

Landmark 10th Cancerversary for CoppaFeel! Founder, Kris Hallenga

Today marks 10 years since Kris Hallenga, founder of the charity CoppaFeel!, was diagnosed with incurable, stage 4 breast cancer.

At the age of 23, she stood an incredibly low chance of contracting the disease and has now beaten the odds again surviving it. There are around 54,900 new breast cancer cases in women in the UK every year, that's around 150 every day. The incidence is strongly related to age, the highest incidence rates being in older people. In the time Kris has had breast cancer, incidence rates have increased by around a twentieth (4%) in the UK. But with an increased incidence also comes a decrease in mortality. Cancer mortality in females has decreased by around a fifth (19%) with rates in males decreasing by almost a quarter (23%) over the last 10 years. Although this is good news - 31 women still die every day.[1]

Of all women diagnosed, 78% survive breast cancer beyond 10 years, but this drops dramatically if it is found at a late stage. When diagnosed at its earliest stage, around all women with breast cancer will survive their disease for five years or more, compared with 3 in 20 women when the disease is diagnosed at the latest stage - the late stage Kris was diagnosed with from day one.

Kris, who lives in Cornwall, credits living with a purpose - that being the founder of CoppaFeel! - having an integrative treatment approach and having a strong desire to **LIVE** as being key reasons for surviving as long as she has. Her cancer has spread to her bones, liver and brain but she continues to do well on a combination of medication available on the NHS combined with those that are not, as well as lesser known immune boosting treatments such as mistletoe and vitamin C infusions.

"Setting up CoppaFeel! just a few weeks after my diagnosis not only became a healthy distraction from treatments and my predicament but also a real purpose and reason to survive. I wasn't to know then that CoppaFeel! would have such a big impact on people but since officially becoming a charity we have made a dent on breast awareness in the UK. We have come a long way and of course I couldn't be more proud of our efforts and the inner strength I managed to discover in me to survive against the odds. I wish we could say that after 10 years campaigning we would no longer be needed, but this is sadly not the case as the statistics show. Let's hope I will be writing a similar quote for my 20th cancerversary but that surviving cancer for a long time won't be worthy of a press release because it will be the norm".

As part of Kris' 10th Cancerversary celebrations, Kris is asking for donations towards CoppaFeel!'s life saving work. No matter how big or small the donation, it will go towards ensuring other young people never find themselves in the position that Kris did 10 years ago - being told that their cancer is at a late stage at the time of the diagnosis. To donate, head to: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kristurns10>

Whether you donate or not, Kris is asking you to do something today that reminds you why being alive is so great.

[1] Cancer Research UK website <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer/survival>

EMBARGOED UNTIL 19TH FEB 2019



Editor's notes

Kris is available for interviews - to arrange, please email kris@coppafeel.org or zoe@coppafeel.org

Read more about Kris on her blog <http://boobchiefkris.tumblr.com/>

About CoppaFeel!

CoppaFeel! aims to ensure that all breast cancers are diagnosed at the earliest stage possible by educating people on the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, encouraging them to check regularly and instilling the confidence to seek medical referral if they detect abnormalities. Currently 5% of diagnosed cases are already at stage IV with breast cancer being the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in women under 30 in the UK (181 new cases diagnosed and 12 deaths annually).

CoppaFeel! is the third most recognized breast cancer charity amongst young people and those aware of CoppaFeel! are 50% more likely to check their boobs regularly than those not aware (CoppaFeel! research, sample based upon 18 – 29 year olds. Jan 2019 research)

Find out more about CoppaFeel! at:

www.coppafeel.org

Instagram and Twitter [@coppafeelpeople](https://www.instagram.com/coppafeelpeople)

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