

Celebrities Who Have Battled Breast Cancer

Rich, poor, famous or not, anyone can get breast cancer.

The two main risk factors for breast cancer are 1) being a woman; and 2) getting older. In fact, according to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, one in eight women will develop breast cancer at some point in her life. Breast cancer has no regard for fame or fortune, and that makes celebrities and other public figures just as likely as anyone else to be diagnosed with the disease.

Public figures who receive a breast cancer diagnosis go through the same emotional struggles as does any other person. And while some celebrities immediately shared the news and battled their cancer publicly, others were more private about their diagnosis and treatment.

No matter when these celebrities made their breast cancer diagnosis known, they have all found power in sharing their survival stories and using their platform to advocate for breast cancer awareness, education and research. Here are just a few:



Kathy Bates

Age at diagnosis: 55

Award-winning actress Kathy Bates was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy. She later told WebMD, “I’m just grateful to have been born at a time when the research made it possible for me to survive. I feel so incredibly lucky to be alive.” She is now the national spokeswoman for the Lymphatic Education and Research Network, having acquired the condition shortly after her mastectomy.

Julia Louis-Dreyfus

Age at diagnosis: 56

In 2017, Julia Louis-Dreyfus became the first actress to win the lead comedy Emmy award six times in a row for the same role. The very next day the Veep star was diagnosed with breast cancer. She announced her diagnosis on Twitter, posting “1 in 8 women get breast cancer. Today, I’m the one.” One year later, after her treatment was complete, she went back to filming the show. At the time she told PEOPLE magazine, “I’m feeling good and feeling quite ready and delighted to focus on funny things as opposed to things that aren’t quite so funny.”



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Andrea Mitchell

Age at diagnosis: 64

The chief foreign affairs correspondent for NBC News was diagnosed with breast cancer after an annual screening. "We discovered it in the earliest stage, it hadn't spread, and I'm already back at work with a terrific prognosis," she told her TV viewers. She also used her built-in audience to encourage women to go for their annual screenings. "Do it," she said.

Dame Maggie Smith

Age at diagnosis: 74

An icon of the stage and screen, Dame Maggie Smith was diagnosed with cancer after discovering a lump on her breast. She underwent chemotherapy while filming *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* in which she plays the esteemed Professor Minerva McGonagall. In an interview she told the *Telegraph*, "The last couple of years have been a write-off, though I'm beginning to feel like a person now." Since then she has starred in numerous film, television and theater roles.



Peter Criss

Age at diagnosis: 63

Most breast cancers occur in women, but men can get it, too. Drummer Peter Criss of the band KISS told CNN that he felt like "the luckiest man on the planet" after surviving breast cancer. He now works to spread awareness about male breast cancer. He told NBC Today, "Every October I hit the streets with thousands of people and march to raise money for breast cancer research."

As these celebrities have shown, it is possible to live a fulfilling life after a breast cancer diagnosis. While there is no way to prevent it, if breast cancer is found early there are more treatment options and better chances for recovery. If you have any questions, call your doctor or your Care N' Care Healthcare Concierge. If you are due for a mammogram, your Healthcare concierge can help you schedule one.

