



OVERCOMING BREAST CANCER

Mary Lynn Heindl



DR. BUDWAY talks with patient MARY LYNN HEINDL in a follow-up visit after her breast surgery.

When Mary Lynn Heindl, 74, of Mt. Lebanon was diagnosed with breast cancer on March 17, she was flabbergasted. An avid swimmer and gardener who loves working in her yard, Mary had been in near perfect health her entire life, with the exception of high cholesterol. Breast cancer was the last thing she figured she'd be diagnosed with.

"One day I just started experiencing chest pains, and since my family has a history of heart disease, I thought I was having a heart attack," Mary says. "To discover that I had breast cancer absolutely shocked me."

Mary's primary care physician recommended that she see **Raye J. Budway, M.D.**, the newest addition to the Breast Surgery program at St. Clair Hospital. Dr. Budway specializes in the diagnosis, workup and treatment of breast cancer. As a participating surgeon in the recent National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project's (NSABP) clinical trials, her work has helped inform changes in the treatment protocols for breast cancer, a disease which affects more than 200,000 women and men annually.

Dr. Budway operated on Mary on April 15, performing a left segmental mastectomy, needle localization, sentinel lymph node dissection. The NSABP, which is supported by the National Cancer Institute, has published studies that have led to the establishment of lumpectomy with radiation over radical mastectomy as the standard surgical treatment for breast cancer.

A couple of months after her surgery, Mary says she's feeling wonderful.

"While we discussed several surgical options, I was really interested in a minimally invasive approach to surgery and opted for that," says Mary. "I thought that minimally invasive surgery was cutting-edge and I wanted to have the most modern technique available."

As a surgeon, Dr. Budway is a proponent of a less invasive surgical approach to breast cancer, and sees herself as an educator and partner in her patient's treatment. One of her most important roles, she says, is

to guide her patients through the unfamiliar and upending journey of breast cancer diagnosis and surgery, step by step. Mary could certainly attest to that. Because of the instant rapport she developed with Dr. Budway, she felt at ease before, during and after her surgery.

"Dr. Budway was very gracious," says Mary. "She took the time to answer every question I had, while explaining the whole process of cancer, possible treatment options, and how my body would react to various treatments."

More importantly, Mary says that her impending surgery didn't seem as intimidating after speaking with Dr. Budway.

"She explained the surgical process to me in great detail," says Mary. "I knew exactly what was going to happen during the surgery so I felt more involved in the entire process. As a result, it didn't seem so scary to me. She put me at ease and I didn't have any reservations anymore."

A couple of months after her surgery, Mary says she's feeling wonderful.

"I'm getting my energy back and feeling well," she says. "All of my tests have come back and it has been looking good."

Mary's advice for others who are experiencing the same apprehension about breast cancer surgery is to visit with a surgeon like Dr. Budway — someone who instills confidence in you and addresses your concerns in a patient and understanding manner.

"You don't want a physician or surgeon who is going to sugarcoat everything for you," she says. "You want someone who is confident and calm because they will make you feel the same way."

RAYE J. BUDWAY, M.D.

earned her medical degree at Hahnemann University in Philadelphia. She completed her residency training in general surgery at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital and additional training in surgical critical care at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She served as the Site Surgical Clerkship Program Director for Temple University Medical School, Site Program Director for the Allegheny General Hospital General Surgery Residency program and Director of the Surgical Breast Disease Program and Surgical Intensive Care at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital. She is board certified in surgical critical care and general surgery. She is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and serves on the Fellowship's Commission on Cancer.

