

Patrick Swayze Dies at 57 of Pancreatic Cancer, Defies Odds in 1.5-Year Public Battle

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CHICAGO – “Dirty Dancing,” “Ghost,” film, TV and dance icon Patrick Swayze died on Sept. 14, 2009 at 57 after a 1.5-year public battle with pancreatic cancer. He was in his Los Angeles home beside friends and family.

The legendary actor made no secret of his condition, wrote a memoir with his wife since he was diagnosed in Jan. 2008 and braved through filming of the TV crime drama “The Beast” while refusing to ingest painkillers so as not to derail his performance. He was noticeably thinner on “The Beast” and shooting was difficult on Swayze physically, but he persisted with his craft nonetheless.

In addition to “The Beast” as Swayze’s most recent and last project, he also starred in “Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights,” “Power Blue,” “One Last Dance,” “Donnie Darko,” “Point Break,” “The Outsiders,” “Red Dawn,” “Road House,” “Ghost,” “Dirty Dancing,” “Youngblood” and “Skatetown, U.S.A.”. Living for 18 months with this extremely terminal form of cancer was rare, experts say.

“If you were to look at statistics, the prognosis that is given to most patients with metastatic cancer is usually three to six months,” Dr. Jeffrey Hardacre, an assistant professor of surgery at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and an attending surgeon at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, said in an interview with FOXNews.com on Monday.

The Houston-born Patrick Swayze, who is part Apache, married Lisa Niemi in 1975 and is the older brother of Don Swayze. Patrick Swayze met Lisa Niemi at the age of 19 when she was 15 while she attended dance lessons with Patsy Swayze (Patrick’s mother, who was a dance instructor). Patrick Wayne Swayze’s father, Jesse Wayne Swayze, died of a heart attack in 1982.

Swayze is survived by his wife of 34 years. In memoriam of Patrick Swayze, who lived from 1952 to 2009, we’ll leave you with this personal quote: “Good-looking people turn me off. Myself included.”

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