



Lauren C. was only 24 years old when she was diagnosed with lung cancer. Since her childhood, she had struggled with breathing problems. As a child, doctors diagnosed her with asthma and multiple upper respiratory infections. Doctors also diagnosed her twin sister with asthma, lessening Lauren's concern. However, questions started to arise again when her sister grew out of asthma, and Lauren's challenges continued.

In middle school, a trip to the hospital revealed Lauren had abnormal white cell counts. Doctors mentioned the possibility of leukemia but were not overly concerned, so they sent her home to see if it improved. However, she was diagnosed multiple times with bronchitis and other infections during the remainder of her schooling.

In 2019 and early 2020, Lauren experienced a significant fever that would not let up. As this was the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, she attributed it to Covid. In September of 2021, she took a turn for the worse. She and her boyfriend went swimming at a lake, but the moment Lauren entered the water, she was unable to breathe and had to be dragged out of the water by others. For the next two months, Lauren was sick and on multiple antibiotics.

"I remember one day at work. I could not stop shaking and I was hallucinating. I went to the Emergency Room, and they told me I had a 106-degree temperature," Lauren recalls.

At the Emergency Room, the medical team discovered Lauren had a collapsed lung. The doctors gave her more antibiotics and sent her home. At that point, she knew her medical issues had been going on for too long. Despite asking for a CT scan, doctors denied her requests because she did not have a smoking history and was young.

In December 2021, Lauren finally received a CT scan. Within 15 minutes of the scan, her doctor called her to tell her she had a tumor on her lung that they believed had been growing since she was in middle school. In January 2022, a biopsy concluded that it was lung cancer. On March 15th, 2022, Lauren had surgery to remove her right lung's lower and mid lobes.

Following her surgery, Lauren has continued to receive CT scans. Her last scan was in April of 2023, and she was declared to have No Evidence of Disease (NED).

Today, Lauren runs marathons worldwide and enjoys hiking trips. Her backpack has a white ribbon to spread lung cancer awareness. "I have the ribbon on my backpack so that when people ask me about it, I'm able to share with them about my journey and educate them about lung cancer."

Thank you, Lauren, for sharing your story with us and for spreading awareness everywhere you go!

