

# Tennis Mom Betty Agassi On Her Breast Cancer Journey

(NAPSA)—Americans' risk of getting and dying from cancer continues to decline and survival rates for many cancers continue to improve, according to the American Cancer Society. That's encouraging news for those who are cancer-free, as well as the more than 10 million Americans living as cancer survivors.

In fact, the largest group of cancer survivors is breast cancer patients, who represent approximately 20 percent of all cancer survivors. Early detection and more treatment options have contributed significantly to these improved statistics.

But even for those living with breast cancer and celebrating survivorship—more than 2 million women in the United States—prevention of recurrent breast cancer is a critical priority. Breast cancer may not just come back in the breast: It can come back in other tissues and organs such as the stomach, brain and liver. Now more than ever, breast cancer patients are not only celebrating life, but focusing their attention on becoming champions of their own health.

In 2000, Betty Agassi, mother of world tennis champion Andre Agassi, was diagnosed with breast cancer. Now six years after her breast cancer diagnosis, Mrs. Agassi focuses her energy on encouraging other breast cancer survivors to stay on top of their health and get informed about advances in the disease. As part of this commitment, Mrs. Agassi partnered with Novartis to launch an education initiative at the U.S. Open in 2006—Andre Agassi's last as a professional tennis player.

"I want women to get as much

---

**"In 2000, when my doctor told me that I had breast cancer, I was truly devastated. Now, six years later, I feel great and have a good prognosis."**

**—Betty Agassi**  
Ⓢ

---

information as they can about what's new in breast cancer. Speak to your doctor; find out what new and existing treatment options are available and ask the right questions to help minimize the risk of your breast cancer returning."

Through this initiative, Mrs. Agassi is directing women and their families to [www.ribbonofpink.com](http://www.ribbonofpink.com), a Web site that provides information about progress in breast cancer treatment and tips for healthy living, which may help women to protect themselves after their surgery.

Mrs. Agassi recently sat down to discuss her own journey with breast cancer and her personal mission of educating other women with breast cancer on ways to reduce breast cancer recurrence.

**Question:** Obviously, this is a personal cause, one that lies close to your heart. Can you tell us more about your own experience?

**Betty Agassi:** In 2000, when my doctor told me I had breast cancer, I was truly devastated. Now, six years later, I feel great and have a good prognosis. But, that said, I know that there is a possibility of my breast cancer coming back. I'm lucky to have the support of my family, in particu-

lar, but I do understand that working to prevent breast cancer recurrence is part of my everyday life. Part of my journey and the reason I'm doing this is that I'd like to make sure that other women do the same.

**Q:** What is your most urgent message?

**BA:** Never stop learning, never stop questioning your doctor and never lose hope. It really is so important for women to understand that the breast cancer journey does not stop after initial treatment. I would think that any woman who has been diagnosed with breast cancer and gone through her treatment regimen would want to take any necessary precautions to make sure the cancer does not return.

**Q:** If you could offer three tips to those doing everything they can to minimize the chances of their breast cancer coming back, what would they be?

**BA:** Knowledge, communication and support are the keys to staying on top of your health and minimizing the chances of your breast cancer coming back. Staying informed about new and existing treatment options and knowing which options you may be a candidate for are vital. So, communicate with your doctor.

To learn more about Betty Agassi and her commitment to patient education, visit [www.ribbonofpink.com](http://www.ribbonofpink.com).

For more information, visit the following Web sites: [www.nci.nih.gov/newscenter/pressreleases/Report\\_nation\\_2004\\_release](http://www.nci.nih.gov/newscenter/pressreleases/Report_nation_2004_release), [www.webmd.com/content/pages/24/113001.htm](http://www.webmd.com/content/pages/24/113001.htm) and [www.breastcancer.org/quality\\_life.html](http://www.breastcancer.org/quality_life.html).