**Chemotherapy** (also called chemo) is a type of cancer treatment that uses drugs to destroy cancer cells.

My chemo started 6 weeks after I had the mastectomy and consisted of 6 sessions over 12 weeks. My treatment was made up of two types of chemo – Fec-T and Taxotere – 3 lots of each.

I was offered a cold cap to try and help preserve my hair but the thought of a constant ice cream headache put me off.

The treatment was administered in a small ward kitted out with comfy chairs, drips and monitors. Once seated I was hooked up intravenously to a drip which fed me my Fec-T for about an hour.

After my first treatment I was made to lie down for 10 minutes to make sure that I had no adverse reaction. I was then allowed home with a large bag of drugs which I had to take on a daily basis – 17 tablets a day in all.

The feeling after having chemo is like an out of body experience – as though every nerve end is on fire – really odd. I found that after an hour or so I became very tired and had to go to bed. This continued throughout the treatment. I also found that my sense of taste changed and all I could eat was fruit and toast, everything else tasted weird.

A week after my first treatment my hair started falling out. I could grab a handful and just pull it out without pain. I decided I was going to take control and got my husband to shave my head. I was completely bald within a month with no eyebrows, eyelashes and no body hair.

Once the Fec-T chemo was done it was time for the Taxotere which I was told may do permanent damage to my joints and my immune system. They weren’t kidding!

The Taxotere wiped out my immune system twice and I ended up in hospital in isolation. I had no white blood cells in my body and a cold could have killed me. Both times I was in hospital for a week and I’ve been left with the immune system of a child so I catch everything that’s going around.

As for my joints, well yes, they’re shot really. My knees hurt when I walk upstairs, I can’t get up easily if I squat down and I sometimes get pain in my hips.

Reading this is sounds like a nightmare and at times it was. It’s the hardest challenge I’ve ever faced but look at the alternative. Here I am now, healthy and ALIVE!!

It’s got to be worth it hasn’t it?