

Dear 16-year-old Me

00:00 Dear sixteen-year-old me

00:02 Dear sixteen-year-old me

00:03 Dear sixteen-year-old me

00:05 Please don't get that perm,

00:06 it's not as awesome as you think it's gonna be

00:08 You have to actually practice in order to learn to play guitar

00:11 Whisky tastes even worse on the way up

00:14 Dear sixteen-year-old me, there's going to be a new set of Star Wars movies

00:18 Don't watch them, they ruin everything

00:23 Dear sixteen-year-old me

00:25 This is where they took the cancer out

00:34 It was something called melanoma

00:36 It's called malignant melanoma

00:38 Malignant melanoma

00:40 'Malignant,' that's not a very friendly word

00:43 You'll be diagnosed when you're twenty-eight

00:45 Eighteen

00:45 Thirty-six

00:46 Twenty-nine

00:47 Twenty-two

00:48 It's a tumour that starts in your skin cells,

00:50 the cells that give your hair and skin colour.

00:52 It's not just skin cancer

00:54 Well, it is

00:55 Well, it is

00:56 But not just

00:57 They cut it out and it'll be fine kind, unfortunately

01:00 It's the kind you have to catch before it spreads

01:02 Because it spreads so fast

01:04 So fast

01:05 To places like your liver

01:07 Your lungs

01:08 Your brain

01:09 Yours will be a really rare kind in your left eye

01:12 and that's when you'll find out

01:13 That melanoma can show up on your tongue, the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet.

01:18 Your doctors will tell you you're lucky that you caught it early

01:21 Yours will tell you that you need aggressive treatment

01:23 I'll have to tell you it might take a year of chemotherapy

01:27 And you'll need to do some of the injections yourself

01:31 Dear sixteen-year-old me

01:32 You're doing okay

01:33 You're strong

01:34 But there are some things I want you to know

01:36 I wish I'd known

01:38 That one bad sunburn before you turn eighteen

01:41 Doubles your chances of developing melanoma

01:43 That fair skin and red hair means that you're at a higher risk of getting it

01:46 As if ginger people didn't have enough problems

01:49 That you're at higher risk if you've got more than fifty moles

01:52 And if you have a weakened immune system or family history of skin cancer

01:56 I want you to know the outlook is very good if we can catch it early

02:00 But you have less than a ten percent chance of surviving more than five years if we don't

02:04 Dear sixteen-year-old me

02:06 Spend more time with family, they mean everything

02:08 If I had one piece of advice for you: don't start the tanning bed

02:12 I know you want a healthy glow

02:13 but it's going to double my chances of getting melanoma

02:15 Sunscreen

02:16 Yes, I agree it's a huge pain in the ass, but so worth it.

02:21 Please

02:22 Your skin's like an elephant. It never forgets

02:25 Dear sixteen-year-old me,

02:27 helping spread this message is how you'll honour Glenna's memory

02:31 At sixteen she's already an incredible lifeguard,

02:34 she loves the sun, and the beach, and tanning

02:38 but she just doesn't know

02:41 She'll be diagnosed when she's twenty-two

02:44 and will lose her battle when she's just twenty-six

02:52 I want you to know

02:53 because it's melanoma that's going to take the strongest man you know,

02:58 your best friend and the love of your life

03:08 Dear sixteen-year-old me

03:09 Don't be afraid, this isn't about being afraid

03:12 I want you to be aware

03:14 That melanoma is a young person's disease

03:17 It is the second most common cancer in children and teenagers

03:20 and one of the most common in young adults

03:23 And it can be deadly

03:24 I want you to know you're not helpless

03:27 This is a cancer that shows itself

03:29 Right there on the outside of you

03:30 Start checking your skin

03:32 Please check

03:33 Get to know your skin

03:34 Get to know your skin

03:36 Start checking your skin

03:37 If a new mole shows up

03:38 Or if one you have starts to change color

03:41 Or size, or shape

03:43 Or feels different

03:44 If something seems out of place get your doctor to have a look as soon as possible

03:48 Know what to look for and get help,

03:51 these are all signs your skin could be developing cancer

03:54 You brush your teeth everyday, maybe even floss

03:56 Okay, we both know you don't floss

03:58 But just once a month I want you to check

04:01 It takes ten minutes

04:03 Ten minutes

04:04 Dear sixteen-year-old me,

04:06 I do realize that you're not actually going to see this

04:08 but someone else will and it'll make a difference to them

04:11 Dear someone else

04:12 Dear somebody else

04:14 If you're watching this

04:15 Send it to a sixteen-year-old you care about

04:17 Send it to anyone who was once sixteen

04:19 Or soon will be sixteen, send this

04:22 And check yourself, educate yourself

04:24 You can download tools and information about melanoma here

04:28 Share this link

04:29 Tweet this link

04:31 Post this to your Facebook