

THRIVER Ryan Switzer

Cutting-edge research helped Ryan beat colorectal cancer



The call was a gut punch. Ryan Switzer, a young father and husband, was fit, active and training for a triathlon when he recognized he was getting weaker instead of stronger. Sitting in the doctor's office with his wife, at her three-month follow-up appointment for a brain aneurysm, they were ecstatic to hear her medical nightmare was over. Then Ryan's cell phone rang.

After receiving the news that he had Stage II colorectal cancer, he enlisted the doctors at Duke Cancer Institute to help him fight his cancer head-on. His radiation oncologist offered him a spot in a new clinical trial, and he jumped at the chance to participate.



Ryan and his team at the Victory Ride to Cure Cancer

I don't wish cancer on anyone, but the quality of care and the advancements in medicine are definitely encouraging.



The Switzer family at Disney World

The Road to Recovery and Beyond

Ryan's treatment was intense and included chemotherapy, daily radiation, drug studies and a total of nine surgeries. Facing setbacks along his three-year battle, Ryan was determined to conquer cancer. Ryan credits critical cancer research, which provided early diagnosis and better treatments, to his recovery.

Now five years in remission, it's "game on!" Paying it forward, Ryan's perseverance and optimistic attitude continue to radiate as he raises awareness and funds for cancer research. Ryan is a team captain in the Victory Ride to Cure Cancer, and he competes in charity runs, cycling events and Ironman triathlons. In addition, he uses his experience to help other families faced with cancer by engaging in programs centered on whole family wellness. Ryan believes having cancer strengthened his family and now helps them live better lives by giving back to others.

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