
Dancing through complex care during COVID-19

Video	Audio
Sonya	"Like my mom says, 'It can't rain forever.'"
	Spending even a few minutes with Sonya Goins, one can't help but notice her perpetual positivity.
Sonya Goins Patient	"Even though bad things happen to you, you don't have to take it and be down about it. So, I try to be uplifting."
	As an active, working mom, Sonya — like so many — has been trying to make the most of the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
Sonya	"Yeah, this is home away from home."
Sonya	"I'm a reporter at a community television station."
Nats of music ...	"Brooklyn Park residents are encouraged to report any incidents."
	What people don't see is the behind-the-scenes battle Sonya is fighting for her health.
Sonya	"2020 was not a good year for me. January 2020, I had my colon removed due to Crohn's disease. And then six, seven months later, I was diagnosed with breast cancer."
	Knowing she would need surgery and ongoing treatment ... Sonya came to Mayo Clinic.
Dr. Giridhar	"Sonia came to see us for HER-2-positive breast cancer."
	Sonya's supervising breast oncologist is Dr. Karthik Giridhar.

Karthik Giridhar, M.D. Medical Oncology Mayo Clinic	"HER-2-positive breast cancers are generally a little bit more aggressive. They grow a bit faster other than the hormone-receptor-positive HER-2-negative breast cancers. But nowadays, we have fantastic targeted treatments against these breast cancers."
	There was another factor that made Sonya's case more challenging: her Crohn's disease.
Dr. Giridhar	"Having two complex medical processes automatically makes things more challenging, particularly because a lot of the HER-2 targeted treatments that we give cause a lot of diarrhea. And, so, we were really nervous that some of the treatments we might give would aggravate her Crohn's disease."
	Her care team took an individualized and multidisciplinary approach to her surgical and ongoing treatment.
Tina Hieken, M.D. Surgery Mayo Clinic	"We're able to integrate our treatments with our colleagues in Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology, so that we work together as a team."
Dr. Giridhar	"We had her get reconnected with her gastroenterology and Crohn's colleagues to make sure we had good control. And, thankfully, with these treatments she's getting, it seems that her Crohn's has not flared."
	In January of 2021, Sonya had successful bilateral mastectomy and reconstructive surgery, and then, began radiation and continued targeted therapy.
Sonya	"It's scary for a number of reasons. One, you go through the treatments by yourself. At the start of the pandemic, I couldn't have anybody with me."
Sonya	"Sometimes when I'm in that radiation room, and they've got this mask on your face to hold your head straight during treatment, and I'll have tears streaming down my face because I'm praying. I'm praying that they zap these cancer seeds away. I'm praying that God heals my body. And I'm praying I survive this."
Dr. Giridhar	"Hello. Hey. How are you doing?"
Sonya	"Good. Thanks for coming to see me."
Dr. Giridhar	"Yeah."
	Even through the most difficult of times ...

Sonya	"I pray a lot haha."
	... Sonya has found strength to stay positive ...
Nats TikTok	"I'm so into you."
	... and even connect with her loved ones afar.
Sonya	"I started doing these TikToks to assure my family that lives, you know, outside of Minnesota that I'm doing OK."
TikTok nats	"Mama said knock you out."
Sonya	"After each chemo session, I would do a little fun dance. And I've done the same thing, like the day after I had my mastectomy, I actually did one in my hospital room.
TikTok music nats	
Sonya	"I am calling them dancing through chemo and dancing through breast cancer treatments."
TikTok nats	"Hands up to the sky."
Dr. Giridhar	"Despite everything that she's going with, she's clearly still trying to help others at the same time."
	Not only does Sonya use social media to share her story and encourage others to do self-breast exams and other preventive screening, she also sees the value of getting involved in research.
Dr. Hieken	"She's got a vaccine study that she's interested in participating in that hopefully we decrease the risk of recurrence for patients with her particular type of breast cancer. And vaccines are of great interest to all of us right now because of COVID-19, but have been, I think, the success of the COVID-19 vaccination efforts are really due to all this work in cancer vaccines."
Sonya	"I'm excited because that could potentially, you know, save my life down the line because this type of breast cancer has a high reoccurrence rate."
(nats of bell ringing)	In April, Sonya completed her primary radiation treatments. And while her journey is not quite over ...
Sonya	"... I'm alive. And, so, every day, I can get up, and I'm here. I'm very blessed. And, so, even with this breast cancer diagnosis, I feel incredibly blessed, especially to be able to get, you know, great treatment here. And my faith, I know God's

	got me, so I'm going to be OK."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.