

Zita Roberts
1968 – 2007



What it's like to die of lung cancer

By someone who did

Zita Roberts was 36, had three kids, smoked, and had a nagging cough that wouldn't go away. It was lung cancer.

"They said it was stage 4, it was terminal, it was inoperable. My first reaction was who's going to look after the kids? My kids are the most important people in my life. It hurt to think I won't be there. I look at them and I think, oh my God, who's going to kiss them good night? Who's going to do those little things that only I can do? My kids are going to be without a mother."

Zita underwent chemotherapy and the pain, vomiting and hair loss that went with it.

"I didn't think I'd make it through Christmas ... so I'm blessed. It's a painful process. This is what happens; this is what you have to deal with once a week. There's no easy way. How do you deal with the fact you're going to die?"

Zita dealt with it courageously, with dignity and determined that others should learn from her story. She visited schools to speak about the effects of smoking.

"I wanted to get the message across about what they should expect if they choose to smoke. It's not enough just to see what it does to your lungs, I want them to see how it tears apart a family, emotionally. I didn't want young kids to find themselves 20 years from now in the same situation. I didn't want kids to be left without mums and dads. I don't want anyone else to go through what I'm going through. If I can stop just one person having to go through this..."

Zita Roberts passed away in February 2007, aged 38.



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