

It seems that there are so many charitable causes that you cannot begin to give to all of them. My husband and I give to our church and the charities that it sponsors. That is the bulk of our cash donations. We also give to the food shelf and donate clothing and house hold items to the homeless and needy. It was not until my sister developed cancer that I thought about donating to medical research.

Eighteen months ago my sister called me to let me know that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. This came as a huge surprise to both of us because there is no history in our family. She is an x-ray technician so she is very aware of the importance of getting mammograms and she has been getting one every year since she was forty years old. It was during her annual mammogram that the lump showed up on the test. The doctors told her all of her options and shared with her that they thought she would be a good candidate for a new treatment. There have been many advancements in breast cancer research and they wanted to try a new chemotherapy on her. Since my sister is in the medical field she has always had an interest in new research. She was willing to try the treatments. If they did not work they would remove her breast. They explained that she would not be risking the cancer spreading because the type she had was slow to develop, and they felt that it was at a very early stage. The breast cancer research that developed the treatments they were to use on her was done at the Mayo Clinic.

I called our nephew who is a pharmaceutical researcher at the Mayo and asked him if he could find additional information about this particular breast cancer research. He told me that a friend of his was working on the breast cancer research team and he could find out what type of results they are getting with the patients that have been taking the treatments. He called me a few days later and shared that the results have been very good. He also thought that it was a plus for my sister that she was chosen for the treatments, because they are only taking candidates that have a good chance of responding to the treatments. The breast cancer research project has been working on this cure for over ten years, so they need to show great results to keep the project going.

My sister had her first treatment seventeen months ago and the lump and all signs of cancer are gone. She is in a long term follow up group so they are checking her often for any changes. She did not have to have the surgery and she is back to doing all the activities that she had done previously.