

About Cancer Care

Cancer Care is a collaborative partnership between the SLO Oncology & Hematology Health Center, Dignity Health Infusion Center of San Luis Obispo and the Hearst Cancer Resource Center at French Hospital Medical Center, offering comprehensive cancer care services to San Luis Obispo County residents. As a cohesive oncology treatment program, Cancer Care features innovative technological advancements and compassionate health care professionals from the nation's top medical training programs. The culmination of these centers provides a personalized, multidisciplinary approach to oncology treatment, clinical trials, pediatric oncology, infusion services, support programs and resources to promote healing.



Stepping Back Into Life: A Roadmap for Renewal

By Gila Zak, C.Ht.

So many changes have been thrust upon us recently and while some of us may be eager to get back out into the flow of life outside our sanctuaries we call home, others may need some help.

With some questions left unanswered and lingering unknowns, it would be natural to feel some trepidation about how and when to step back into life and what this will be like.

Fortunately, you already have immense inner resources to make this happen successfully! With this Living Room Talk, I will be providing you with the metaphorical roadmap, and you will create the route that works for you. I'll show you how to leave the "baggage" behind and set off on this next leg of the journey feeling more light and free.

After a brief overview of how our emotions influence our behaviors, decisions and actions, we will get into the creative and inspiring part! This will be an interactive event that you can join from the comfort of your very own home, and there will be time for a Q&A at the end.

Gila Zak, C.Ht. is an honors graduate of HMI College of Hypnotherapy, a member of the student advisory board and an advanced handwriting analyst. She actively pursues continued education on the mind-body connection and how it can be utilized for an optimum quality of life. Her passion is teaching human behavior and how easy it is to access the power of the subconscious mind to create change.

For more information and areas of specialty, visit QuantumWavesHypnotherapy.com

Please join us for an inspirational talk:

Stepping Back into Life: A Roadmap for Renewal

WHEN: Wednesday, July 15 at 5pm

WHERE: Virtual Zoom presentation

PRESENTED BY: Gila Zak, C.Ht.

Reservations are required. Please call Hearst Cancer Resource Center at **805.542.6234**. Valid email, name and phone number will be required for Zoom invite information.

This lecture is made possible through the support of the Martin Hulburd Family Cancer Education Fund and is offered as a community service.



Pet Therapy

Since 2013, dogs of all sizes have been visiting patients at French Hospital as part of the Pet Therapy Program. A therapy dog and its human handler can be seen walking the halls of the main campus or interacting with cancer patients at the Dignity Health Infusion Center in San Luis Obispo. The program, supported by the Harold J. Miozzi Charitable Trust, currently has 12 therapy dogs, all of whom are vaccinated and certified with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

A visit from a therapy dog at the Infusion Center can help relieve stress and anxiety, increase joy and offer a welcome respite for cancer patients. Program volunteer Denise Fitzgerald says it's incredibly rewarding to see the healing benefits of pet therapy first-hand. Denise described a powerful interaction she had with a patient at the Infusion Center. The patient actually had an easier time having her blood drawn because she was so relaxed from petting Denise's dog, Mr. Bingley, who sat calmly on the woman's lap. And the therapy dogs aren't just beneficial for patients—they also comfort patients' families and hospital staff.

In some ways, the dogs have become little, furry celebrities. But they haven't let the fame go to their heads—they're too busy spreading joy and making people feel better.

If you would like to support the Pet Therapy Program, please contact the French Hospital Medical Center Foundation at **805.542.6496**.



Dear Friends of the Hearst Cancer Resource Center,

Because each of our newsletters requires two months of preparation, I'm writing to you in May for the HCRC July/August Cancer Care newsletter. At this time, I honestly don't know what our "new normal" will look like in SLO County. However, I do know we live in a beautiful community with healthcare providers who have amazing, compassionate and caring hearts. Their stories of helping during this crisis have truly been wonderful to hear and restore my faith in mankind!

The HCRC staff and I are grateful for the opportunity during these uncertain times to be here for you, helping you cope with feelings of fear and anxiety, concerns, needs and wants. It is a privilege to assist you during this difficult time. However, we have deeply missed your smiling faces and warm bear hugs. It's been a challenging time for all of us, but the future is looking brighter. Soon we'll be able to greet each other face to face, in person and offer "air" hugs!

We are looking forward to that day. However, for the coming summer months, July and August, HCRC is temporarily closed to in-person visits and class participation. This was a very hard decision for Dignity Health to make, but it was made for the safety, respect and protection for all our patients and their loved ones.

The HCRC staff remains ready to assist our cancer community through the following ways:

- Phone consultations are available during our business hours with Gloria Caine, Nurse Navigator, and on specific days and times with Angela Fissell, Registered Dietitian at 805.542.6234
- Support groups, certain classes, referral resources and educational offerings will be available through virtual platforms, emails and telephone consultations. Please see our calendar for class details and descriptions
- HCRC staff is at the center answering cancer patients' and their loved ones' calls. We are here to serve, support and listen to your needs and wants. No one, at any time, has to face cancer alone!

As always, we are here to help, serve and support you!

Sincerely,

Bev Kirkhart, Director and HCRC staff
805.542.6234 • beverly.kirkhart@dignityhealth.org

Benefits of Physical Activity for Enhanced Cancer Recovery

By Jan Secord, Cancer Exercise Specialist and Director of Cancer Well-fit Program

Cancer patients might feel their best if they simply maintain or slightly increase their physical activity throughout chemotherapy instead of letting it decline.



Studies show that a walking program and gentle, resistance-band training reduces chronic inflammation, which is common among people receiving chemotherapy. Progressive resistance training is shown to improve cognition in folks with mild cognitive impairment*, which can include “chemo-brain” and provides positive outcomes including:

- Reduced Anxiety
- Fewer depressive symptoms
- Less fatigue
- Better quality of life
- Increased muscular strength
- Improved physical function and fitness

An effective exercise program includes three or more days per week of moderate aerobic activity. Moderate activity is at a pace at which you can talk but cannot “sing.” Examples include brisk walking, light hiking, water exercise and dancing.

While the recommendation is to build up to 30 min per day at least three days a week, you can exercise for any length of time. For example, you might:

- Walk 5 minutes here, 10 minutes there
- Just work your way up to 30 minutes three days per week
- Gradually building up to a daily step count of 7,000-9,000 steps

Muscle strength training (resistance training) two days per week.

- You don’t have to go to a gym. You can use elastic bands, do body-weight exercises (kitchen counter push-ups, chair sit-to-stand) or lift dumbbells. Heavy work around your home also builds strength.
- Strengthen your legs, back, chest and arms. To start, try 10-15 repetitions using light effort. Building up to medium to hard effort for 8-12 repetitions. Repeat two to four times, two to three days per week.
- Give yourself a rest day between each strength training session.

Fortunately, in San Luis Obispo County, there is a supervised exercise program for patients with cancer known as Cancer Well-fit. This is an option and alternative to working out at home.

Colleen, a Well-fit participant shares, “Exercising during and after my cancer treatments has had immense positive impacts on my well-being. After going to exercise classes at both Cancer Well-fit and the Hearst Cancer Resource Center—moving my body and being with everyone I leave with a full heart, uplifted spirits and more energy. My body is stronger and I am regaining my stamina and muscle mass.”

For information on Cancer Well-fit Program, call **805.595.7600 x122** or email: **admin@cancerwell-fit.com**. In North County, call **805.239.7397** or email: **kthomas@caclubs.com**. Pre-registration required. No cost.

*University of Rochester Medical Center, Karen M. Mustian, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Rising to the Occasion: Oncology Care During a Pandemic

By Susan Diaz RN, OCN, Director of SLO Oncology

Did we ever think we would be here?

The first few weeks of working in oncology since COVID-19 became part of our lives were very hectic. Tons of new information. Changes in policies and practices (almost daily for the first few weeks). Constant concern for keeping everyone safe; each patient, each employee and everyone's families.

Triaging each and every patient. Should we start treatment? Hold treatment? Continue treatment? What is best for each individual? Do we have enough wipes, masks, hand sanitizer?

Everything seemed overwhelming. But with very strong and adaptable leadership, we have done well. Each leader, MD, NP, PA, nurse, pharmacist, pharm tech, MA, receptionist, and counselor has shown such confidence and adaptability. Our oncologists have used guidance from the CDC, ASCO, and other renowned resources to help keep everyone safe.

Oncology patients are by the nature of their diagnosis and treatment at high risk for catching COVID-19 and having serious complications. We need to educate our patients to know what symptoms to watch for, when to call us and what actions to take.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Symptoms can appear as soon as two days or as long as two weeks after exposure.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

Call your doctor immediately, especially if you have traveled recently or think you have been in contact with someone who is suspected to have the virus.

What can our patients do to protect themselves from the virus?

- Avoid crowds
- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap, for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70 percent alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. The approved list of products can be found on the EPA website.
- Use a disposable towel or tissue to cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough, and wash your hands after.
- Avoid people who are sick—and stay home if you're sick.
- Disinfect countertops, door handles, telephones and other frequently touched objects.
- Be vigilant about avoiding exposure to illnesses such as influenza and measles and require the same of your family and caregivers. (Remember: While vaccines may help curb the spread of those diseases, there is no vaccine for COVID-19.)

Stay safe, stay healthy, stay home.

<https://www.dignityhealth.org/coronavirus-disease-2019>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>



Eating Well in the Summer

By Angela Fissell, MS, RD.

Summer is upon us! Memories of the summer spending time enjoying the warm sun, water and flavorful produce at the peak of its ripeness, floods my mind! Many cancer and nutrition research organizations promote the benefits of a plant-based diet, and one of the best ways to start is to use the bountiful produce available in the summertime. Colorful fruits like berries, apricots and peaches and vegetables like

zucchini, tomatoes and eggplant are perfect examples of the types of produce available at this time of year. Loading up your plate with these plant-based foods provides you with naturally cancer protective vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, AND you get the bonus of filling up on low-calorie, fiber-packed foods.

So as we head into summer, think about cooling off your days with a refreshing salad that incorporates vibrant vegetables, fruit, nuts and healthy carbs to round it out for a complete meal!

Summer Salad

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 fresh lime or lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. paprika
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Zest of one large orange
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped cilantro
- 4 cups baby or regular arugula
- 4 green onions, sliced thin
- 4 kiwis, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 cups strawberries (halved)
- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped, toasted pecans
- 1/4 cup cooked quinoa or brown rice
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Directions

1. In small mixing bowl, whisk together orange juice, honey, lime juice and paprika. When well combined, slowly add oil and continue whisking until mixture is smooth. Stir in zest and cilantro. Salt and pepper to taste. Set aside and allow 10 minutes for dressing flavors to mingle.
2. In a large salad bowl, spread arugula and sprinkle with green onions and the cooked quinoa. Arrange kiwi and strawberry slices on top.
3. Just before serving drizzle salad with dressing and garnish with pecans.

Recipe adopted from American Institute on Cancer Research



Unleash your creative spirit through the power of vision collage

By Kathleen McKinnon, breast cancer survivor, HCRC Wings of Hope artist and HCRC Vision Collage facilitator

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in the spring of 2016, just five months after my mom passed from hers. To say the least, it was an emotional time. When the chemo and radiation was over, I was filled with questions about what would come next. Along with my faith and trust in God’s healing power, I began to collage to quiet my thoughts

Visioning collage is a practice that allows your mind to journey through images. It is a personal act. It is done by quieting your mind so your intuitive nature chooses the images and the composition of the collage. As the process continues, the images begin to “speak.” It always amazes me how the images come together and reveal ideas that were not even considered when making the collage.



The collage begins with personal reflection on a reading, usually a poem centered on a theme. After the reading of the poem, there is time provided to reflect and write thoughts to keep in mind while tearing images, words, and phrases from magazines, and building the collage. After the images are collected, there is further reflection and only certain images are chosen for the collage. When the collage is complete, the poem and personal reflection are glued to the back of the collage, and any additional thoughts are journaled.

The most amazing and wonderful part of the process is the sharing that happens between those who are creating their intuitive collages. We “ooh” and “aah,” we laugh and cry as our insights, thoughts and



unexpected messages are shared. The healing, the release of emotions and feelings that take place is a gift to everyone involved. We take our collages along with the experience of creating them, and hang them in our homes for further reflection. It is fantastic how other messages are revealed over time.

Class is postponed until further notice. Feel free to email Kathleen McKinnon at kathleen@harmonyschoolhouse.com to learn more about creating your collage.

Turn to us for answers:

HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

1941 JOHNSON AVENUE, SUITE 201,
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
805.542.6234
OPEN MONDAY–FRIDAY
9AM–4:30PM

Katherine M. Guthrie

Senior Regional Director, Cancer Services
CENTRAL COAST SERVICE AREA
805.346.3434
Katherine.Guthrie@dignityhealth.org

Beverly Kirkhart

Director
HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER
805.542.6269
Beverly.Kirkhart@dignityhealth.org

Thomas Spillane, MD

Medical Director
HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

Gloria Caine, RN, BSN, OCN, CN-BN

Nurse Navigator
HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER
805.542.6234
Gloria.Caine@dignityhealth.org

Eloisa Medina

Lay Patient Navigator
805.786.6130
Eloisa.Medina@dignityhealth.org

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Hearst Cancer Resource Center has partnered with these organizations to bring programs and activities to the community:

American Cancer Society

Cancer Connections

Cancer Support Community

Cancer Well-Fit Program

Jack's Helping Hand

Central Coast Dragon Boat Association—Central Coast SurviveOars

SLO ONCOLOGY & HEMATOLOGY HEALTH CENTER

715-B/C TANK FARM ROAD
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
DIRECT: 805.543.5577
INFUSION CENTER FRONT DESK: 805.786.6140

Care Providers:

Thomas Spillane, MD, Medical Oncology
Director of Clinical Trials
Gorgun Akpek, MD, MHS
Diane De Vos Schmidt, FNP-C
J.T. Link, MD
James Malone III, MD
Tim Soucek, PA

Clinical Research:

Thomas Spillane, MD
Nathania Boutet, Clinical Trial
Regulatory Coordinator
Amy Hidalgo, Clinical Trial Coordinator
Lee Walton, Clinical Trial Coordinator

Susan Diaz RN, OCN

Director of SLO Oncology
805.786.6144
Susan.Diaz@dignityhealth.org

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715-B/C TANK FARM ROAD
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
DIRECT: 805.786.6140
NURSE LINE: 805.786.6144

Susan Diaz RN, OCN

Director of SLO Oncology
805.786.6144
Susan.Diaz@dignityhealth.org

Lonnie Hirabayashi Pharm D

Pharmacy Manager
Lonnie.Hirabayashi@dignityhealth.org

Viridiana Ruiz

Oncology Counselor
805.542.6500 EXT: *1491
Viridiana.Ruiz@dignityhealth.org

Barbara Hoelle

Billing Supervisor
Barbara.Hoelle@dignityhealth.org

IMAGING CENTERS

FHMC SAN LUIS DIAGNOSTIC CENTER
1100 MONTEREY ST #210,
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
805.542.9700

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SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
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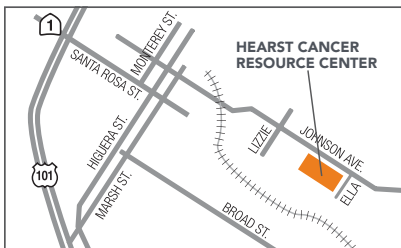


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Dignity Health Cancer Care Centers



Hearst Cancer Resource Center
Commission on Cancer Community Cancer Program
1911 JOHNSON AVENUE
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, 93401
805.542.6234



SLO Oncology & Hematology
715 TANK FARM ROAD, SUITE C
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
DIRECT: 805.543.5577

Infusion Center of San Luis Obispo
715 TANK FARM ROAD, SUITE B
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
DIRECT: 805.786.6140

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please visit dignityhealth.org/frenchhospital