

Dear friend,

Nearly four years ago, after two weeks of constant coughing and wheezing, a chest x-ray found a 3 cm tumour on my lung.

I'm sure you can imagine how shocked I was.

When BC Cancer's Dr. Stephen Lam confirmed it was late stage lung cancer, my heart sank. As a family physician, I know that it's one of the deadliest types of cancer.

Mine is also a very different kind of lung cancer, unique to people who have never smoked. This is the same cancer Dr. Lam is studying, looking for ways to prevent it. Although it's too late to prevent my cancer, I hope his research means other people don't have to suffer.

Thankfully because of the type and stage of my cancer, even though it was stage 4, an innovative new treatment was available. This targeted therapy, in the form of a pill, is much more precise than chemotherapy, with fewer side effects.

The last few years have been a rollercoaster. The pill worked for a period of time, but then the cancer took over and other treatments were necessary—I've had chemotherapy, radiation and even tried immunotherapy.

To top it off, when I was going through treatment, my husband suffered a heart attack. Our family, friends and church rallied around us and took care of him. I am so thankful to each and every one of them, all our healthcare providers, and God who gives us life and good response to treatment.

Today, I'm on a new kind of targeted pill, and it's working really well ... for the time-being.

Despite the odds, I am enjoying the gift of the "extra time". If I had gotten this same illness 10 years earlier, I would be dead by this point.

The progress in genomic testing, targeted treatment and immunotherapy in recent years has given lung cancer patients like me hope for the future, and better quality of life during treatment.

That's why now is the right time to move ahead with even more research, especially in cancer prevention. I have no stronger wish than to spare others what my family and I have gone through.

I am a proud supporter of the BC Cancer Foundation, and I hope you will join me by making a donation to help prevent more cancers and save more lives.

Thank you,
Dr. Cynthia Chan

To donate online visit www.bccancerfoundation.com

