

# 'I woke with my hand on a lump in my breast' How Kylie saved me

ROBYN RILEY

MELBOURNE mother Kathy Levanic believes she has superstar Kylie Minogue to thank for saving her life.

Mrs Levanic, 39, said it was because Minogue went public with her breast cancer that she was diagnosed early with the disease.

"I had been reading about Kylie before I went to bed this particular night," Mrs Levanic said.

"During the night something made me wake up, it was eerie.

"I woke with my hand resting on a small lump in my breast."

The lump was only 1 cm, barely noticeable.

"(But) if I did not find it that night, it would have been a very different story."

She plans to write to the singer to thank her.

Friends of Minogue said this week that her parents want her back in Melbourne so they can care for her as she recovers from treatment.

The singer, 37, is resting at the Paris home of boyfriend Olivier Martinez after chemotherapy. Minogue is expected to return to Mel-



Anguish: Kathy Levanic with children Tayla, 6, and Joey, 12. It was only after reading about the cancer battle for Kylie Minogue (above) that Mrs Levanic discovered her own cancer.

Picture: CAMERON L'ESTRANGE

bourne for radiotherapy early next year.

Coincidentally, Mrs Levanic was operated on by the surgeon who cared for Minogue, Dr Jenny Senior.

Though diagnosed early, she has aggressive HER2 positive breast cancer. It is life-threatening and her oncol-

ogist says Mrs Levanic's best chance for survival is to have the drug Herceptin.

Initially Mrs Levanic was told she qualified to have it government-subsidised as nine of her 15 lymph nodes were affected by the cancer.

"Three weeks ago I was told I had to pay for the drug

myself because the disease was not advanced enough. I need Herceptin now, not when it is too late," she said.

With husband Joe, family and friends, Mrs Levanic is trying to raise \$70,000 for a year supply of the drug.

Her workmates at McCormick Foods have organised a

fund-raising dinner dance next month and her parents and in-laws have offered money.

The couple — parents to Tayla, 6, and Joey, 12 — now face re-mortgaging their house to cover the shortfall.

"It shouldn't be this way," Mrs Levanic said. "I've

worked since I was 15 — paid taxes all my working life.

"There is a drug available that can help me, but if I can't find \$70,000 I can't have it.

Donations to Mrs Levanic's Herceptin fund can be sent to Kathy Levanic c/o PO Box 1169, Dandenong, 3175.

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