

# cancer care

Hearst Cancer Resource Center



**Dignity Health.**  
French Hospital Medical Center

**Hearst Cancer Resource Center**

## About Cancer Care

*Hearst Cancer Resource Center at French Hospital Medical Center provides comprehensive support services for all cancer patients in our community, at no charge, and appreciates the generosity of our donors, who make it all possible.*

## Understanding And Coping With Stress



*By Dennis Pezzato, PhD*

Stress can be difficult to define but it does play a big role in our existence. It is a natural mechanism that enables us to respond to challenges in

life. When we encounter stressors, or situations that are challenging, we automatically switch to a higher level of alertness, consciousness, and focus.

Stress is an inevitable part of our existence, but when it becomes chronic, it plays a key role in our overall physical and psychological health. Chronic stress can cause physiological changes that can cause health problems.

The kinds of things that stress us, depending on how we perceive things, are everywhere in life. Stress occurs in all our relationships, such as, but not limited to our marriages, our jobs, our children, our families, our friends.

Let me switch gears a little and point out the importance of our immune systems. The immune system is the body's first line of defense against illness and disease. Long-term, unremitting, unpleasant emotions—stress—suppresses or depresses the immune system. Our immune systems can become severely

compromised by the effects of chronic stress by virtue of the many ways our chemistry is changed.

So, how do we prevent stress from contributing to ill health? I suggest three things; these are admittedly big things but they are things that need to happen.

Thing One: Practice wellness and preventative medicine by good **diet**, regular **exercise**, and **rest/relaxation**.

Thing Two: Learn to eliminate, modify, and/or manage stress. This involves boundaries, improving problem-solving skills, and relaxation techniques.

Thing Three: Choose how you view your stressors; and remember to be grateful for what you do have and not regretful about what you don't have.

Always remember that **gratitude** is the **best** attitude!

### Understanding and Coping with Stress

**WHEN:** Tuesday, January 11; 5:30PM

**WHERE:** Zoom

**PRESENTED BY:** Dennis Pezzato, PhD

To RSVP, contact: [hcrc@dignityhealth.org](mailto:hcrc@dignityhealth.org)  
or call 805.542.6234



## Thank you for sharing hope with local cancer patients!

Last month, our community rallied behind local cancer patients who are facing financial hardship by supporting our Share Hope fundraiser. We are excited to announce that **more than \$140,000 was raised to support cancer patients in need!**

All funds will support the **Angel of Hope Program** at the Hearst Cancer Resource Center. The Angel of Hope Fund provides cancer patients in need with assistance and support through the cancer program. This assistance will greatly impact the lives of these patients.

**On behalf of the patients who will benefit from Share Hope, thank you to everyone who participated, fundraised and donated!**

Thank you to our major sponsors:

### French Hospital Medical Staff



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## Advisory Member Spotlight

*Sandy Dunn, in her own words:*

I am a long time supporter of French Hospital and of the Hearst Cancer Resource Center. It is now my privilege to serve as the Chair of the HCRC Advisory Committee. Many years ago, my husband, John, and I lost our fathers to cancer. At that time, there was no one to guide us through the journey.

Since then, many of our friends and family have suffered from cancer, as I have. Today we are blessed with the Hearst Cancer Resource Center, providing services at no charge to cancer patients and families. It is truly a gift for me to be able to serve the community in this way.

I also have the honor of serving on the French Hospital Foundation Board and as the Vice President of the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo County.

I enjoy traveling, reading, photography and “hanging out” with my amazing husband, great family and many wonderful friends.





# Cancer and Sexual Health

*By Ann Frost, PT, CLT, WCS*

A diagnosis of cancer brings about a flurry of activity, questions, and emotions, often happening at a whirlwind pace. By the time the patient is post-treatment, many changes in their life, their function, and their well-being have taken place. Often, there is little attention given to the role and importance of sexual health in the person's life. And equally often, patients are left wondering how they can go about regaining some semblance of sexual function. They may be met with expectations that their life will just magically return to normal, and they have no idea how to do so. Studies have shown that 85% of patients want to discuss sex with their provider, and 70% believe their provider doesn't want to, or doesn't have the time.

Why talk about sex, sexuality, and sexual health? The World Health Organization describes it as an integral part of overall health, well-being, and quality of life; a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being. It's not just about having sex; it includes connectedness, touch, love, sensuality, togetherness, affection. It is not just for younger people, or only for couples.

It's rarely discussed and it's hard to talk about. Health care providers often don't know which questions to ask, and patients often feel embarrassed or ashamed.

The benefits of sex are numerous. It can result in feelings of bonding, acceptance, love, affection, warmth, caring, and physical and emotional closeness. It can reduce stress and improve self esteem. It helps with circulation to the pelvic organs and can help get joints moving and feeling better.

Cancer treatment affects sexual health in many ways. The list of common side effects of cancer treatment that can affect a person's ability to have and enjoy sex is long: fatigue, nausea, pain and fear of pain, scar tissue and adhesions, altered sensation, decreased endurance, premature menopause, fatigue, weight gain or loss, altered body image, osteoporosis, bowel and bladder problems, and erectile dysfunction. Partners often have their own unique set of concerns: they may be afraid of hurting their partner, or of putting pressure or stress on their partner; they may not know how or whether to talk about it. They too may feel burnt out and overwhelmed by helping their partner through cancer treatment.

There's help! A multidisciplinary team can include counseling for individual or couples, medical treatment, and physical therapy. Education, empowerment, exercise, and manual therapy are all part of physical therapy, with the goals of improving function, quality of life, fitness, and movement. A pelvic physical therapist can help you function better sexually as well.

Join me on February 10 at 5:30PM to learn more about how to recover your sexual function after cancer treatment.

## Sexuality and Intimacy During and After Cancer Treatment

**WHEN:** Thursday, February 10, 5:30PM

**WHERE:** Zoom

**PRESENTED BY:**

Ann Frost, PT, CLT, WCS

To RSVP, contact:

[hcrc@dignityhealth.org](mailto:hcrc@dignityhealth.org) or call

805.542.6234



# Eating and Wellness in the New Year

By Angel Fissel, RD

Most people know that what you eat influences your health and wellbeing. What some people sometimes forget is that foods that are consistently eaten can support your ability to stay strong, healthy and nourished through your cancer journey. Eating a balanced diet that is rich in naturally nutrient-rich whole foods and low in highly processed foods are just a few of the keys to overall wellness through diet.

With the New Year upon us, many people vow to make resolutions to improve their diet. This is met with great enthusiasm in the beginning of the year, but once the months wane on, many times resolutions fall by the wayside. Life just gets in the way!

How can we avoid falling into that trap? Try to be genuine and intentional about what changes you are willing to make in your diet. Are eating processed foods just easier? Is it that making healthy foods takes too much effort/time? Or maybe you have strong cravings for favorite foods that are hard to resist? Aiming for a wholesome diet rich in minimally processed plant based foods, minimal added sugars, lean proteins (including beans and legumes), nuts/seeds with plenty of vegetables and fruit, on a consistent basis, can get you on the road to wellness. If you experience that drop in motivation in your eating journey, know that help is available at HCRC by scheduling a nutrition consultation with our very own Registered Dietitian. The Registered Dietitian can help you get back on the road to wellness.

## Citrus Quinoa Avocado Salad (Adopted from AICR recipes)

### Ingredients:

**½ cup** cucumber, diced  
**1 cup** cherry tomatoes, cut in half  
**2** small cloves garlic, minced  
**¼ cup** red onion, chopped  
**1 bunch** cilantro  
**2 cups** spinach, thinly sliced  
**1 15.5 oz can** no salt added garbanzo beans (drained and rinsed)  
**1 cup** cooked and cooled quinoa  
**2** medium avocados, diced

### For the dressing:

Juice of **2** lemons  
Zest of **1** lemon  
**2 tsp.** Dijon mustard  
**1 Tbsp.** olive oil  
**1 tsp.** honey  
**½ tsp.** ground cumin  
Salt and pepper, to taste

### Directions

1. Place all salad ingredients in a bowl.
2. Whisk all dressing ingredients together in a separate bowl.
3. Drizzle dressing over salad mixture and gently toss. Enjoy!

# Introducing Dr. Lin Soe



San Luis Obispo has a new oncologist in town! Dr. Lin Soe has joined the team at SLO Oncology and Hematology. Dr. Soe started his professional career as a malaria research scientist in Burma. He enjoyed the complex nature of studying a disease that is challenged by drug resistance and is a public health crisis around the world. Dr. Soe shared that researching and studying malaria

and working on developing a vaccine challenged his intellectual side, and more than 25 years ago, sparked his interest into becoming an Oncologist.

Fast forward to today, Dr. Soe has been practicing oncology for 24 years and has many life experiences that he has acquired along the way that have taught him to be both a great doctor and an understanding partner in the cancer journey.

Dr. Soe values his role in your cancer health, wherever on the spectrum you might be. His philosophy is to start by first listening to your goals as a patient. Then to coach you along your path, trying to match you with the best treatment options that are right for you and your personal health goals. He values treatment that is manageable, tolerable and as painless as possible. He also shared that he appreciates and approaches cancer treatment with honesty and from a place where the patient is the guide.

Dr. Soe champions 5 key points in cancer treatment:

- 1. The care is functionally appropriate for your quality of life**
- 2. Care is financially appropriate**
- 3. Care is socially and spiritually right for both patient and family**
- 4. Diet and nutrition are an important part of cancer care**
- 5. Goals are listened to for all the facets of care: curative treatment, palliative treatment and end of life care**

Dr. Soe looks forward to working with patients in our community.

## Hearst Cancer Resource Center Free services include:

- **Nurse navigator to guide**
- **Support Groups**
  - *All Blood Support Group*
  - *Breast Cancer Support Group*
  - *Caregiver Support Group*
  - *Living With Advanced Cancer Support Group*
  - *Newly Diagnosed Cancer Group*
  - *Prostate Cancer Support Group*
  - *Spanish Support Group, en Español*
  - *Young Survivor Support Group*
- **Social services, programs, one-on-one, family, and financial resource support**
- **Nutritional counseling with our Registered Dietitian**
- **Bi-lingual Patient Navigator**
- **Wellness tools to aid in holistic well-being and relaxation**
  - *Energy Balancing*
  - *Guided Meditation*
  - *Intuitive Collage*
  - *Lymphedema Evaluation*
- **Appearance center with hats and wigs**
- **Exercise and strengthening classes**
  - *Pilates*
  - *Tai Chi Chih*
  - *Qigong*
  - *Yoga*
- **Educational presentations from local and national experts**
- **Transportation Support**



## Hearst Cancer Resource Center

Mailing address:

1911 Johnson Avenue,  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Street address:

1941 Johnson Avenue, Suite 201,  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

## HCRC Advisory Committee

*French Hospital Medical Center*

**Alan Iftiniuk**—PRESIDENT AND CEO

**Julia Fogelson, MSN, RN**—COO, CNE

**Debby Nicklas**—VP PHILANTHROPY

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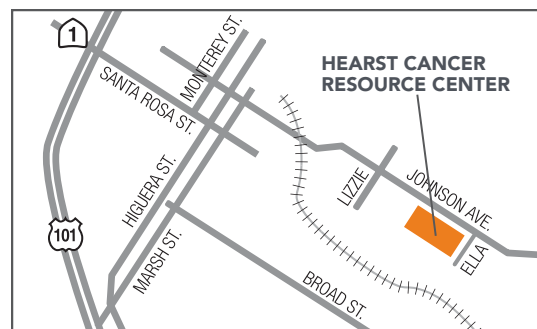
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## Hearst Cancer Resource Center



### Hearst Cancer Resource Center

*Commission on Cancer Community Cancer Program*

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