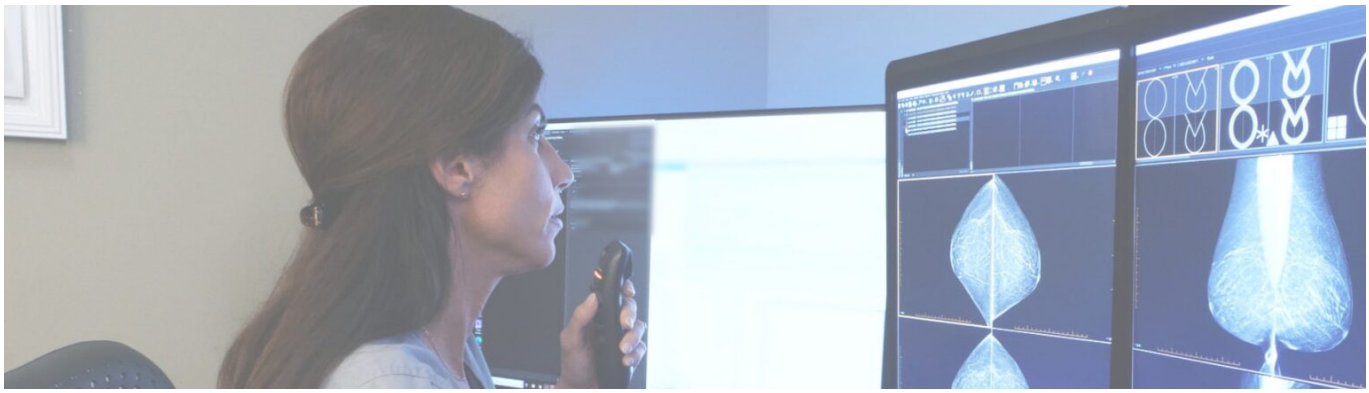

A Patient (and Physician) Save: Dr. Dana Bonaminio's Journey Through Breast Cancer

Dr. Dana Bonaminio, a breast radiologist in Nashville, has spent her career providing mammography care for women, promoting the importance of preventative care and early detection, and encouraging women to advocate for their breast health. But in 2024, she found herself on the other side of the conversation, facing the diagnosis of breast cancer herself.

Supplemental Screenings Led to Early Diagnoses

In addition to annual screening mammography, her own journey began after a routine supplemental breast MRI revealed suspicious masses in her left breast. Her care team followed up with a diagnostic mammogram and ultrasound, which confirmed four small masses correlating with the MRI findings. The following day, she underwent two ultrasound-guided biopsies.

"For me, the very worst part was the wait to learn about the tumor markers," Dr. Bonaminio shared. She was scared, but hopeful. "I have two little kids," she said.

The Power of Contrast-Enhanced Mammography

Despite a cancer diagnosis, her biopsy results brought a sense of relief. She learned she had favorable tumor markers and would not be required to have chemotherapy treatments, a stage one diagnosis. While she would need a bilateral mastectomy and reconstruction, there was hope she could avoid radiation if her lymph nodes and surgical margins were clear.

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Before surgery, Dr. Bonaminio chose to have a contrast-enhanced mammogram. As a radiologist, she knew the power of contrast but seeing it as a patient was even more eye-opening. The contrast revealed cancers that conventional imaging had missed, hidden within her dense breast tissue.

“This technology could have caught my cancer earlier,” she said. “We need to ask why contrast-enhanced mammography isn’t offered as a screening tool. The answer should be yes, and we need to push for approval.”

After her bilateral mastectomies, she relied on her support system throughout her recovery. “It’s a solo battle, but I wasn’t alone,” she reflected. Ten days post-op, she received her final pathology results, and her recovery journey began.

Fueled to Advocate

Dr. Bonaminio leaned into advocacy after her reconstruction procedure. She participated in the Komen Walk in Nashville, attended the Pink Ribbon Good Gala in St. Louis and was honored at the Tennessee Titans Crucial Catch Game.

In early 2025, her experience led her to start a Pink Ribbon Good chapter in Nashville. The non-profit organization serves patients and their families affected by breast and gynecological cancer, offering free healthy meals, rides to treatment, housecleaning essentials and other support and resources.

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RP’s Practice Leadership Summit in May 2025

At RP’s 2025 Practice Leadership Summit in Chicago, Dr. Bonaminio bravely shared her journey with her colleagues. RP radiologists and leaders joined RP CEO and Board Chair Rich Whitney and the practice in donating to support the Pink Ribbon Good Nashville Chapter, giving $30,000 to support the newly created organization. Later, in October, Pink Ribbon Good’s Nashville Chapter held its inaugural fundraising event “Ignite the Fight.”

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Inaugural Ignite the Fight event for the Pink Ribbon Good, Nashville Chapter, in October 2025

Now, with the perspective of both physician and patient, Dr. Bonaminio is committed to advocacy. She said, “Whether it’s legislation for better access to care or supporting nonprofits that provide essential services, I’m excited for the rest of my career.”

Supporting the Work

Join Dr. Bonaminio in supporting the work of Pink Ribbon Good. Visit the website to find out more about their work and to support the area of greatest need or the Nashville chapter, founded by Dr. Bonaminio.

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