The next morning, on February 10 of 2006, I received a phone call while at work. My family doctor gave me the results... Invasive Ductal Carcinoma. Breast Cancer. The cancer had already spread outside of the milk duct.

I was in total shock. My entire life flashed before my eyes and it was difficult to breathe. I emailed my boss that I had to leave work and I went to a church friend's home. It was hard to describe how I really felt at that moment. I thought of death, and not being able to live the rest of my days here with my family and friends. It almost felt like I was floating and not really here.

But then I remembered, that it was through Jesus' divine intervention that this cancer was found NOW rather than later! The Holy Spirit directed me to ask for that mammogram. Health guidelines say that a woman does not need to get a mammogram until the age of forty, unless they have a family history of breast cancer. No one in my family had a history of this disease. My breast cancer was revealed at the age of thirty five by my Lord Jesus Christ.

During this time, I continually sought God and prayed for my healing. I read all the healing scriptures in the Bible, showing that Jesus healed everyone.

## Surgery

We met the surgeon, and she said the cancer tumor was considered large. Therefore, she also wanted to remove any lymph nodes that may be associated (in addition to removing the cancer tumor). She also said I would need to have Radiation. Since I only have one tumor, a lumpectomy was chosen. The surgery was scheduled for March 17, 2006.

During this time, I continually sought God and prayed for my healing. I read all the healing scriptures in the Bible, showing that Jesus healed everyone. I watched the movie, "Passion of the Christ" several times. I also read the book titled "Christ, Your Healer" by Morris Cerullo. (I would encourage you to get a copy of this book and read it over and over. Also, the only website I would use to research information was [www.breastcancer.org](http://www.breastcancer.org))

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On the morning of the surgery, we went across town to the Greenville Breast Center, to have the radiology technician perform a needle localization. (This marks the mass tumor in your breast prior to surgery. An ultrasound is used to guide the needle placement into the appropriate area. When the needle is correctly in place, a small guide wire is inserted through the needle to mark the position. The wire is used as a “map” for the surgeon. The needle is then removed and a guided wire is taped securely to your skin. Why is this done? With the breast localized in this manner, the surgeon can accurately remove the suspicious tissue while minimizing the removal of healthy breast tissue.)

We then headed over to the hospital and I was prepped for surgery. Family and friends are there to support me. (What happens during surgery? The doctor injects blue dye near the tumor site within your breast. This shows which lymph nodes filter fluid from the affected area of the breast, where the cancer is. Any lymph nodes that turn blue, will be reviewed and analyzed. This procedure is called a Sentinel Lymph Node Dissection.) The cancer mass/tumor and one lymph node were removed.

After the surgery, my family took me home and I went straight to bed. Later, when I got out of bed, and looked at myself in the mirror, I was blue... literally! My whole body was the color of blue and I looked like a smurf. In addition, my eyes were a little swollen. I didn't feel any pain, so that was good. My mom stayed with me as I recovered. Before the surgery, I cut off about six inches of my hair, so it would be easier for me to manage. I was also very careful when showering to not get the areas wet. (My mom dried my hair for me (since I was unable to lift my right arm).

## Biopsy Results

A week later, we returned to see the surgeon for the biopsy results. She said that she went all the way to the chest wall and out far enough to get all the cancer. The pathology report shows, the margins around the cancer tumor were clear, and that the one lymph node removed was negative (which meant no cancer cells were in found in the lymph node).

A very good report and I am so very happy. I think to myself, “It is done and over and I can go on with my life”. But hold on... the doctor gives me more information.

The biopsy report also showed the following. The cancer tumor was very large (2.5 centimeters), poorly differentiated, and very aggressive. This meant that both chemotherapy and radiation were necessary! She explained that chemotherapy was required due to the high probability the cancer may return later on. The surgeon said the cancer tumor had probably been there for six years (I had read that stress can cause cancer, and I had been under a tremendous amount of stress six years ago).

I was devastated, and I almost fell off the examination table. You know what was the first thing that came to my mind? My hair. My beautiful, long dark brown hair would fall out. She said that they make lovely wigs now and people can't tell you're wearing one. I thought about what she said, and I would rather have no hair and be alive, than to have my long hair and not be here alive on Earth.

## Listening to the Holy Spirit

After the surgeon gave me the news about chemotherapy, she said I would need to select an oncologist. A nurse came in and asked which oncologist I would like to see. I had no idea! So, she read off five to six different names of oncologist in my area. I asked her to read them one more time. Each time, only one name stood out. In my mind, it was as if all the names were printed on a large sheet of white, poster paper, but one name was in large, bold letters. I didn't say anything and the nurse said that they would see who was available.

By the time I got home, there was a message on our answering machine. The nurse had me scheduled to see the SAME name that I saw earlier on that “white, poster paper”. This was confirmation from the Lord that this was the correct oncologist for me.

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## My Healing

After receiving the news that I would need to take chemotherapy, I became sad and depressed. I only told my boss at work and my close friends, family and church knew. At church, I would go down to the alter and pray, asking why this happened to me. I had no peace.

But I started reading a book titled “Christ, Your Healer” by Morris Cerullo. (This book contains all the healing scriptures in the Bible and it says that Jesus healed *everyone*.) I focused on that and started believing Jesus was healing me.

On Palm Sunday of 2006 (just two days after I had the port surgically implanted for the chemotherapy treatments coming up), I sang the song named, “Via Dolorosa” at our church. Halfway through the song, I broke down in tears, and saw how Jesus went to Calvary all beaten and bruised and how His stripes were for my healing. I managed to finish the song and sat down. A few moments later, tongues were spoken (our church is Pentecostal), and the interpretation was given.

God said “I sent My Son, and **YOU ARE HEALED!**” A few moments later, tongues were spoken again and the interpretation was given.

Jesus said “I walked down that rode for you, and by My stripes, **YOU ARE HEALED!!**”

This was confirmed two times. You wouldn’t believe the peace and relief I immediately felt. The church knew that message was for me. From that moment on, I had **no** doubt I was healed and that I would live a very long life on Earth. (I would often times play this recorded church service in my car.)

In my early twenties, I had an overwhelming feeling that I would either not be alive after the age of thirty five, OR I would have short hair. I didn’t know what it all meant, but I just had that feeling from the Holy Spirit.

After God and Jesus said I was healed in the Sunday morning service, my outlook on life was very positive; however, I still didn’t understand why I had to take the Chemotherapy if I was healed. I thought about this, and decided that maybe this was God's way of healing me, and to possibly help someone else. I also thought about losing my hair. I thought of it this way.... Would I rather have long, beautiful hair and be dead in a coffin? Or would I rather have no hair for a little while, and live the rest of my life... ALIVE?

The choice was easy... I wanted to live.

## Wigs

I shopped for a wig as soon as I found out I was going to be taking chemotherapy. That way, I still had my hair and I felt comfortable trying on different styles. We don’t have many options in Greenville, SC, but I did find this store that seemed to cater to cancer patients:

Parisienne Wig & Hair Replacement  
2102 Laurens Rd, Greenville, SC 29607  
(864) 297-8235

I liked their store and the people that worked there were very understanding and friendly. I tried on many different styles. I wanted something that looked like my hair, and I found a long style with bangs, and you know, I couldn’t tell it was a wig. It was so real! (It did not have human hair because that is very expensive and is a lot of upkeep like normal hair.) I picked out the brown color closest to mine and placed the order.

When the wig came, the store cut and trimmed it so it was styled just like my own hair.

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I returned to the store about every 4 weeks to have the wig hair straightened. I developed intense hot flashes, which caused the wig hair against my neck to get tangled and matted. Straightening helped to lengthen the life of the wig. I also used special wig shampoo and conditioner. It was important not too was the wig too often, because the color fades quicker.

When I contacted my insurance company about reimbursing me for the wig, they said they didn't cover that. Then later on, I found something on the internet: I read that insurance companies were required by law to cover wigs. I called them back and told them that. Guess what? They covered it completely. You have to be persistent with insurance companies. Also, I bought another long wig, same style and color and used that for a while.

A few months later, after all my treatments were over, I bought a short wig. (I still didn't have enough hair yet to wear out in public.) I was going to be traveling to Asia on business for two weeks and needed a style that would not be too hot. Wow! The short style was so attractive, comfortable and refreshing. Everyone loved it. On my trip to Asia, a flight attendant at the Los Angeles' airport (LAX) stopped me and asked where I had my hair done. I just said "Oh, at a shop in South Carolina". Which was true, because they styled, cut and steamed my wig regularly.

My health insurance company paid for all three wigs.

I wore a wig from April 2006 to May 2007.

## Chemotherapy

When we met with my oncologist, he was very nice and we talked for a very long time. He described the cancer I had in my body and said he wanted to do everything he could to remove it from my body.

He immediately said he wanted me to begin chemotherapy ASAP! Following the removal of the cancer tumor from my right breast, it was analyzed. Although the pathology report showed that the lymph node removed was negative (contained no cancer cells) and the margins around the tumor were clear (no cancer), the results were not good. The cancer tumor was very large (2.5 cm), poorly differentiated, and very aggressive. Also, since I was only thirty five years old, this indicated a worse kind of cancer.

I liked him, but I was very nervous. My mom and I took a small voice recorder and recorded the entire conversation, in case we forget anything. I asked a lot of questions.

My oncologist wanted me to take four months of chemotherapy treatments (a total of eight rounds). Each treatment was every other week to allow my body to build back up between rounds.

## Chemotherapy Treatment Drugs

For the first two months, I took two drugs at the same time. These drugs were named Cyclophosphamide (also known as cytoxan) and Adriamycin (also known as doxorubicin). Since I was scheduled to take Adriamycin, a heart test (named Muga) was required to see if my heart was strong enough to take this drug. For the last two months, I took one drug named Taxol (also known as paclitaxel).

As far as food was concerned, he said to eat anything I could to keep up my strength.

Then, I asked him about children. Chemotherapy drugs can negatively affect ovaries and shut them down. We did not have time to store my eggs and freeze them (looking back, I had a feeling I was supposed to have done that). Another option was to receive a one time drug administered in my lower back in order to possibly protect my ovaries.

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## Port Implant

During my consultation with the oncologist, I discovered that I would need a port surgically implanted underneath my skin. (A port allows easy access to a vein so the nurses can administer chemotherapy drugs and also to draw blood.) The port was scheduled for April 7 of 2006 and my first chemotherapy treatment was scheduled just a week later. He wanted to start treatment immediately.

You wouldn't think putting in a port would be that bad, and I felt great after the surgery. I even went to Target and shopped a little bit. But then, oh, it became horrible. The pain was so intense. Just breathing a certain way was painful. When I would lie down to sleep, I could only lie on one side. I ended up having to sleep on the couch to be comfortable (slept on the couch from April of 2006 until October of 2006). The intense pain probably lasted for three to four days.

## My First Chemotherapy Treatment

Talk about not wanting to go. When I showed up, a nice nurse took me back to a room filled with patients receiving chemotherapy treatment. I reclined in a nice soft chair with my legs up, and the nurse drew blood from my port. When the blood tests were completed, I saw my oncologist. He reviewed my blood tests and encouraged me about the treatments. Then, I returned to the room I just left and reclined in my chair. The nurse explained the chemotherapy drugs, the side effects and the other medicine they would be giving me to keep me from getting sick. They hooked me up to a machine that had wheels and started the treatment. I didn't really feel anything, but I'm cold. (I'm naturally a cold person, but I was very cold.) I brought a blanket with me and a little stuffed animal. My mom sat next to me the whole time.

The fellowship I had with the others receiving treatment was enlightening. I told them about my journey so far and how Jesus had healed me. They were always so amazed about how much Faith I had and how positive I was.

My appointments were always on a Thursday and I would get there about eleven in the morning. After blood tests and seeing my oncologist, my chemotherapy treatment would begin about twelve thirty and I would stay there until five o'clock in the afternoon.

After my first treatment, I felt great and actually went to a grocery store. We stopped at McDonald's and I ordered a Big Mac. I came home, ate, and then went outside and played ball with my standard poodle, Andre'. I thought this was wonderful. About three and half hours later, I became so sick, it was horrible. I have NEVER felt so sick before. They had given me some medication to take, but I had felt so good, that I didn't take it. That was a mistake. This sickness lasted for hours, and then I finally fell asleep.

The next day, I went back to the cancer center and received a white blood count shot (Neulasta) in my stomach. This would keep my white blood counts up and keep my body strong so I could receive my next treatment in two weeks. This shot is required after each chemotherapy treatment.

## My Second Chemotherapy Treatment

Same routine and I pointed out to my oncologist that my hair had not fallen out. I was so positive that it would stay there. He said it would fall out soon. One of the patients also described how her head felt just before the hair came out.

On Saturday (after my second treatment), my scalp felt funny. It kind of tingled and was warm. I noticed a few hairs on my pillow, but just brushed them off. On Sunday morning, I washed my hair and noticed a few more hairs than normal in my hand. Then when I brushed my hair, well, it left a dime sized bald spot. I carefully swept my hair into a ponytail and sprayed it and left for church.

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On Monday, I left my hair up and sprayed it again. I repeated this for Tuesday and Wednesday. But by Wednesday evening, I couldn't take it any longer. I had to wash my hair and I knew it would all fall out. I had so much hairspray in my hair, that it was stuck to my head. I had to cut away my hair and large hunks came out. I decided that I would look better shaving it all off. So, that's what I did. I got the electric shaver and shaved it all off and you know what? I didn't even cry. I laughed a little, and just reminded myself that Jesus has a purpose for me living and a purpose for my life.

## Encouragement

Most of the people at my church sent me so many encouraging cards. I would receive a card in the mail each day! After sitting in the chemotherapy chair for over four hours each time, and then getting back home feeling so sick, just receiving a new card saying someone was praying for me, helped me so much. In addition to my Mom sitting next to me during each chemotherapy treatment (over five hours each time), my Dad and brother also sat with me some and were there to help me at home. My good church friends (Charline and Garvin Turner) were there for me during the entire journey. Charline went with me to some of my doctor appointments.

## Side Effects

The side effects from drugs used in the first four treatments made me extremely tired, and my legs felt like weights were on them. For the second half of my treatment, the drugs caused my toes and fingers to go numb. At this point, my doctor signed me up for Oncology Rehabilitation. I was also starting to gain one pound a week since the treatments included steroids (these were used to keep me from getting sick). But I just want to praise God that I was able to continue working during this time (my position had changed at work and was not as stressful). The company had said my job was ending on September 30th 2006, but I prayed the Lord's Will would be done.

## Heart Catherization

As mentioned earlier, a port was surgically implanted into the upper left part of my chest. The port allowed easy access to a vein so the nurses could administer the chemotherapy drugs and draw blood. It looked like a huge marble under my skin. During the chemotherapy treatments, my port continued to give problems.

On my last chemotherapy treatment, my port did not work, and it hurt terribly when they tried to administer the drug. My oncologist recommended having the port removed as soon as possible. It was a blessing because I was able to get an appointment the very next day with the surgeon.

The surgeon started working on the removal of my port. It was quite difficult as it had developed a large amount of scar tissue around the port. He showed me what came out and the plastic tube was only a few inches long. I didn't think that was long enough and he agreed. (A port is a device that has a tube connecting to a vein which leads to your heart. It is about twelve inches long.)

The port had broken off inside my body!

A Chest X-ray showed that the broken port had moved to my heart. You may be asking... what exactly does this mean? Well, it means that a plastic tube, six inches long was in my vein and had travelled to my heart and was lodged inside. If the tube continued moving, it would most likely cause my heart to stop.

I was rushed to the emergency room where they performed an emergency catherization. I prayed to Jesus to let me live and not die. It took the doctor two attempts to remove the tube.

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After the successful catherization, I had severe bleeding from the site where they went into the vein. At home later that night I was in terrible pain and had to use a cane the next day to walk around. The surgeon personally called the house the next morning to check on me.

A few days later, I found a medical news article on the internet discussing how ports can sometimes break off and go into the heart. This article said that if this occurs, you only have a fifty percent chance of surviving.

Before and after, I thanked the Lord that He had let me live.

The Lord blessed me again and saved my life once more!

## Hot Flashes

Hot flashes you say? Yep, that's right. I'm not sure if it came from the chemotherapy treatment and/or the shot they gave me to protect my ovaries. I'm leaning towards the shot, because it basically shut down my ovaries temporarily so the chemotherapy would not go there and damage them.

These were NOT your typical hot flashes you see on television. I liked to call them "Nuclear Blasts"! They became so intense (particularly at night) that I kept a container of ice water and towels next to the couch where I slept. It was only my head and neck that was hot. (I had read that some women had to be admitted to the hospital.) It was unbearable. I carried a portable, battery-operated fan with me and even used it in church services. I even had several different fans, including one that sprayed water. The hot flashes were worse than the chemotherapy

When the chemotherapy ended in August of 2006, the hot flashes seemed to get better and within a few weeks were gone. I would occasionally get warm/hot, but not like before.

In January of 2007, my menstrual cycle started back. It had stopped since beginning treatments in April of 2006. This was another Praise Report. The doctor didn't know if I would ever start back, but it did.

## Radiation

Radiation focuses on a specific area and kills any cancer cells that are so small you can't see them.

Before radiation began, a scan was performed on my right breast to pinpoint where the radiation would be beamed. Then the technician used an ink pen to place black lines and dots on my chest. These lines and dots were "read" by the radiation machine to ensure the radiation beams were precise and accurate.

For 31 days (Monday through Friday) I had a radiation. It wasn't painful at all, and lasted for only a couple of minutes. Compared to chemotherapy, it was a breeze. In the waiting room, I gave my testimony to others and how the Lord had blessed me.

Throughout my treatments, I did not wear a bra as it was uncomfortable and the port was in the way. I purchased tops to wear under my normal blouses and wore clothing that hid the black lines and dots for the radiation.

The radiation caused only a little redness for me. Otherwise, I felt fine the entire 31 days.

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## Genetics Testing

My oncologist wanted me to have genetics testing. This would show them if I had a history of breast cancer in my family, and also see what my DNA and genes looked like.

We went through the medical history for my mom's side and my dad's side of the family. No breast cancer on either side. We then decided to have my DNA reviewed and blood was drawn at a later date.

The blood was sent off to a facility that researches DNA. The primary genes (BRCA1, BRCA2) they were looking at to see if they were mutated, came back all normal!

Praise be to the Lord! If these genes had been mutated, the doctor had advised me to have my ovaries removed. A good report indeed!

## Oncology Rehabilitation

During my chemotherapy treatments, I noticed my legs felt as though they had weights on them and I was gaining a pound each week from the medication. I also had numbness in my fingers and toes (caused by the chemotherapy drugs).

My oncologist referred me to the Oncology Rehabilitation program:

I met with the program director/nurse and she said the program included exercise, eating healthy foods, and checking my blood pressure and pulse each time I came.

I signed up and my health insurance paid for it all. I started immediately (July of 2006) and went three times a week for several months. It took me a long time to get where I'm at today. I had to take baby steps and the weight didn't come off until after the chemotherapy ended; however, I did manage to stop putting on more pounds. The numbness went away too.

## Medication

My oncologist instructed me that I must take the drug, Tamoxifen, each day for 5 years (since I had hormone-receptor-positive breast cancer). Basically, Tamoxifen blocks any cancer from getting into your cells and you are supposed to take it for five years (no more than that).

Now, I had researched this medication and I didn't like the side effects: possible weight gain and losing hair. I didn't want to lose my hair again! But my doctor gave me all the advantages of taking it. I started taking it, and didn't notice any side effects.

## My Hair

People's hair grows differently. Mine had always grown pretty fast. When I lost all my hair from the chemotherapy treatments, I dreamed of the day I would be able to brush my hair, pull it up in a ponytail, put in a hair bow, or just wash it. My wigs were beautiful, but I wanted my hair back.

When my chemotherapy ended in August 2006, my family and I took a well deserved vacation to Garden City Beach, South Carolina. One morning, when I stepped out of the shower and looked in the mirror, I noticed something on my head. It looked like blond, peach fuzz, but it was HAIR!

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So the hair started out blond, but it started growing. After a few weeks, it turned brown. I read that hair grows half an inch a month, but I think mine was growing faster. I still had to wear a wig for nine more months, because the hair was so short. I just wasn't comfortable wearing it that short. (I wore a wig from April of 2006 through May of 2007).

The other hair on my body started coming back too. My eyebrows fell out during the last month of treatment. I was thankful to have them for the first three months of the treatments. Also, my eyelashes fell out and the hair everywhere else.

On a positive note: I didn't have to spend money on shampoo, conditioner, or shave my legs.

To camouflage not having any eyelashes, I used more eyeliner on the top lids (powder eye shadow). For my eyebrows, I pulled the wig's bangs down lower and drew in light colored brows. Most people didn't even notice.

As of today, my hair is below my shoulders and it is much thicker. It originally came back curly, but after about nine months, it returned to normal.

## Stages of my hair

Below are some photos showing what my real hair looked like before it fell out due to Chemotherapy. Also, I show the different wig styles I used. I have also included pictures of my real hair since removing the wig in May 2007. This lets you see the stages of my hair.



### December 2005 (M Y R E A L H A I R)

Real Hair: Me with my standard poodle Andre'. I had curled my hair for Christmas.

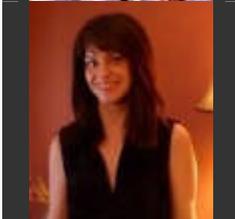
Less than 2 months later on February 10, 2006, I am diagnosed with Breast Cancer.



### April 2006 (M Y R E A L H A I R)

Real Hair: I had cut my hair before surgery, not expecting I would have to take Chemotherapy.

This picture was taken Easter Sunday, about a week before my hair fell out.



### December 2006 (W I G)

I started wearing a wig on April 19, 2006. I had purchased the wig before I started chemotherapy so it could be styled like my real hair.

At Christmas time in my home.



Business trip to England.

Some of the places I visited were London, Stonehenge, and Bath.

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## March 2007 (*W I G*)

I purchased a short wig since I would be travelling to hot and humid Asia for a business trip. Everyone just loved this short style!

In Sydney, Australia.



And in Singapore now.



Now, I'm in Hong Kong.



## April 1, 2007 (*W I G*)

My hair looks pretty much the same.

I'm in Dusseldorf, Germany for business.



## May 24, 2007 (*My REAL REAL HAIR!*)

I finally get to take off the wig and show the world my REAL hair!! I am so excited that my hair is growing and feels wonderful.

This picture shows my hair after 9 months of growing.

I wore the wig for almost 14 months.



## September 2007

My bangs are getting so long that they are getting into my eyes... which makes me happy! I can also put my hair up into a ponytail!!!

I travelled back to England again on business in September.



## October 2007

It's the simple things in life that are important to me now.

I travelled to Shanghai, China for business.

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**December 2007**

I was able to use my large curling iron for the first time!



**March 2008**

I recently flew back from Sao Paulo, Brazil. I was down there training some sales people. I'm back in the US for a while!



**July 2008**

I travelled to Toronto, Canada for business.

I'm having dinner in the 360 Restaurant located at the top of the CN tower. I could see all of Toronto from here -- the restaurant rotated all the way around!



**December 2008**

My hair is so much longer. :-)



**April 2009**

My hair is back to its original length. The last time it was this long was in March 2006.

As a reminder, about a week after I completed my last chemotherapy treatment (end of July 2006), my hair started to grow back. It took almost 3 years for it to grow back to this length. YAY!!!