



## Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group



Newsletter October 2014 Issue 194

### Explore Your Options

**Dr Sanjay Azad is a Consultant Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeon at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre and an Assistant Professor at North Ontario School of Medicine.**



Born in India, he graduated with honours from the Armed Forces Medical College in Pune. He served the Indian Navy with distinction as a naval officer and went on to do his Masters Degree from the same institution.

He moved to the UK and completed an extensive 6 year training programme in all aspects of Plastic Surgery including Fellowships in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery and Cosmetic Surgery.

He was a Consultant Plastic Surgeon at the tertiary care hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust in Birmingham for 6 years. His repertoire included treating war wounded UK soldiers.

He was Course Director for numerous national courses and workshops and also examiner for the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. He is widely published and has also written a textbook on general surgery.

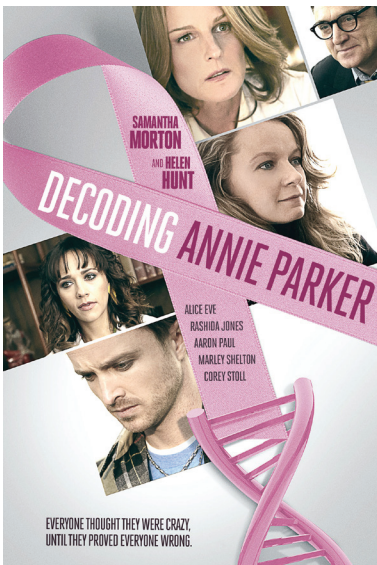
### SPECIAL GUEST

Dr. Azad will be the special guest at the next BCSG meeting on October 8 at 8:00 pm

He now lives and works in northwest Ontario and his practice is inclusive of many conditions, once of which being breast surgery and breast reconstruction for benign and malignant disease. This includes reconstruction after cancer (Immediate and Delayed for mastectomy) and for benign conditions like Tubular breast deformity, Breast asymmetry. Breast reconstruction for deformity following breast conserving surgery. Also male Gynaecomastia and Chest wall reconstruction after resection and radiotherapy.

Dr. Azad will be the special guest at the October Breast Cancer Support Group meeting. We encourage everyone to attend to take part in the support group and the special presentation.

**BREAST  
RECONSTRUCTION  
AWARENESS DAY  
OCTOBER 15, 2014**



### Inside This Issue

- Apps for your smart phone or tablet
- Coming Soon - A new BCSG Website
- What Interests You?
- Decoding Annie Parker Movie
- Support and Encouragement

Thunder Bay  
Breast Cancer  
Survivors Forum



## There's an App for That!

Visit the Willow site for a complete listing.

If you own a smartphone or tablet, there's a variety of health-related apps that you may be interested in downloading. Whether you're concerned about your breast health, have been diagnosed with breast cancer or are a caregiver, here are some free tools from reputable non-profit organizations that you may find helpful.

*Please note: these apps have not been tested or endorsed by us; they are for informational purposes only and not intended to replace the care of your health care team.*

**MyMedRec** by Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) This app was designed by several of Canada's leading health care associations as a safe and smart way to help you get the most out of your medicines. It serves as a portable, up-to-date health record that can be easily shared with anyone involved in your healthcare. It keeps track of the medicines that you are taking and many other elements related to your health. You can use the app to remind yourself when to take a dose and when to refill your prescription.

### **My Cancer Coach by BreastCancer.org and Fight Colorectal Cancer**

This app provides breast and colon cancer patients with treatment information specific to their diagnosis. It includes calendar, note-taking and audio-recording functions, and has a glossary of terms as well as links to additional resources.

### **Your Man Reminder by Rethink**

**Breast Cancer** This breast health awareness app gives you regular reminders from "hot guys" to check your breasts. It advises you on what kinds of changes to look for when checking your breasts. The app also allows you to keep notes on anything unusual you discover while checking your breasts and have it handy when you see your

doctor. You can use the Doctor's Appointment Reminder feature to set your next doctor's appointment and get a reminder.

### **Ask The Nutritionist: Recipes for Fighting Cancer by The Dana Farber Cancer Institute**

This app was designed to help people with cancer find recipes for getting through treatment and staying healthy, although it is a useful tool for anyone looking for healthy recipes. It contains over 100 easy-to-prepare recipes including snacks, main dishes and desserts.

Developed with Dana-Farber's staff of dietitians, it is designed to help find the optimal diet for any type of cancer. It offers the ability to search by symptoms you may experience while going through treatment (e.g., nausea or mouth sores), so that you can find meals to help ease symptoms.

The app allows you to access a list of ingredients, directions on how to prepare the dish, a shopping list to use at the grocery store, nutrition tips, and nutritional analysis information. New recipes are added each month.

### **My Cancer Manager by Cancer Support Community**

This app provides cancer patients and caregivers with a set of tools that address their physical and emotional concerns related to living with cancer and its treatment, such as fatigue, sleep, sadness, anxiety, pain, and hope. With this app, you can monitor your concerns over time, so you can report progress to your health care team. It also allows you to record your thoughts and questions in a personal journal.

### **Cleveland Clinic Stress Meditations by Cleveland Clinic**

Feeling stressed out? With this app, created by Cleveland Clinic's Wellness Institute, you can practice clinically proven relaxation techniques that will help you reduce and control your feelings of stress. The app features seven different relaxation techniques.

## **A New Look is Coming for the Thunder Bay BCSG Website**


The Steering Committee is very excited to announce that a new and revised website will be launched at end of October. The new site will feature information about our group, a gallery of photos and links to conferences and special events.

**Watch for the email announcing the unveiling of the new site!**

## **What's important to you?**

We want to know what kinds of information you want to read about in the newsletter and discuss at the support group meetings,

Share your thoughts with a steering committee member at a meeting or send us an email. We will do our best to gather relevant information and/or contact health care professionals who can share this information with the group.

**"Breast cancer changes you, and the change can be beautiful."** 

**Jane Cook,**  
breast cancer survivor

## A Story of Hope & Inspiration: Decoding Annie Parker

By Ishana Nath, Mediaplanet

**PATIENT PERSPECTIVE** Three-time cancer survivor Annie Parker discusses how her story became a major motion picture and a source of inspiration for audiences everywhere.

**OVERCOMING CANCER.** Annie Parker discusses the role of genetics and perseverance in her battle against cancer. Cancer has been a part of Annie Parker's life for as long as she can remember. "My cancer journey started when I was actually in my mother's womb because that's when she found out she had breast cancer," she says.

Parker was only 14 when her mother passed away from breast cancer. In the decade that followed, she lost her sister and her first-cousin to the same disease and began to see a pattern. She became convinced that she was next. "In my heart and my gut, I just knew that this had to be put down to more than bad luck," she says.



It was the 1960s and at the time, the word genetics wasn't really in Parker's vocabulary. In fact, it was commonly thought breast cancer resulted from environmental, not genetic, factors. Parker spent hours in the library researching causes of cancer and frequently checked her breasts for lumps. She was 29 when she found one. "When I was diagnosed with breast cancer, it almost put a smile on my face," she recalls, explaining that the diagnosis seemed to validate her research and concerns.

Battling breast cancer in 1980 was only the beginning for Parker. She went on to survive ovarian cancer in 1988, and a malignant tumour behind her liver in 2005—three different cancers in less than three decades. In that time, research emerged confirming Parker's suspicions that there was more to her cancer than bad fortune.

### BAD GENES

One in nine women are expected to develop breast cancer in their lifetime, making it the most common cancer among Canadian women. While some of these cases are the result of "sporadic" breast cancer, research published in 1990 by Dr. Marie-Claire King confirmed Parker's suspicion that there is also a genetic link for this disease – known as the BRCA gene mutation. During her search for answers, Parker worked with King, calling herself

a "very willing guinea pig" for the geneticist's studies. Women who carry the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene have up to an 85 percent higher chance of developing breast cancer as well as an increased risk of developing ovarian cancer. It was these odds that prompted actress Angelina Jolie to have a preventative double mastectomy when she discovered that she carried the BRCA1 gene, according to her New York Times op-ed. Parker was one of the first patients tested for the BRCA gene mutation and when her results came back positive, she once again smiled. She has since become an advocate for genetic testing.

"I feel that it's my role to give people the tools [to get tested]," she says. "What they choose to do with it is completely up to them." From genetic screening to the big screen This incredible story of survival has now made its way from Toronto to Hollywood.

Directed by Steven Bernstein, Decoding Annie Parker tells the story of two women and their relentless search for answers. The film intertwines the personal struggles of Parker, played by Samantha Morton, with the genetic research of King, played by Helen Hunt, and the ultimate discovery of the BRCA gene.

During Q&A sessions after film screenings, Parker met multiple audience members who had been touched by cancer and were moved by her story. Some even brought their BRCA tests for her to autograph.

**"This is a film not just about breast cancer, in fact, in some ways it's not even about breast cancer," Bernstein said in an interview with the Dallas Film Society. "It's about survival. It's about faith. It's about humour...It's about those things that allow us to survive catastrophic things."**

The full story can be read on the Willow Website.



Visit the Movie website at  
<http://decodingannieparkerfilm.com/>



## A Look Ahead

**Tbaytel Luncheon of Hope**  
**Friday, October 3, 2014**  
Victoria Inn

**Canadian Breast Cancer  
Foundation**  
**CIBC Run for the Cure**  
**Sunday, October 5**  
Royal Legion Track (Delaney  
Arena)

**BRA Day**  
**October 15, 2014**  
[www.bra-day.com/breast-reconstruction/](http://www.bra-day.com/breast-reconstruction/)

### MEETINGS

October 8th  
November 12th  
December 10th

7:00 pm  
St. Michael's Church  
Red River Road

### Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer: Taking Control Conference

Saskatchewan Breast Cancer  
Connect Inc  
October 17-18, 2014  
Radisson Plaza Hotel

[http://  
livingwithmetastaticbreastcancer-  
takingcontrol.eventbrite.ca](http://livingwithmetastaticbreastcancer-takingcontrol.eventbrite.ca)

### CBCN's Fall 2014 Network News is now available!

In this issue:

- Hereditary Breast Cancer • Know Your Risk
- Q&A: Genetic Counselling
- Preventative Treatment
- Survivor Story

- Healthy Living: • Getting Active
- Nutrition and Recovery

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Thunder Bay  
Breast Cancer  
Support Group

As fellow support group  
members, we would be  
happy to hear from you.

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Canadian Breast Cancer Network  
Réseau canadien du cancer du sein

[www.cbcn.ca](http://www.cbcn.ca)



### Breast & Hereditary Cancer Support

[www.willow.org](http://www.willow.org)  
1-888-778-3100



Supportive Care  
(807) 684-7310  
Toll Free  
(877) 696-7223  
No Referral Needed



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Foundation

The Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group  
gratefully acknowledges the funding support of the  
Northern Cancer Fund of the Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences Foundation. All gifts made to the  
Foundation stay in Northwestern Ontario to benefit  
its residents.

[healthsciencesfoundation.ca](http://healthsciencesfoundation.ca)

### GO GREEN

If you have an email address, please consider receiving the newsletter  
electronically. Not only does it help to keep our postage costs lower, it helps to  
keep our environment green. Simply sign the guest book at the next meeting  
and provide your email address or send a quick email to [bcsg@tbaytel.net](mailto:bcsg@tbaytel.net)  
and you will be added to our E-List.