“I want to help cancer patients advocate for themselves”

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When Laura Pearce, 52, was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and given weeks to live, she refused to accept her fate. Now, with the help of cutting-edge cancer treatment and a 360 approach to her health, she is in full remission and looking forward to the future.

WHEN I STARTED TO feel a bit tired on holiday with five of my six children, I put it down to the stress of separating from my husband and selling some of my property over the previous 12 months – and perhaps also being menopausal at the age of 51. As a property developer and owner of my own fitness studio, I was super fit and used to exercising every day. But when I realised that I was struggling to raise my hands to wash my hair in the shower two weeks after returning home, I knew something wasn't right.

'My GP sent me for blood tests thinking I might have contracted hepatitis while getting a tattoo touched up. But within four days I was in A&E because I couldn't get out of bed and was vomiting bile. Even though I'd been diagnosed with primary breast cancer in 2018, I'd been given the all-clear just four months beforehand and my doctor said he didn't think my symptoms were cancer related. But when the results of a CT scan showed that the cancer had spread to 85 per cent of my liver, and I had extensive metastasis to my bones as well as a lung tumour, I was diagnosed with very late stage 4 secondary metastatic breast cancer in August 2023 and told only had 4-6 weeks to live.

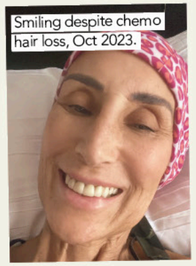
I left the hospital and told all my children and my ex-husband that I was going to die, which was horrific. But I refused to accept my fate. While waiting to receive palliative chemotherapy and hospice care from the NHS, I did loads of research to seek alternatives and was put in touch with the esteemed Professor Vogl, a leading radiologist in Germany who is an expert in transarterial chemoembolization (TACE) treatments.

Unlike systemic chemotherapy administered intravenously or orally to kill cancer cells throughout the body – which can massively affect your immune system and kill lots of good cells – TACE is different because it is very targeted. A trio of strong chemotherapy drugs is applied directly into the head of the tumour and embolised, so they remain in situ, thus helping to shrink tumours and prevent some of the debilitating side effects caused by systemic chemotherapy. Unfortunately, this type of treatment is not offered as standard by the NHS, and they'd already told me that TACE wouldn't work at my late stage of diagnosis. But, during the time it took NHS doctors to set up my chemo, I'd already had one TACE treatment with Vogl in September.

Laura with her youngest daughter Evie on a family holiday in April 2025.

On Mother's Day 2024 with three of her boys, weighing just 5.5 stone.

Having a high dose vitamin C treatment, Sept 2023.



Smiling despite chemo hair loss, Oct 2023.

Out for a walk with dog George, Oct 2024.

When I returned to the UK, I didn't tell my oncologist I'd been to Germany. But when I got neutropenic sepsis and nearly died after one round of palliative chemo, I stopped my UK treatment and continued with Vogl. And thank goodness I did. Despite my deteriorating condition, I spent the next 13 months travelling to Germany every four weeks for treatment, and every time I went, my tumour saw a shrinkage of 10 per cent. The journey was incredibly gruelling but, luckily, my ex-husband, who I'm best friends with, organised everything and looked after me on every trip because I'd dropped to five stone and was so weak, I couldn't walk.

ALL CLEAR

I had my eleventh and final treatment in September 2024 and, miraculously, I am now in total remission, with my most recent scans in March showing that my body has been clear from active cancer for the past six months. Of course, my journey to health has come at a cost, both financially and emotionally, but it has also been a source of inspiration for many. Since sharing my story on social media, I have received hundreds of messages from individuals who are seeking similar treatment after being told they are only eligible for palliative care in the UK, which is why it's so important for me to get my story out there.

The innovative treatments I received in Germany are approximately a decade ahead of what is currently offered by the NHS, and many oncologists here remain uneducated about the developments in TACE, so they are giving out misinformation to UK patients – although my UK oncology team now recognises the miraculous nature of my recovery and frequently seek updates from me to share within their multidisciplinary team meetings. I'm not trying to shoehorn anyone into seeking alternative treatment, because ultimately it's every person's choice.

Doing yoga in July 2023 with no idea she was riddled with cancer.

Laura after completing treatment with Dr Vogel.

Laura relaxing in Australia, April 2025, and in full remission.

But I'm passionate about sharing this vital information so people can be aware of all their options, make informed decisions rather than fear-based choices, and advocate for themselves.

I'm not saying, "Vogl can cure you". But I am saying there is another option, and I am using my TikTok account to pass on the information to help alleviate some of the fear. So far, I've introduced around 200 people to Vogl and helped one woman set up a GoFundMe page – she raised £35,000 in two weeks and is now on her sixth treatment.

I'm also keen to share the details of the many lifestyle changes I've researched and implemented, from radically changing my diet and improving my gut health so my body is better able to absorb nutrients, to taking repurposed medication to block cancer-feeding pathways as well as supplements to boost my immune system, increase detoxification, and reduce inflammation – because inflammation levels are really, really high when you're having chemo, and cancer loves inflammation.

It's my passion to keep sharing information and document my journey, even if the cancer returns. I'm not daft enough to think that it can't come back at any time, but I no longer believe my body is a cancer-producing environment, and I feel that if I look after myself, I've got a good chance of keeping it at bay.

If cancer does raise its head again, I'll have more treatment immediately and deal with it. But for now, I'll make hay while the sun shines. I've just spent a month in Australia with my family, and I have every determination to be here for my family and help as many people as I possibly can going forwards.

Christmas 2024 with five of her kids and grandson after getting the all clear.

Follow Laura's journey on TikTok at @lauralucy72 and at facebook.com/laura.pearce.942.

• *At the point of going to press, Laura's blood results were within the normal range.*