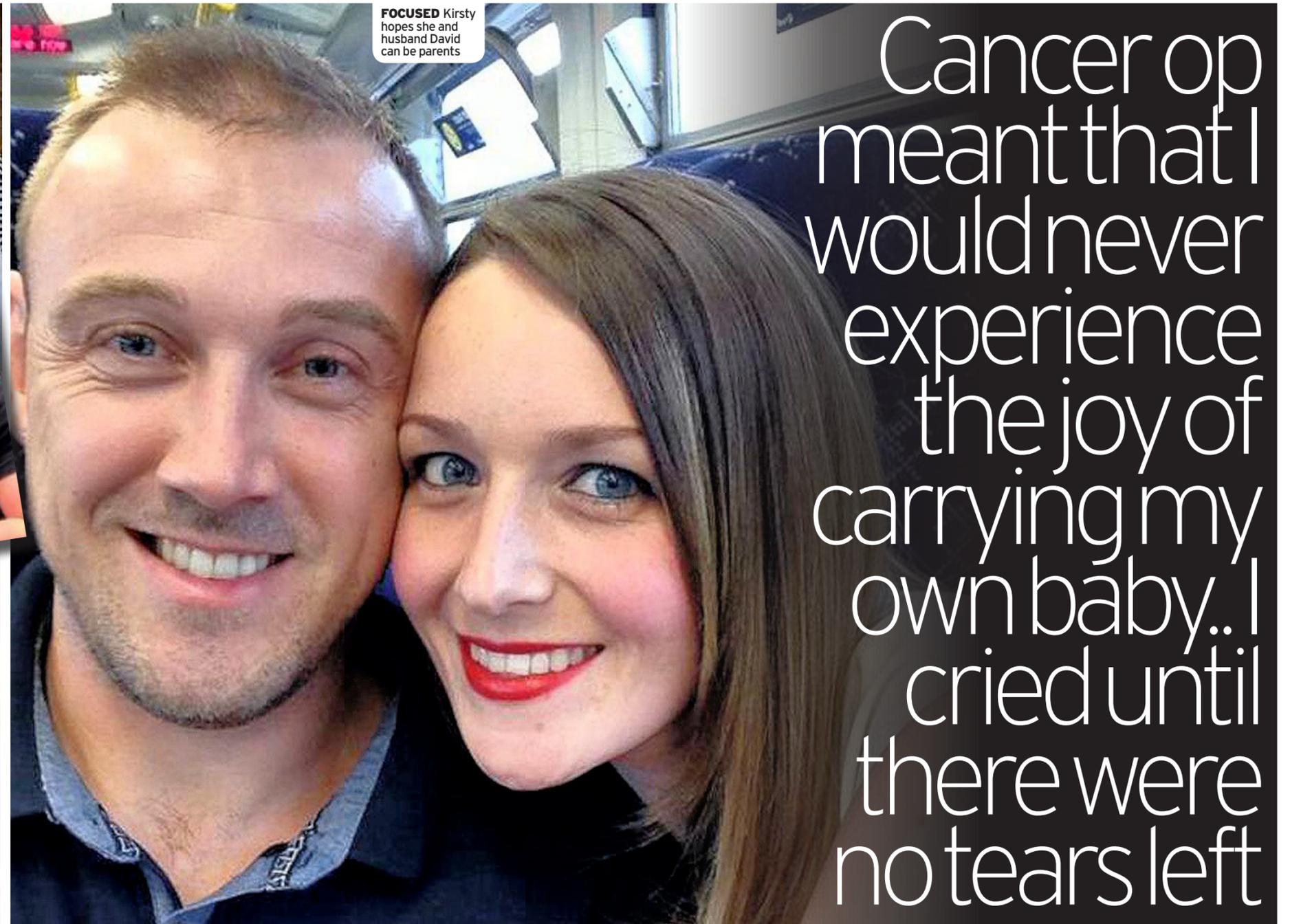


# KIRSTY WON'T GIVE UP ON HER DREAM OF BECOMING A MUM



**CLOSE BOND**  
Kirsty with mum and gran, top. Right, with husband David, and all smiles on their wedding day, below



**FOCUSED** Kirsty hopes she and husband David can be parents

Cancer op meant that I would never experience the joy of carrying my own baby.. I cried until there were no tears left

» **JOE BROTHWELL**  
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**KIRSTY** Reid has always longed to become a mum.

But when doctors tried to find out why she was having trouble conceiving, they discovered she was suffering from a very rare form of cancer.

Kirsty, 31, was told she needed surgery and doctors performed a full hysterectomy, bringing on the menopause.

While the treatment dashed her hopes of getting pregnant, it saved her life and she had time to receive IVF treatment which she hopes will allow her to become a mum through surrogacy.

She said: "Ever since I was a little girl, all I've wanted to be was a mummy."

Kirsty and husband David started trying for a baby after they got married in August 2012.

She said: "It was no use. I kept a calendar of the best times to have sex and took multivitamins and folic acid but nothing worked. I just wouldn't fall pregnant."

Almost 18 months later, in January last year, she confided in her mum Linda, who advised her to go to a

**Brave 31-year-old is looking to the future after surgery to remove reproductive organs.. and praises Hollywood star for speaking out about her early menopause**

fertility clinic. Kirsty said: "When David's sperm count came back as normal, I just knew that I was the problem."

"Naively I'd always thought that I would get pregnant whenever I wanted to. I never thought that I would have any issues."

Tests showed that Kirsty, from Whitburn, West Lothian, had a cyst on her right ovary and that she had scar tissue on her cervix - caused by the removal of some abnormal cells following a smear test in 2010.

She said: "Doctors told me that those setbacks were stopping me from conceiving and if I had surgery to remove them I should fall

pregnant. They were the words I'd been longing to hear."

She had surgery in June and it was only due to last an hour.

Kirsty added: "It ended up going on for four hours. The surgeon had discovered something he wasn't expecting."

"I was taken in for a CT scan and that's when my world came crashing down. They told me I had cancerous tumours in my abdomen."

She had a very rare form of cancer called pseudomyxoma peritonei (PMP). If left untreated the tumours would grow, slowly crushing her vital organs.

Kirsty, a supermarket buying assistant, needed a further operation to remove the tumours and was warned that she may have to have a full hysterectomy.

Knowing how desperate the couple were to have children, she was put forward for emergency IVF before her operation, which resulted in six healthy embryos.

During her op in November, surgeons discovered the cancer

had spread and that she would need all her reproductive organs removed.

She said: "When I woke up the first thing I asked is what they'd taken out. I was devastated when they told me."

"To know I'd never experience the joy of carrying my own baby was heartbreaking."

"I cried and cried until there were no more tears left."

"I was kept in hospital for 15 days, then was allowed home. It was then I started experiencing extreme hot flushes. I was going through the menopause."

"I couldn't sleep and I'd burn up about 12 times a day. I felt like I was on fire."

"Friends didn't know what was happening. The only person I could talk to was my mum."

So she knows some of what movie star Angelina Jolie is going through at the moment.

The actress, 39, who carries a cancer-causing gene, revealed she is having an early menopause after choosing to have her

reproductive organs removed as a preventative measure.

Kirsty, who was given hormone replacement therapy, said: "I think what she has done is great."

"People think this only happens to older women but that's simply not true. Raising awareness is just so important."

"It's incredibly brave and shows women that there are tests and options out there."

"Although my surgery wasn't preventative - I had to have the surgery or I would have died - I can imagine in some way what she's going through."

"It's life-changing and to have to make that decision must be devastating."

"I never thought something like this would happen to me. I still find it difficult to come to terms with."

The reality of her situation really hit home when she saw mums-to-be at the hospital.

She said: "I felt so low. For my check-ups I had to walk through the maternity unit and seeing all

those baby bumps broke my heart."

Kirsty has, however, found some solace through sharing her experiences with fellow sufferers after discovering the website Pseudomyxoma Survivor.

She said: "I found it so helpful chatting to other survivors and now I look to the future."

"In June, I have tests to see if I'm cancer free and depending on the results David and I will then try for a baby using IVF through surrogacy."

"If that's unsuccessful we'll look into adoption."

"I'm now back at work part-time and things are looking up."

"It was my dream of becoming a mum that caught my cancer."

"I'll always be grateful for that."

For more information on PMP, visit [www.pseudomyxoma.org](http://www.pseudomyxoma.org)



**COURAGE** Kirsty in hospital and actress Angelina, left

» I was taken in for a CT scan. That's when my world came crashing down **KIRSTY**