

Ohio wife, husband both battling breast cancer

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(AP) -- A husband and wife are both undergoing treatment for breast cancer in a case that illustrates how the disease can strike both sexes. Mike and Barbara Welsh, of Monroe, in southwestern Ohio, each had surgery this year after separate discoveries that they had breast cancer.

Barbara Welsh, 63, had surgery in January, went through chemotherapy and is now starting radiation treatments.

After surgery in July, her 62-year-old husband is determining the next step in his recovery, which may include [chemotherapy](#) and radiation. He had a modified radical mastectomy on his right breast.

Mike Welsh says he is speaking up about his cancer to make other men aware that [breast cancer](#) is not just something that strikes women.

"If I could help 10 people or 100, that's a start," said Welsh, a retired AK Steel bricklayer.

Male breast cancer is still rare, with about 1,900 cases expected to be diagnosed this year, with about 440 men dying from the illness.

Mike Welsh first noticed something was wrong when he got into his car and felt discomfort as he strapped the seat belt across his chest.

After his wife began her treatments, he asked his doctor if men could get breast cancer. His doctor referred him to the Compton Center at Atrium

Medical Center, in Middletown, where he got the diagnosis.

The couple, married 41 years, laugh about their experience to help stave off the depression that sunk in after their diagnoses.

"You've got to laugh at it," Mike Welsh said. "You have good days, bad days and better days. We're having fun with it."

He and his wife joke that she glows from [radiation treatment](#) that she has begun.

"I'm going to set her outside for Halloween," Mike Welsh said.

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