



## **The Making of Janac Sportswear**

*APPEARED ON CBC TV SHOW DRAGONS' DEN NOV 5  
(and made a deal with 2 dragons, check it out on [www.cbc.ca/dragonsden](http://www.cbc.ca/dragonsden))*

Necessity is the mother of invention, as they say. Never did I think I would be inventing products to help women post-breast cancer surgery – until I went through it myself. Here is my story.

In 1995 at the age of 43, I found an odd dimpling on the side of my left breast when I was doing a routine self-examination. I went to my GP who said he thought it was nothing, but arranged for me to have a mammogram—just in case. I had the mammogram and an ultrasound and was told there was something unusual. I then went for an appointment with a surgeon who, after a physical examination, told my husband and I that I had breast cancer. To say that we were shocked is an understatement. I had no risk factors, no breast cancer in my family, a non-smoker, social drinker, active and the mother of two sons, who were 20 and 22 at the time. We had planned to go to a family wedding in England, and my surgeon said for us to go and have the surgery when I return. Once in England, I had to tell my parents and two sisters, my husband's family and our friends. I received a lot of love and support and felt strong enough to face whatever I had to face on my return to Canada.

I had my first surgery, a lumpectomy on October 5<sup>th</sup>, but was told that I would have to have a mastectomy because they couldn't get clear margins. So on November 7<sup>th</sup> I had a mastectomy. The cancer that I had was lobular carcinoma and lobular carcinoma in situ. Because in situ was found I have been warned that it isn't unusual for it to be in the other breast. However, I did not opt to have the other breast removed. I am checking it regularly and I still go to the cancer clinic for annual checkups. Luckily the lymph nodes were clear, so I wasn't offered chemotherapy as a follow up treatment. Instead, I started to take Tamoxifen and continued on it for 5 years. Since having the cancer, I have been more physically active and take a more pro-active attitude with regards to my health.

In 1998 I was informed that Kathy Levy wanted to form a dragon boat team for breast cancer survivors called ***Knot-a-Breast***. My friend Anna and I went along to the first meeting and joined. I am still a member and love the support, interaction with the other paddlers and the exercise that dragon boating brings.

However, as much as we loved the sport, we realized that we couldn't find a suitable bra top for those of us who had had a mastectomy, so I set about to design one. I had 12 made and asked my team mates to try them out and give me feedback. Their feedback indicated that I had the "perfect" sportsbra. I started a business called Janac Sportswear and launched the original sportsbra "Aggie" and after much success has added two new styles; "Dinah" and "Anna", named after some of my teammates.

One day while I was exercising and stretching over a Swiss ball, I looked down and found my prosthesis pointing up to the ceiling and my natural breast lying flat. I fell off the ball laughing and realized that my gel prosthesis didn't react like my natural breast when wearing the sportsbra – hence the creation of the ***Been-a-Boob Prosthesis***. The Been-a-Boob is a pocket made of a special quick-drying material and filled with polypropylene pellets which molds into the shape of a breast when put in the pocket of the sportsbra or any mastectomy bra or swimsuit.

When you have been faced with an invasive surgery with disfiguring results, one of the challenges is to be comfortable with your appearance. One of the ways to re-gain your confidence is to feel good in the body you now have. Women can enjoy being active after breast cancer surgery wearing products that are comfortable and supportive. The sportswear that I created is unique because there is no other mastectomy sportsbra on the market that can be worn as a bra top. The sports bras are designed to look and feel like the sports bras you wore before your surgery. Exercising regularly and remaining active continues to be important to women's overall health, rehabilitation and quality of life, and especially so for those living with a chronic or life threatening disease such as breast cancer.<sup>1</sup>

Whether you are running a marathon, participating in an exercise such as dragon boating or aerobics, walking your dog, working in your garden or in your home, nobody will know you are wearing prosthesis. Testimonials  
<http://www.janacsportswear.ca/testimonial.htm>

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<sup>1</sup> Courneya et al. 2001. Exercise adherence in breast cancer survivors training for a dragon boat race competition: A preliminary investigation. *Psycho-Oncology*. 10:444-452.

## **Prosthetic Sportsbra developed for women with breast cancer**

Bra gives women natural look after breast surgery

**BURLINGTON, December XX, 2005** – In 2003, breast cancer survivor Janet Cockburn created Janac Sportswear, a unique line of sportswear created for women living with the after effects breast cancer surgery. The Janac sportsbra was designed to accommodate the “Been-a-Boob” - a prosthetic insert that simulates and reacts like a real breast when exercising. The “Been-a-Boob” prosthetic is inserted into a Janac Sportsbra where it is held firmly in place to mimic a natural breast. The bra can be worn as a bra-top when exercising without being hidden under a shirt. The Been-a-Boob can be worn in a regular mastectomy bra and also a swimsuit.

In 1995 at the age of 43, Cockburn developed breast cancer and underwent a lumpectomy followed by a mastectomy. Shortly after her recovery Cockburn joined a Dragon boat Team of breast cancer survivors. *“We call ourselves “Knot-a-Breast”. It was the best thing I could have done to help me heal both physically and emotionally. Being part of the team has made me realize how good it feels to give and receive the help and support of others”* says Cockburn. She later discovered that it was difficult to find a good sportsbra for women who had undergone breast surgery. Janac Sportswear was created to offer the perfect solution to women survivor’s of breast cancer. *“My product is called Been-a-Boob for obvious reasons – it’s going where a boob has been!”* laughs Cockburn.

Janac's Special Sportsbra was originally created to hold the “Been-a-Boob” prosthesis however Cockburn says the pocket can also be used to hold Kleenex, gym locker key. or whatever else you may have to carry. The Been-a-Boob is constructed of drytec material so there is no concern about puncturing or leaking as a gel prosthesis would do. The sportsbra is so comfortable it can be worn anytime – exercising, gardening, decorating or doing housework. Cockburn has also designed a bra-tank, shorts and Capri’s in a multitude of colours to match with the sportsbras.

Janac Sportswear is available in some Canadian Lingerie stores, mastectomy specialty stores and one sports store (The Running Company, Oakville) in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and is now available in the U.K. It is also available on-line with shipping available to all international destinations. Cockburn anticipates future growth by having Janac Sportswear available in fitness clubs, home health care stores and sports stores. *“I am looking for Sales Agencies to promote and sell my products to stores – I want breast cancer survivors to know that there is comfortable clothing available to them”*

For more information on Janac Sportswear visit us at [www.janacsporstwear.ca](http://www.janacsporstwear.ca).

### **Media requiring further information please contact:**

Janet Cockburn – 905.332-7576 (not sure of the international phone number here)

Or visit: [www.janacsportswear.ca](http://www.janacsportswear.ca)

To find a retailer or to order online visit [www.janacsportswear.ca](http://www.janacsportswear.ca)