

## **Kent Hildebrandt**

Testicular cancer is most commonly found in adolescents or young adults. To any young man in my situation, I would highly recommend the book, It's Not About the Bike My Journey Back to Life by Lance Armstrong.

One of the keys to physical, mental, and emotional survival during cancer treatment is maintaining a positive outlook. A cancer patient needs a positive attitude and a persistent hope that health will be restored and the cancer will be defeated. In this way, Lance Armstrong's story is an excellent motivator. Lance not only had cancer in the testicle but it had spread throughout his body. He had surgery and chemotherapy. His was just about the worst possible scenario with the best possible outcome. Reading his story gives a cancer patient hope that he, too, can overcome the many obstacles of cancer, no matter how bad things look at the beginning.

Lance is a great role model for a cancer patient. He has talked openly about his ordeal and written his story in book form in an effort to help other people. When his treatment was completed it would have been easy for him to retire from athletic competition and take a "desk job" because of the ordeal he had been through. Instead, he worked with a passion to eat right exercise, and get his body back in top shape. I think that his successes in athletics have much to do with the persistence and determination not to give up that he learned from his cancer. The physical conditioning certainly helped but I believe that it was the mental conditioning and the lessons learned from adversity that truly made him a champion.

Every cancer patient hopes that his life will someday return to normal. Lance has shown us that life can once again be normal. Sometimes after chemotherapy or surgery, a cancer patient feels so close to death that it is hard to imagine a normal existence. Life seems to revolve around hospitals, doctors, CT scans blood tests, and bad news. Lance shows us that life can return to normal after cancer. He is a husband, a father, and a successful provider for his family. In addition, he is a world class athlete and an author. During my cancer treatment, there were times when I felt very alone. All of my friends were working, going to school, dating, partying and doing all the other things that twenty-one year olds were supposed to be doing. They were all very kind to me but no one really understood my fears, my despair, or my pain. At the most difficult times, I could pick up my Lance Armstrong book and read about someone who knew exactly what I was going through, someone who had felt the same doubts and fears.

It's Not About the Bike My Journey Back to Life is a tremendous story for anyone to read but a lifesaver for a young adult with testicular cancer.