

Journeys

News and inspiration for
Dignity Health Cancer Institute
patients and family

March / April 2017



10 Tips for Tackling Chemo

Even though it's been over a year since my last chemotherapy treatment, I can STILL feel the effects it had on my body. It made such an impact on my life. I know there are others out there looking for helpful hints to make it through their chemo treatments so I'm sharing what I learned from my experience. First of all, chemo is a drag. It's hard but know that you can do it. You will make it through. There are things you can do to minimize the side-effects and to make yourself more comfortable.

Here are my suggestions:

- 1. Drink LOTS of liquids.** More than you think your body can deal with. This will help flush the toxins out of your system faster and therefore make you feel better

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Cancer Awareness Month

April is Head & Neck
Cancer Awareness Month
and Testicular Cancer
Awareness Month



Dignity Health™
Cancer Institute
of Greater Sacramento

Resolutions 2017

A new Marist poll states that “Being a Better Person” tops the list of New Year’s Resolutions for 2017, moving “Weight Loss” and “Fitness” down to #2 and #3. We are already looking back on the first two months of the New Year. A few weeks ago, I came across a statement from Dr. Pamela Peeke, who observed that “around week four through six, people become “excuse mills.” Now I wonder how your New Year’s Resolutions are moving along.

Apparently, a study found that 75% of people stick to their goals for at least a week, 46% are still on target six months later, but only 8% accomplish their goals. We all want to be in the 8% group, so how can we increase the likelihood of reaching our goals?

Let us start at the beginning. For some of us, the term “New Year’s Resolution” might already bring up bad memories of past failures. If your relationship with the term is toxic, I invite you to switch it to something more positive. Maybe “Goals for 2017” or “2017 Opportunities for Growth” will resonate with you. Some people are unable to keep their resolutions, because they are too extensive, too numerous, too aggressive, too vague, or too rigid. Make it specific: being a better person sounds like a good goal to have, but what does that mean? Is there one single area in our life we can focus on? Do we want to be a better parent, partner, friend, caregiver, patient, or money manager? Once you break it down, you will notice how possibilities for interventions will open up. Maybe you can start by spending

more time with your partner, be a better listener, sign up for a class, or join a support group. Once you have prioritized, state why you chose that specific goal. Write down why this goal is important to you. Why is this goal meaningful and desirable? Motivation has to come from within – it has to be yours, own it!

Next, say how you will accomplish this goal. What steps are you willing to take? Is there somebody who can help you along the way? Would you be open to seek help from a friend, a financial planner, a life coach, a personal trainer, etc? How will you know your goal has been accomplished?

Lastly, break your overall goal down into steps and track your progress daily, weekly, or monthly. Accountability can be a strong factor: share with family and friends that you have decided to, for example, quit smoking and welcome their support. Trust that somebody will remind you of your plan in case you forget and exhibit the behavior you are trying to change. Add the date for the 10K on Thanksgiving to your schedule and pay your fee—then set the alarm on your watch to count down.

Remember the 8% mentioned earlier? Planning for failure seems realistic. Do cut yourself some slack. Next time you give in to a friend’s spontaneous idea and end up at Thunder Valley, even though your resolution was to manage your budget more responsibly, forgive yourself but also understand the consequences of your decision. Change never happens overnight and always starts by stepping outside of our comfort zone, which often makes it hard to get started at all. But there is help. James Clear’s Two-Minute Rule, which states that we are less likely to procrastinate if we realize a task can be done in two minutes or less, has helped me personally. Ask yourself: can it be done in two minutes or less? How about tossing the laundry in the washer, taking the garbage out, washing dishes right after a meal, slipping into walking shoes, putting a leash on the dog, sending that one e-mail, or pulling flyers and brochures out of a cluttered drawer? You and I both know there is no turning back once the leash is on the dog. Most likely, your dog will have walked you around the block before you become fully aware that your goal of daily exercise has been completed.

Eva Lukas, MA, LMFT



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faster. I had a hard time drinking water after a while, so I added other clear liquids such as broth, popsicles, gelatin, fruit juice and ginger ale. (This was a lifesaver! In fact, Schwinn's gave me a free case after I wrote to them about how awesome their ginger ale had been.)

2. Eat bland food. You may not want to eat, but getting food into your system can make all the difference. Try bland, mushy foods such as oatmeal, pudding, white potatoes (mashed), yogurt and white bread. The first few days after chemo, it's not recommended to eat any fruit.

3. Find an outlet. I found that journaling helped me cope with the pain and fear I was experiencing. It was so healing to get my emotions out of my system and onto paper. I journaled in my Ready for Recovery planner and through an online blog that kept family members up-to-date on my progress.

4. Dress comfortably. I really had a hard time resigning myself to the fact that I was in treatment. In the beginning, I would get all dolled up (I refuse to look like a "patient!") and head on over to the Infusion Room. After a while, I realized how ridiculous I was being. What's more important is getting THROUGH treatment. Dress comfortably and bring a blanket. (Those rooms are cold.) Warm fuzzy socks are nice.

5. Track your experience. This is very important. WHY? Because you'll forget. If you haven't heard of "chemo fog," let me tell you it exists. In fact, I'm a year out and STILL have it! Documenting all the drugs you're taking, your doctor's appointments, your side effects as you have them will better prepare you for your next treatment and will help your caregivers make you more comfortable. This is another place where my Ready for Recovery planner was a lifesaver!

6. Exercise. You will not want to. You will hate your husband for telling you "It's good for you, do it!" You will curse the ground he walks on, but ... it HELPS! Just do it! Walk for 15 -20 minutes a day, if that's all you can do. This

gets your blood pumping and gets the toxins out. Other patients I've talked to have had a great response to yoga during treatment.

7. Have fun. Ok, this sounds ridiculous doesn't it? I'm a cancer patient and I will have fun, dammit! Let me explain. Last summer, I had six chemo treatments. Last summer, I also had five close friends get married. Yes. FIVE weddings to go to! I was bald, I was tired, and I felt like I could die. But I could not miss the wedding of my brother and my four other close friends. So, I resigned myself to the fact that I was NOT going to miss them. I bought five fun wigs (pink, purple, white, blonde, brown - all varying lengths and styles). I downed a few ginger ales, grabbed my dancing shoes and went to every single wedding. And, you know what? I had a blast! I forgot about being a cancer patient and all the guests assumed I was the "fun" chick in the wigs.

8. Take your meds. They WORK! I also supplemented the doctor prescribed meds with medical marijuana. This may be controversial, but some days this was the ONLY thing that worked. It reduced the nausea and helped me to eat.

9. Avoid strong odors. It reminded me of being pregnant. Strong smells (and tastes) would make me feel even more nauseous. I also had a strange reaction to the saline flush they use before injecting chemo. I could taste it in my mouth. I found out late in the process that they actually do offer an alternative. Ask for this if you're finding the saline flush taste to be unpleasant; this only happens to about 20% of patients. (UGH! Even writing this brings that taste back to me. Yuck!)

10. Be gentle with yourself. As I said earlier, you will survive this. It will be hard. The hardest thing you'll ever do. But you will survive. Be gentle with yourself and take the time you need to heal. SLEEP. Write. Survive. You can do it!

From "Ready for Recovery, Cancer Treatment Planners"



2nd Annual “Your Next Step is the Cure” Cancer Walk

Please join Team Dignity Health for the second annual **“Your Next Step is the Cure” Sacramento 5k walk/run on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at William Land Park.**

You are invited to walk, jog or run with the Dignity Health Cancer Institute of Greater Sacramento. This is a great event where patients, families and friends gather to bring awareness to lung cancer. The event also raises much-needed funds for patient services and clinical research projects supported by the Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation (ALCF), a non-profit organization known nationally for its work in fighting lung cancer.

“It is the brave patients and their families who make my work as a physician so satisfying—if they can fight then I can fight with them,” said event chair Dr. Costanzo DiPerna. “Your Next Step is the Cure” is an opportunity for all of us to come together for an uplifting and inspirational gathering that celebrates and recognizes our common goal – to celebrate life and put an end to lung cancer.”

Whether you choose to walk, jog or run, participate as an individual, form a team or join as a team member of Team Dignity Health, please know we are all in this together. The more who walk, the more awareness we create. And the

more money we raise, the more the Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation can get closer to its goal of making lung cancer a chronically managed disease by 2023.

To join Team Dignity Health, please visit:

<https://sacramento2017.yournextstepisthecure.org/Team/View/30388/Team-Dignity-Health>

Event Location:

William Land Park
3800 Land Park Drive
Sacramento, CA 95822

Registration Fees:

Pre-Registration: \$30
Youth (Age 5-12) and Senior (60+): \$15
Day of Registration: \$35
Youth (Age 5-12) and Senior (60+) Day of Registration: \$20

Event Schedule:

Saturday, April 22
Registration opens at 9:00 a.m.
Shotgun Start at 10:00 a.m.
Celebration at 11:00 a.m.

Through the generosity of our donors, Mercy Foundation is proud to support programs and services of the Dignity Health Cancer Institute of Greater Sacramento.

To make a gift or learn more, call 916.851.2700 or visit supportmercyfoundation.org

FROM 1954 UNTIL THE END OF NEED

For over six decades, Mercy Foundation has partnered with the community to further the mission of the Sisters of Mercy. Together, we help feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, educate the underserved, and care for the sick at local Dignity Health hospitals and clinics.



MERCY FOUNDATION

Inspiring philanthropy. Changing lives.



Risk is revealing.

Cancer threatens some more than others. Take our online health risk assessments.



Although cancer has the ability to threaten some more than others, we are all at risk. Many cancer risk factors, such as age, race and family history can't be controlled, but there are things you can do to lower your risk for some of the most common types of cancer: Breast, Gynecologic, Lung and Prostate. Take our quick online cancer risk assessments at DignityHealth.org/CancerRiskAware to learn about managing your personal risk factors and the screening options available for early detection, and in some cases, even prevention.

The Power of Food: New Product Trends for 2017

There are a number of interesting new food trends for the upcoming year, some of which support recommendations to reduce the risk of cancer. A quick overview:

Increase in plant-based products

- Pasta made from garbanzo bean and nut flours
- Chips made from ancient grains, veggies, and bean flours
- Yogurt with veggies
- Beet hummus
- Expansion of alternative milks such as Ripple (pea protein)
- **Research has found higher intakes of fruits and vegetables as well as plant-based protein linked to reduced cancer risk**

Increase in fermented/cultured foods and beverages

- Kimchi (fermented cabbage)
- Beet sauerkraut
- Savory yogurts made with beets, squash
- Increase in variety of Kefir (cultured milk) and Kombucha (fermented) teas
- **Probiotics in fermented foods/beverages can help support healthy gastrointestinal tract and immune system function**

Water made from different trees and fruit

- Maple water – claims rich in vitamins, nutrients, antioxidants
- Birch water– claims for cholesterol lowering, detoxifying
- **Research is not yet available to support claims or to identify negative effects**

Moringa

- Native to West Africa, South America and South Asia
- Claims range from antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory to reducing blood sugar levels, cholesterol levels, stomach ulcers, and tumor formation
- Powdered leaves used for tea, added to smoothies, stews
- Leaves and pods contain protein, vitamins (C, A), minerals (calcium, iron, potassium), antioxidants

- Possible side effects: low blood pressure, liver and kidney damage with long-term use
- **Not enough evidence to support the use to treat cancer as studies in humans have been small**

Alternative flours

- Nut flours
- Ancient grains such as teff, amaranth
- Legume flours such as chickpea, green pea
- Many of these flours have higher fiber and protein than white or wheat flour
- **Plant protein is a less expensive and vegan protein to help meet increased protein needs of cancer patients**

Lower sugar products, increased use of stevia, monk fruit

- Jams, cereal, yogurt, beverages
- **Reduced sugar can help with weight loss, diabetes, metabolic syndrome**

Full-fat dairy

- Yogurts, cottage cheese, milk
- **Some studies have found a link between consuming full fat dairy and lower risk of obesity and diabetes**
- **Emerging research that dairy, even full fat, has a neutral to positive effect on cardiovascular and type 2 diabetes risk**

FODMAP-friendly products may be the new “gluten-free”

- It stands for “fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharide and polyols.” These are carbohydrates that are difficult to digest and become fermented by bacteria, causing bloating and discomfort.
- The FODMAP diet has been shown to help with IBS but is very difficult to follow
- Companies are now marketing low FODMAP products to help
 - Energy bars
 - Pasta sauces
 - Great potential for expansion – breads, cereals, frozen dinners, desserts
- **Research has found the FODMAP diet helpful in reducing symptoms of IBS**

Susan Liebert, MS, RD, CSO, CDE, Clinical Dietitian



Cancer: Thriving and Striving

A Stanford University Cancer Program

Join us as we explore some of the challenges and changes you may experience as you deal with cancer or care for a loved one with cancer.

Topics include:

- Dealing with problems such as frustration, fatigue, and isolation
- Appropriate exercise for regaining and maintaining flexibility, and endurance
- Communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals
- Strategies for pain management, poor sleep and better nutrition

Program is facilitated by two trained peer leaders provided by Dignity Health.



Fremont Presbyterian Church
5770 Carlson Drive, Sacramento 95819 (Rm. E211)

Group meets these four Saturdays
March 4, 11, 18, & 25, 2017
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Call Joy at (916) 452-7132 or email joy@fremontpres.org to register!

Complementary Classes & Support Groups

For more information on any of the listings below, call 916.962.8892

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

1st Thursday of every month, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

(Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov)

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

3rd Thursday of every month, 4:30 – 6 p.m.

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6555 Coyle Avenue, Ste. 140, Carmichael, 95608

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 4 – 5:30 p.m.

Mercy Hospital of Folsom

1650 Creekside Drive, Folsom, 95630

Call 916.390.2661 for location

CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Friday of every month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

For more information, please contact 916.990.8454

GYNECOLOGIC CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Wednesday of every month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

LEGACY SUPPORT GROUP (Lung Cancer)

1st Wednesday of every month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

(MCC = Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov)

(MSJ = Feb/Apr/Jun/Aug/Oct/Dec)

Alternates every other month between

Mercy Cancer Center & Mercy San Juan Medical Center

Call 855.637.2962 for location

LIVING WITH CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Wednesday of every month, 2 – 3 p.m.

Woodland Cancer Center

Haarberg Building Conference Room

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

2nd Tuesday of every other month, 6 – 8 p.m.

(Jan 10/Mar 14/May 9/Jul 11/Sep 12/Nov 14)

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

4th Monday of every other month, 2 – 4 p.m.

(Jan 23, Mar 20, May 15, Jul 17, Sep 18, Nov 20)

Woodland Healthcare

515 Fairchild Ct., Woodland, 95695

MEDITATION GROUP

Every Tuesday, 1 – 1:45 p.m.

Dignity Health Cancer Institute

6403 Coyle Avenue, Carmichael, 95608

For more information, please contact 916.990.8454

MULTIPLE MYELOMA SUPPORT GROUP

1st Saturday of every month, 10 a.m. – noon

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6501 Coyle Avenue, Carmichael, 95608

NUTRITION CLASSES

Quarterly, Tuesdays 2 – 3 p.m.

(Feb 7, May 16, Aug 8, Nov 14)

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

Individual appointments are available at Mercy San Juan

For more information, please contact 916.983.7598

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

1st Saturday of every month, 10 a.m. – noon

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6501 Coyle Avenue, Carmichael, 95608

PROSTATE SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Thursday of every month, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

(MSJ = Jan 19/Mar 16/May 18/Jul 20/Sep 21/Nov 16)

(UCD = Feb 16/Apr 20/Jun 15/Aug 17/Oct 19/Dec 21)

Alternates every other month between

Mercy San Juan Medical Center & UC Davis

YOGA CLASSES

Every Monday & Wednesday, 5 – 6 p.m.

1st Thursday of every month, 5 – 6 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

3rd Thursday of every month, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6501 Coyle Avenue, Carmichael, 95608