

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.



HPV and Cancer

By Tom Spillane, MD

As an oncologist, I witness the suffering caused by tenacious cancers that originated with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) daily. According to the Centers for Disease Control, HPV results in cancer in

approximately 35,000 Americans every year. An estimated 80 million Americans have HPV, with roughly 14 million people (mostly teens and young adults) becoming infected annually. This same virus that causes warts can also cause cancer of the mouth, throat, cervix and genitalia—all cancers that are most successfully treated when detected early. Unfortunately, too many cases are still detected at later stages, often requiring surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Once metastasized, these cancers are inevitably fatal.

The good news is that this cancer threat can be permanently eliminated. Gardasil, the current FDA-approved vaccine, is a non-infectious treatment containing particles that protect against HPV. It has been recommended for use in females since 2006 and males since 2011. Approximately 300 million doses of the vaccine have been given worldwide, including 100 million doses in the US. And studies show there are no side effects or associated complications.

Because of successful vaccination programs, high vaccination rates have been reached around the world, from Africa and Europe to Australia. Unfortunately, here in the US we are doing a poor job vaccinating our youth. According to a national survey, estimated vaccine coverage among adolescent females and males was 63% and 50%, respectively, for at least one dose and much lower for the recommended two or three doses.

The implications of this should be alarming to all of us. Some experts estimate that by increasing complete-dose HPV vaccination coverage to 80% in females, approximately 53,000 additional cases of cervical cancer alone could be prevented in the US over the lifetime of those currently under age 12.

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It is unthinkable today for a child not to wear a seat belt in a car, just as we make sure that our kids wear helmets when riding bikes and skateboards. Yet, nearly half of our children are allowed to roll the dice with a potentially deadly yet preventable cancer.

Accessibility is not an issue for this safe, widely available vaccine—it comes down to public education and collective action.

For the first time in history, we have an unprecedented opportunity to eliminate a specific type of cancer. Herd immunity against HPV can be achieved. As a community, we can protect future generations and make that a reality.

HPV and Cancer

WHEN: Tuesday, April 26, 5:30pm

WHERE: Zoom

PRESENTED BY: Tom Spillane, MD

To RSVP, contact: hcrc@dignityhealth.org
or call **805.542.6234**

Colorectal Cancer Update

WHEN: Tuesday, March 8, 5:30pm

WHERE: Zoom

PRESENTED BY: Lin Soe, MD

To RSVP, contact: hcrc@dignityhealth.org
or call **805.542.6234**

Staying Well

Oncology Care During a Pandemic

By Susan Diaz, RN, OCN

Can you believe we are still living with COVID? Here we are two years into this pandemic, living with new and frequently changing rules, changing our everyday routines to stay safe and healthy. Signs indicate a decrease in cases and transmission rates in our community in the months to come. However, we must remain vigilant. Oncology patients are by the nature of their diagnosis and treatment at high risk for catching COVID and having serious complications. We need to educate patients on what symptoms to watch for, when to call, and what actions to take.

What are the symptoms?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to update the list of symptoms COVID-19 patients may experience. Its latest update says common symptoms of the infection include a **cough and shortness of breath**, or at least two of the following:

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

Symptoms can appear within two days or up to two weeks after exposure.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

- Call your doctor and report your symptoms, especially if you have a fever. Be sure to tell them if you are getting chemotherapy.
- Separate yourself from others, try to stay one room away from others in your home, and use a separate bathroom if possible.
- Avoid sharing personal items. Don't share dishes, towels or bedding. After using these items, wash them thoroughly.

What can our patients do to protect themselves?

- Wear a well-fitting mask that covers your mouth and nose (N95/KN95).
- Avoid crowds in poorly ventilated areas.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap, for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose.
- Avoid people who are sick—and stay home if you're sick.
- Stay six feet away from others.

MORE TIPS

- Ask your doctor about having extra necessary medications at home in case you need to stay home for a long time.
- Have over the counter medications available at home to treat fever and other symptoms in case you get sick.
- Call your doctor's office a few days before your appointment to make sure they can see you at that time.
- If you have cancer that is responding well to treatment, talk with your doctor. Only consider delaying treatment after discussing this with your doctor.

[cancer.gov/about-cancer/coronavirus/coronavirus-cancer-patient-information](https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coronavirus/coronavirus-cancer-patient-information)
[cancer.net/blog/2022-01/coronavirus-and-covid-19-what-people-with-cancer-need-know](https://www.cancer.net/blog/2022-01/coronavirus-and-covid-19-what-people-with-cancer-need-know)



Stephen and Brandy

Advisory Committee Member Spotlight

Dr. Stephen Holzman, in his own words:

Q: How long have you been part of HCRC?

I have been there since the very beginning.

Q: Why is the HCRC important to this community?

HCRC is important to the community because there are few times in your life when you feel more scared and helpless than when you get cancer. It is at that moment when you need someone with a clear head to help guide you to where you have your best chance at surviving. HCRC is a great place to turn to and I am proud to have been a part of this wonderful organization.

Q: Tell us a fun fact about yourself.

I think the central coast is magical. Not only does it have the HCRC, but so many wonderful people and things to do. I feel so fortunate to be a part of this community.

Dr Stephen Holtzman we cherish your years of dedication!



Making the Most of your Relationship with your Healthcare Team:

Suggestions from a Nurse Navigator

By Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN

- First and foremost, find a provider that you trust. Trust is the foundation of a therapeutic physician-patient relationship and provides the necessary peace of mind to face challenges along the way.
- Be clear about what is most important to you to enable effective shared decision making. Your goals may differ from your physician's objectives, so it is important that you communicate and keep your provider updated if your priorities shift.
- Arrive on time or early to appointments so you can maximize the time spent with your practitioner.
- Write down what your doctor says during your appointment. Better yet, have someone with you that can take notes. As much as you think you will remember what is said, you may not, especially if you are experiencing a range of emotions during the visit.
- If there is something complicated you would like to discuss, consider giving the office advanced notice so time can be allotted and utilized appropriately.
- It is okay to ask if there are options or alternatives to what is being recommended. It is also okay to seek a second opinion; this will give you either confirmation and peace of mind or more options to choose from.
- Don't leave your appointment without knowing the next steps. Commit to doing your part and take responsibility for what you need to do in your treatment plan. This will help your healthcare provider trust you.
- Keep your healthcare provider informed between appointments if you are experiencing an issue that might require assistance. Oftentimes, they can make recommendations that will help you or they can provide you with the reassurance you need.
- It is okay to be persistent, but remember that your doctor's office is likely working with a large number of patients and it may take a little while for them to get back to you. If your concern is urgent, it may be necessary to seek urgent/emergency care instead.
- If you don't know or understand something, ask! If non-urgent questions come up between appointments, write them down, starting with most important, to make good use of your appointments.
- Use your nurse navigator, patient navigator or social worker to help you clarify what you value, determine questions to ask or issues to bring up with your doctor. While they will not make decisions for you, they can help you determine what is most important to you.
- If something happens that makes you angry, it is okay to express your anger and address your frustrations—doing so in a healthy, constructive way will create a better outcome for all.
- Remember your healthcare providers are people too!

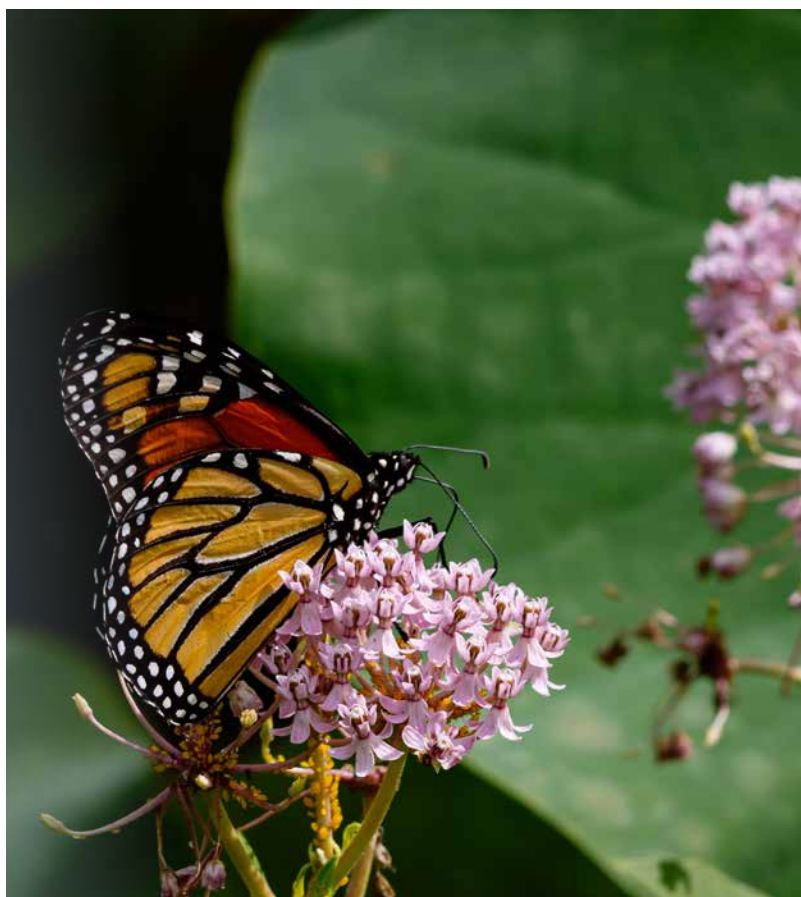
American Cancer Society Supports Patient Transportation Program



In addition to facing the challenges of a cancer diagnosis, many local cancer patients also face the added struggle of finding transportation to medical appointments. This is especially true for patients who live in rural areas far away from San Luis Obispo, where the primary treatment centers are located.

Thanks to a recent grant from the American Cancer Society, the HCRC will continue to offer our transportation services to cancer patients. The program gives cancer patients access to door-to-door transportation services for medical appointments, as well as other services.

Established in 2015, the HCRC transportation program has provided numerous patients with transportation services over the years thanks to previous support from the Hearst Foundations. *Please contact the HCRC for more information or to take advantage of this valuable service: 805.542.6234.*



For the Kids

The following programs provide kids with an outlet to help them better deal with stress when a family member has cancer.

Camp Kesem, Cal Poly

Camp Kesem is a free, week-long summer camp experience designed for children ages 6–18 who are impacted by a parent’s cancer.

kesem.org

Make Music with Joey

MARCH 2 & APRIL 6 AT 3:45PM

Joey teaches participants to make cool electronic beats and create music with computer software. Open to teens affected by cancer in the family.

Call 805.542.6234 to RSVP.

Pure Stoke Surf Camps

MARCH 19–OCTOBER 1, 2022

The Pure Stoke Youth Program provides a safe, fun environment that taps into the healing energy of the beach and ocean. This program includes surf lessons and all gear; ocean and marine biology education; more beach activities and lunch. Staffed by supportive instructors and counselors.

surfingforhope.org

Turn to us for answers:

HEARST CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

1941 Johnson Avenue, Suite 201,
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805.542.6234
Monday–Friday
9AM–4:30PM
dignityhealth.org/hcrc
HCRC is temporarily closed to walk-ins.
Please call for assistance.

Thomas Spillane, MD
Medical Director

Shannon D'Acquisto
Director, Cancer Survivor
HCRC@dignityhealth.org

Julie Neiggemann, RN, MSN, OCN
Nurse Navigator

Lauren Jermstad, MSW, LCSW
Social Worker

Eloisa Medina
Patient Navigator
805.786.6130—en español
Eloisa.Medina@dignityhealth.org

Teresa Fernandez
Lay Patient Navigator

Angela Fissel, RD
Registered Dietician

DIGNITY CANCER CARE CENTRAL COAST

Mission Hope Cancer Center
1325 East Church Street, STE 102
Santa Maria, CA 93454
805.219.HOPE (4673)

850 Fair Oaks Avenue
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
805.474.5300

Katherine Guthrie
*Senior Regional Director,
Cancer Services*
CENTRAL COAST SERVICE AREA
805.346.3434

Kathleen Sullivan, PhD, RN
*Vice President, Post Acute Care and
Health Services Operations*

SLO ONCOLOGY & HEMATOLOGY HEALTH CENTER

715-B/C Tank Farm Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Direct: 805.543.5577

Care Providers:

Thomas Spillane, MD
*Medical Oncology Director of
Clinical Trials*
Gorgun Akpek, MD, MHS
Diane De Vos Schmidt, FNP-C
Robin DiBiase, NP, OCN
James Malone III, MD
Tim Soucek, PA
Lin Soe, MD

SLO INFUSION CENTER

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

IMAGING CENTERS

FHMC San Luis Diagnostic Center
1100 Monterey St #210,
San Luis Obispo, Ca 93401
805.542.9700

FHMC Women's Health and
Imaging Center
1941 Johnson Ave Suite 104,
San Luis Obispo, Ca 93401
805.597.6700

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

DIGNITY HEALTH HOME HEALTH
& HOSPICE
800.549.9609

PALLIATIVE CARE
805.739.3950

COASTAL CANCER PARTNERS

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

17 Strong
seventeenstrong.org

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

Camp Kesem Cal Poly
campkesem.org

Cancer Connections
cancerconnectionslo.org

Cancer Support Community
cscslo.org

Cancer Well-Fit Program
cancerwell-fit.com

Central Coast Dragon Boat Association—Central Coast SurviveOars
ccdba.org

Hats for Hope
hatsforhope.com

Jack's Helping Hand
jackshelpinghand.org

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
lls.org

Surfing for Hope
surfingforhope.org

Teddy Bear Foundation
teddybearcancerfoundation.org

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**

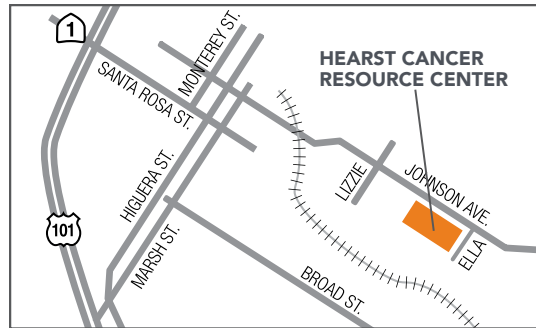
French Hospital Medical Center

- Alan Iftiniuk—PRESIDENT AND CEO
- Julia Fogelson, MSN, RN—COO, CNE
- Debby Nicklas—VP PHILANTHROPY
- Thomas Vendegna, MD—CMO

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- Jackie Starr
- Christine Williams

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Commission on Cancer Community Cancer Program
1911 Johnson Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA, 93401
805.542.6234

