



Cancer Recovery Program | Programme de rétablissement à la suite d'un cancer

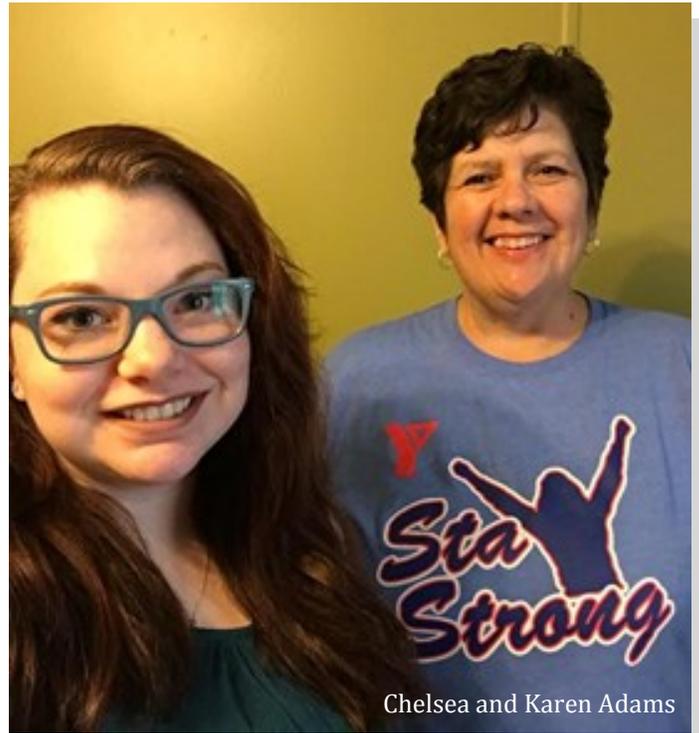
## Life After Cancer: Karen's Story

**"Without the Stay Strong Program I would still be at home, on my couch, depressed and unable to walk," says Karen Adams, a breast cancer survivor. "This program was the push I needed to get my life back."**

Karen entered the Stay Strong Program in April, following the completion of her breast cancer treatments in February. Unfortunately, Karen's chemotherapy treatments caused neuropathy (nerve damage) to develop in her feet, delaying her radiation treatments and bringing her significant pain and weakness. Karen was unable to walk and had to use a wheelchair for a time, eventually getting some mobility back with a walker. When Karen arrived at the Saint John Regional YMCA for her first session in the Stay Strong Program, she relied heavily on her walking poles to get around.

**Karen completed the Stay Strong Program in July: "I feel fantastic and no longer need the poles for stability; in fact I now walk 2 miles a day!" says Karen. "I don't know where I would be without the program."**

Karen highly recommends the program and has become an unofficial ambassador for it, encouraging more people to join and cheering on those who have already started. The journey was tough, but with the endless support and encouragement of the staff, Karen made it through. "Every time I was there they would encourage me to take just one more step," Karen says, looking back, "they would say even if it's only 10 more steps, it's still 10 steps further than before." Not only does Karen encourage other cancer survivors to participate, but has inspired her daughter to join her at the YMCA and become more physically active as well.



Chelsea and Karen Adams

Although Karen completed the program at the beginning of July, she has kept up her membership at the Saint John Regional YMCA and walks two miles every morning on the treadmill. She continues to receive encouragement and support from the staff in the program: "Even though I have finished the program, Gina, Carolyn and Andrea still encourage and support me," says Karen, "often coming over to the treadmill to chat while I walk."

Karen wants others to experience the benefits of having the support and encouragement offered through the life-changing Stay Strong Program. "I want this program to grow," she says, "so that others have the support they need to get back to life after cancer."

To learn more about the Stay Strong Program please contact Gina Spear-Burrows, (506) 632-5446. To make a gift to support this program, please call (506) 648-6400 or visit [sjrhf.ca/ask10for10](http://sjrhf.ca/ask10for10)

