

# Journeys

News and inspiration for  
Dignity Health Cancer Institute  
patients and family

December / January 2017

## Renew, Resolve, and Remember the Benefits of Exercise for the New Year

It's a New Year and a new chance to start exercising or return to exercise if you have stopped. Getting back on track or starting a regular exercise program is one of the best things you can do to help reduce your cancer risk. It's one of the most common New Year's resolutions so here are some helpful tips to help make it happen:

- **Start low and slow** with five- to ten-minute sessions of light walking or easy cycling or swimming once a day, increasing to several times a day and build from there.
- **Listen to your body.** Try not to get frustrated if your body cannot handle the level of exercise you once used to do. Be patient. You are in this for a lifetime.
- **What's your personality?** This can help you decide what type of exercise motivates you. Do you like to exercise alone, in a group, or with a partner?
- **Use a pedometer, activity tracker, or app on your phone.**  
These are great tools to measure your steps or activity and keep you motivated. You may be surprised how many steps you do when you are not thinking about exercise.
- **Stand more, sit less.** This can improve your posture. Sitting for long periods of time can take a toll on your posture and affect your breathing and lung capacity. Keep your shoulders back and open your body to encourage deep breathing.
- **Remember flexibility exercises.** You are only as strong as you are flexible.
- **Move those muscles to keep them strong.** Strength training can help offset the weight gain and muscle and bone density loss that often occurs with cancer treatments.
- **Be sure to warm up** and cool down with each exercise session.
- **Be safe.** If exercising outdoors, make sure to dress appropriately, wear reflectors and light colors if outside in the dark, carry a cell phone with you.
- **Consult your doctor** before beginning an exercise program, especially if you have been inactive or had a noticeable change in health or weight.

Julia Stedifor, BS, RCEP ACSM, Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist

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**Dignity Health™**  
Cancer Institute  
of Greater Sacramento

## Get Out of Your Own Way

Many years ago, a good friend of mine allowed himself to get terribly out of shape. It happens! Jerry was a professional man with a thriving accounting and financial advisory practice. He convinced himself he just didn't have the time, but at the gentle urging of his wife, children and friends (including me), he decided to set his alarm early three days a week and go for an early morning jog. I saw him on the "appointed day" he was supposed to have started his exercise routine.

"How did it go, Jerry?" I asked. He told me he was having trouble finding a good pair of running shoes. He went to several stores, did research by reading running magazine articles, and he even went to the local park to observe what other runners were wearing. He promised that the next time I saw him, he would be well on his way to a transformed physique!

About a month passed. I saw Jerry at a local restaurant and he looked the same. I asked him how the exercise program was progressing. He informed me that he found the perfect set of running shoes, but there was another problem. He had purchased a beautiful jogging suit. However, the pockets could not be secured to protect his house key. He was planning on going to his tailor and having the tailor sew a zipper on one of the pockets so his house key would not fall out. He then explained he would be coming into tax season, and tax season was always rough. How could he afford to "waste the time" running around the streets of North Carolina when important clients needed his undivided attention? Jerry also noted his arthritis was flaring up and he was afraid jogging would aggravate his joints. Well, what about getting a personal trainer to plan a program? He explained he didn't trust them and would figure out an exercise program on his own.

I think all of you know where this story is going. Jerry never went on an exercise program, his weight and blood pressure continued to rise, and who knows how bad his arthritis has become.

### The Big Picture

It is so very easy for us to lose sight of the big picture. When I speak to groups, I often remind them that if we're too caught up in the details and can't get out of the way of ourselves, then nothing is ever going to change. I have no doubt Jerry needed to find good running shoes, that a pocket on his jogging suit needed to be secure, that his arthritis caused



him worries and that his tax practice was, well, taxing. However, the big picture was that he needed to improve his health and take better care of himself. Jerry had lost perspective. The details severely bogged him down, and his health continued to decline. I pray that he does something about his situation. Sometimes, it is important for us to take a step back. Health is extremely important. His family and friends wished only good for him. He couldn't see that their concern was another way of telling him they loved him. Finding the perfect sneaker or sewing a button onto a pocket or setting the alarm 30 minutes early a few days a week became more important than understanding he needed to take better care of himself.

### Paralysis by Analysis

There will always be details to address with major or minor roadblocks. The end result is well worth the journey, even if there is temporary pain or discomfort. No matter what your particular life challenge or unresolved ambition might be, it all starts with one simple step. Get out of your own way and stop resisting. Don't overthink it. Analyzing will only get you so far, and there comes a point when you just need to get busy and allow yourself to be fully in the moment and just do your best. Shift your focus away from what you don't have to what is here and available. Stop waiting for perfection, doubting everything and stumbling over your shortcomings. I have heard many justifications for people not achieving the success they want or deem they deserve. It's not that the excuses aren't sometimes valid. It's just that sometimes the alibis arise whether or not they are valid. I have met many people, including my friend Jerry, who have had the opportunity to prosper. Unfortunately, instead of grabbing it and running, they trip over their own feet and become immovable objects on the path to the results they desire. It's time to get out of your own way!

From "Enjoy the Ride" by Steve Gilliland

## Guided Meditation

Guided Meditation is an effective tool for stress management. It allows you to calm your body and relax your mind. It is pleasant to practice and not difficult to learn. It can help you to de-stress in minutes but can also be a useful strategy for maintaining resilience toward stress during challenging times. In addition, meditation enhances

connectivity between brain regions, improving attention and concentration. Give yourself the opportunity to experience the benefits and join us for our free group sessions on Tuesdays on the 2nd floor at 6403 Coyle Ave. If you have any questions, please contact Eva Lukas at 916.990.8454.

## Navigating Your Cancer Journey

As an oncology nurse navigator, the most important tip I can start with is this: Tell your providers about any side effects or signs of infection you are experiencing as soon as they start. Do not wait!

People who are on chemotherapy have medication in their system that hunts down fast-growing cancer cells and destroys them. That's exactly what we want. However we have other healthy, fast-growing cells that can also be destroyed by some chemotherapies, including cells in the bone marrow and digestive system, and the cells that make up our hair. The killing off of healthy cells can lead to some of the bad side effects that many people on chemotherapy experience. When the bone marrow in people on chemotherapy is damaged, it cannot make enough of the cells it should to fight infection. For this reason, when a person on chemotherapy with a sick immune system is able to mount a response, like a fever, **that response should be taken seriously.**

I've seen a lot of pain and suffering in patients on treatment that could have been prevented by keeping the doors of communication open with their providers. Remember, if you don't tell your doctors about what's going on with you at home, they won't know. Because they don't know, they won't be able to treat you quickly if you need it, especially if you have some type of infection. Your providers want you to communicate with them. That helps them ensure you're receiving the best possible treatment on your unique cancer journey.

For other self-help tips, visit [preventcancerinfections.org](http://preventcancerinfections.org), [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) and [cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov).

From "Navigating your Cancer Journey: A Handbook for Cancer Patients and Caregivers by an Oncology Nurse Navigator" by Jenny Marais



### Life

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it  
 Life is beauty, admire it  
 Life is a dream, realize it  
 Life is a challenge, meet it  
 Life is a duty, complete it  
 Life is a game, play it  
 Life is a promise, fulfil it  
 Life is sorrow, overcome it  
 Life is a song, sing it  
 Life is a struggle, accept it  
 Life is a tragedy, confront it  
 Life is an adventure, dare it  
 Life is luck, make it  
 Life is too precious, do not destroy it  
 Life is life, fight for it

—Mother Theresa



## Self-Help for a Better Night's Sleep

If you are twenty years of age or older, chances are you have experienced insomnia at some point in your life. According to the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, 9 million U.S. adults take prescription sleep aids, and an estimated 50 to 70 million adults suffer from sleep disorders or sleep deprivation. And did you know that about 20% of all serious motor accidents are associated with sleep deprived drivers?

This article may not be your ticket to a better night's sleep, although it may offer you a shift in perspective. Often we are not as powerless as we think. Obviously, chronic lack of sleep affects our quality of life. For one thing, our risk of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease increases. Scientists even suggest a correlation between sleep deprivation and a possible suppression of overall immune functioning. And often a situational decline in cognitive functioning can be attributed to lack of sleep. And that is bad news for all of us entering the holiday season with an increased number of responsibilities, chores, and family gatherings.

Frequently, insomnia is identified as part of a multi-symptom cluster including medications, hospitalizations, chemotherapy, radiation, hormonal therapy, pain, nausea, vomiting, and unrealistic expectations regarding the holidays. Some of these symptoms may emerge alongside sleep disturbances and may last up to five years post-cancer treatment. So what can we do in the meantime in order to accomplish the highest level of sleep quality and quantity? It turns out that we are not as powerless as we might feel! Experts suggest implementing good sleep hygiene.

Start by changing your bedtime routine: pick a bedtime that works for you, set a time to get up in the morning (and every morning thereafter), and then stick to that schedule! If you feel tired during the day, experts suggest taking a nap in the mid-afternoon, lasting 30 minutes at the most. Check your bedroom: do curtains block out the light? Is the atmosphere peaceful and calming? How would you rate the overall noise level? Keep your bedroom as dark and quiet as possible. Set the thermostat between 60 and 70 degrees. Next, notice your lifestyle: are you going to bed at the same time every night? Have you established a bedtime routine? Do you feel stressed?

Depressed? Are you eating, sending e-mails, watching movies while lying in bed? Do not go to bed feeling either hungry or "Thanksgiving turkey stuffed." Maybe tonight you can set the intention of using your bed for sleep only. The idea here is to train your brain to associate your bed with sleep and rest. Also, check your diet and exercise regimen for areas of improvement. If you have not exercised in a while (earlier in the day is best) and would like to get back into a routine, check with your doctor and find out what works for you.

And there is more: David S. Black (et al 2015) stated in the publication of their randomized clinical trial that mindfulness practices were significantly more effective at dealing with sleep disorders than traditional techniques. Dr. Ronald Siegel suggests one easy way of implementing mindfulness into your daily routine. Here is how it works: Take a five-minute break and choose a calming focus. This can be a painting on your wall or a tree in your backyard, for example. Notice the texture of the paint, the size of the trunk, the color of the leaves, etc. Do not judge yourself. Do not worry about how you are doing. When your mind starts to wander, simply pull yourself back.

You may also like to try stimulus control. Go to bed when you feel fatigued. (Preferably at the same time every night). If you are not sleeping twenty minutes later, get up and do something calming, like reading a book in the living room. When you feel tired again, return to bed. Repeat if necessary. Ultimately, sleep is not under voluntary control, and there are no techniques available to guarantee a good night's sleep – fluctuations are normal and have to be accepted. A sleepless night is no catastrophe; changing our habits is a process that takes time and discipline.

In order to track your own progress, you might like to start a sleep diary. You can access a pdf sample published by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine at [aasmnet.org](http://aasmnet.org) or create your own template. This will allow you to identify your sleep patterns and get an overview of the number of hours you spend sleeping in a 24-hour period. Talk to others, find out what works for them, and do not hesitate to mention your sleep disturbances to your doctor, especially if the changes you have implemented have not led to the desired success.

Eva Lukas

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](http://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.*



## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Dignity Health Cancer Institute Team!

1st row: Quincey Roxburgh, RN, RRT; Costanzo DiPerna, MD; Mark Cruz, CTR

2nd row: Kay Habal-Nagtalón, CTR; Terri Thompson-Seim; Dawn Diorio, RN; Jennifer Thietz, RN; Rachel McConachie, RN; Marie Froehlich, RN; Ashely Tiner; Angela Gianulias; Tina Fantozzi, PA

3rd row: Laura Westbrook; Wendy Ringer, CTR; Frida Sarabia; Stelios Katzakis, PA; Joshua Carter; Kari Jones; Eva Lukas; Renae' Huwes; Lois Inferrera, CTR

Not pictured but other valued team members include Ann Chrisler, RN; Jennifer Gutierrez, CTR; Tami Hoar, RN; Susan Liebert; Michael Mair, RN; Cindy Sucevich, RN; and Judy Viegas, CTR



## Holiday Recipe Makeovers: All the Taste, More Nutrition

### BAKING TIPS

- Increase fiber by substituting higher fiber flour (whole wheat, whole mixed grain, garbanzo bean) for all or part of white flour
- Increase fiber with ground flax/chia seeds
- Decrease sugar by one third to one half
- Add sweet spices such as cinnamon, cloves, allspice or vanilla extract to increase sweetness
- Decrease fat/oil by one half
- Substitute for up to half the fat: applesauce, pumpkin puree, butternut squash puree, pureed black beans

### COOKING TIPS

- Substitute chicken broth for butter in stuffing, whipped potatoes, basting turkey
- Use herbs and spices to flavor dishes instead of butter and salt
- Increase vegetables in stuffing and side dishes for more fiber, vitamins, and minerals

### EATING TIPS

- Have smaller portions of foods higher in fat and smaller portions of high fat condiments – butter, mayo, dressings
- Eat slowly, really enjoy the meal

## Green Bean Casserole

*Serves 8*

Nutrition (with bread crumbs): 125 calories, 4 gm fat, 5 gm protein, 28 gm carb, 4 gm fiber

Nutrition (with cheese): 138 calories, 6.5 gm fat, 6.5 gm protein, 25 gm carb, 4 gm fiber

Nutrition (with both cheese & bread crumbs): 153 calories, 6.5 gm fat, 7 gm protein, 28 gm carb, 4 gm fiber

2.5 pounds green beans, cut into 2" pieces

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

3 tablespoons flour

$\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper

1 tablespoon fresh herbs – sage, thyme, or rosemary

2.5 cups low fat milk

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup panko bread crumbs or shredded cheese (or both)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Toss green beans with 1 tablespoon oil, then spread beans in even layer on two baking sheets. Roast in oven 20–25 minutes, stirring once halfway through. If sheets are on different shelves in the oven, switch the sheets halfway through cooking time. Beans should be tender.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in pan and cook onions over medium heat, stirring frequently, until very soft and brown, 5–8 minutes. Add flour, salt, pepper, cook and stir 1 minute. Add milk, continue to stir until sauce bubbles and thickens, approximately 4 minutes (coats back of spoon). Add 1 tablespoon of fresh herbs and stir. Remove from heat.

Place  $\frac{1}{2}$  green beans in broiler safe 2 quart baking dish, spread  $\frac{1}{2}$  sauce over beans, top with remaining beans, then remaining sauce. Sprinkle top with either bread crumbs, cheese, or both. Broil until bubbly and beginning to brown, 1–5 minutes. Let sit 10 minutes, serve.

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



## January is National Cervical Health Awareness Month

Cervical cancer is almost completely preventable with regular screening. For the prevention and early detection of cervical cancer, the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force recommends all women ages 21 to 65 have a Pap smear every three years unless recommended more frequently by their doctor or healthcare provider. A Pap test can detect abnormal cells that can be caused by certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV)—a group of related viruses commonly passed from person to person

through sexual activity. The Gardasil vaccine can help protect against certain types of HPV for females between the ages of 9 and 26. Cervical cancer symptoms can be vague but women should see their doctor or medical provider if they experience abnormal vaginal bleeding/spotting/discharge or continuing symptoms of back or leg pain. Risk factors include not having regular pap tests and pelvic exams, multiple sex partners (or a partner with multiple partners), HPV infection, and smoking.

## BRA Day USA Recap

On October 19th, Dignity Health Cancer Institute hosted an educational event for the public. Breast Reconstruction Awareness (BRA) Day USA is a campaign designed to promote public education, timely patient care, and new research on breast cancer reconstruction. The goals are to educate breast cancer patients about their breast reconstruction options while advocating for the rights of patients to be made aware of their options at the time of diagnosis. BRA Day USA provided access to a medical team to further discuss these options and provide new research. Dr. Amy Wandel led a team of medical professionals including Dr. Lindsey Satre (radiology), Dr. Christian Swanson (general surgery), Dr. Gurvinder Shaheed (hematology/oncology), Dr. Ellen Wiegner (radiation oncology) and Dr. Carrie Black (plastic surgery) who addressed questions from patients and their families. This panel of physicians mirrors the patient's team of professionals who work together from the onset of a woman's breast cancer diagnosis to develop and implement a treatment plan tailored to each patient. This team approach improves patient outcomes and quality of life.

A big thank you to the vendors who participated in BRA Day USA: India Hicks, Rossi Catering, Stella Dot Jewelry, Mercy Plastic Surgery Center, Mentor, Alloderm, Allergan, MTF and Dignity Health Nurse Navigators. We hope to see you again next year!



## Making Strides Recap

On Sunday, October 16, the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer marked its 20th year! Fifteen thousand enthusiastic participants braved the rain to raise \$500,000 in the fight against breast cancer. Making Strides Against Breast Cancer is the largest network of breast cancer awareness events in the nation, uniting nearly 300 communities. Every event is an incredible and inspiring opportunity to honor those who have battled breast cancer, raise awareness about what we can do to reduce risk, and raise money for the American Cancer Society. These precious funds help them fight the disease with research, educational outreach and services including mammograms for women who need them.

A big shout out to Dignity Health Cancer Institute of Greater Sacramento for their continued support of Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. #NoOneWalksAlone

## 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.

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 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

### 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.

Alternates every other month between

Mercy Cancer Center & Mercy San Juan Medical Center

Call 855.637.2962 for location

### LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

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

(January, March, May, July, September, November)

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

### 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

**Every other Tuesday**, 2 – 3 p.m.

(February, May, August, November)

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.

Alternates every other month between

Mercy San Juan Medical Center & UC Davis

### WOODLAND CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

**2nd Wednesday** of every month, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Woodland Healthcare Cancer Center Conference Room

515 Fairchild Ct., Woodland, 95695

For more information, please contact 530.669.5353

### 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