

Journeys

News and inspiration for
Dignity Health Cancer Institute
patients and family

Spring 2019



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Life After Cancer

When cancer treatment ends, people begin a new chapter in their lives, one that can bring hope and happiness, but also worries and fear. No two people are alike. Each person has his or her own way of coping and learning to manage these emotions. It will take time and practice. You'll probably be concerned that the cancer might come back, and you might find yourself thinking about death and dying. The fear of cancer coming back (called cancer recurrence) is common among cancer survivors and can sometimes be quite intense. Unexpected issues might also cause concern. Some people are better prepared for life after cancer than others. But everyone can benefit from help and support from other people, whether friends and family, religious groups, support groups, professional counselors, or others.

Going Back to "Normal"

When treatment is done, some people feel like they're no longer fighting the cancer. You might feel alone and lost without the support of your cancer care team. You may also find that going back to your role in the family is not as easy as you thought it would be. For some people, emotions that were put aside during cancer treatment come flooding back all at once, and they feel overwhelmed

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April is Testicular &
Head and Neck Cancer
Awareness Month

May is Brain Tumor & Skin
Cancer Awareness Month

June is National Cancer
Survivors & Men's Cancer
Awareness Month



Dignity Health™
Cancer Institute
of Greater Sacramento



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with sadness, anger, or fear. Some of it may be the lingering side effects of treatment, but some of it feels as if your body and spirit are tired and need a long rest. Facing these feelings and learning how to deal with them is important. Don't expect everything to go back to the way it was before you were diagnosed. Give yourself, your family, and those around you time. Just like it took time to adjust to cancer, you can adjust to life after cancer.

Staying Positive

In recent years, a lot of attention has been paid to the importance of having a positive attitude. Be careful to not allow others' misguided attempts to encourage positive thinking place this burden on you. You might be better able to manage your life and cancer history when you're able to look at things in a positive light, but that's not always possible. It's good to work toward having a positive attitude; but try to not let the positive attitude myth stop you from telling your loved ones or your cancer care team how you feel.

Learning to Live with Uncertainty

You may notice that you're paying a lot of attention to aches and pains in your body. You may feel like a "sitting duck." The doctor says you have no signs of cancer now, but can you be sure? The fear grips you, and you have trouble sleeping, being close with your partner, and even making simple decisions. You are not alone. As time goes

by, many people say that their fear of cancer returning (recurrence) decreases and they find themselves thinking less and less often about cancer. But even years after treatment, certain events may stir up this worry. Here are some ideas that have helped others deal with uncertainty and fear and feel more hopeful:

- Be informed. Learn what you can do for your health now and about the services available to you. This can give you a greater sense of control.
- Be aware that you don't have control over cancer recurrence. It helps to accept this rather than fight it.
- Be aware of your fears, but don't judge them. Practice letting them go. It's normal for these thoughts to enter your mind, but you don't have to keep them there.
- Express your feelings of fear or uncertainty with a trusted friend or counselor. Being open and dealing with emotions helps many people feel less worried.
- Take in the present moment rather than thinking of an uncertain future or a difficult past.
- Use your energy to focus on wellness and what you can do now to stay as healthy as possible.
- Find ways to help yourself relax.
- Be as physically active as you can.

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What is Testicular Cancer?

Testicular cancer is a disease in which cancer develops in one or both of the testicles. It occurs when germ cells experience abnormal growth. Germ cells, like stem cells, have the potential to form any cell in the body. Normally these cells lie dormant until sperm fertilizes an egg. If germ cells (a sexual reproductive cell) become cancerous, they multiply, forming a mass of cells called tumors that begin to invade normal tissue. When this happens, these cells have the potential to form a variety of embryonic-like features including, but not limited to, hair, nails, teeth, etc.

Testicular cancer can metastasize, meaning that it can spread to other parts of the body. During this time, cells leave the original tumor from the testicle and migrate to other parts of the body through blood and lymph vessels, forming new tumors. Testicular cancer spreads most often to the abdomen, liver, lungs, bones, and brain. Testicular cancer can spread rapidly and is deadly if left untreated.

Testicular cancer has a very fast onset. If not detected early, the cancerous tumors can grow rapidly with the ability to double in size in just 10 to 30 days. Testicular cancer is on the rise and can affect any male from infancy to the elderly. The highest rate of diagnoses are males between the ages of 15 and 44.

Warning Signs and Symptoms

- A lump of any size on the testicle
- Enlargement of the testicle, change in shape, size or any irregularities
- Pain or discomfort in the scrotum or testicle
- A dull ache or sense of pressure in the lower abdomen or back
- A feeling of heaviness or fullness in the scrotum
- Enlargement or tenderness of the breasts due to elevated hormone levels

In most cases, early stages of testicular cancer present themselves in a completely painless manner.

Advanced Signs and Symptoms

- Significant weight loss (due to the growth of tumors and/or enlarged abdominal lymph nodes)
- Back pain
- Chest pain, coughing or difficulty breathing
- Coughing up blood (due to tumors in the lungs)
- Enlargement of the lymph nodes in the abdomen and/or neck

If any of the signs and symptoms of testicular cancer are present, you need to see your doctor for further testing immediately.

Special Surprise for Mercy Cancer Center Staff

Patient, Michael Puente surprised the staff and patients at the Mercy Cancer Center on January 16 with original Merlino's freezes! He wanted to give back to all those caring for him, and also "to bring a little sunshine to other patients while waiting for their treatment." Lots of smiles were shared while enjoying the delicious treats. Many thanks to Mr. Puente.



Philosophy of Hospice and One Common Complaint

Written by: Eva Lukas, MA, LMFT

The beginnings of the hospice movement date back to the 11th century when Crusaders set up homes to care for the incurably ill. In the 14th century, the Knights Hospitaller opened facilities to care for sick and injured pilgrims. With religious orders and their influences fading in the following four centuries, it was not until 1879 that the Irish Religious Sisters of Charity opened Our Lady's Hospice in Dublin, Ireland. Finally, in 1967 nurse and social worker, Cicely Saunders, opened the first modern hospice, St. Christopher's, in London.

Ultimately, Saunders brought together a large number of patients with terminal illness and compassionate staff who were committed to provide the highest level of care possible. As a result, new research, insight, and knowledge have evolved in the last 52 years. And that benefits all of us.

Today, hospice provides emotional, spiritual, and physical support to patients. The focus is on quality of life while caring for the wishes and needs of patients and their families. The approach is holistic and individualized.

Services are multifaceted, covered by Medicare, and include pain management, expert nursing and medical care, physical therapy, social work, counseling services, medication and supplies, as well as housekeeping. Volunteers are available to come to visit as well.

Despite the difficult topic and our expertly developed coping skill of avoidance, it is not too early to start a conversation about hospice. Educating ourselves and finding answers to questions will help us to tap into high-quality resources in a timely manner. And only you will decide when the time is right for you.

Would it help you to know that research has shown that patients in hospice prolong their life by an average of 29 days compared to patients who insist on treatment despite the fact that it has stopped working? Try to keep an open mind, and you may meet the most compassionate, warm, and kind professionals you have ever met in your whole life.

And now that you have reached the end of this article, I will keep the promise implied in the headline and share the common complaint I hear from patients: "I wish we had called hospice much earlier."



Katz Family Valentine's Day Tradition

For the sixth year, Lorraine Katz, son Jeff and husband, TJ, delivered presents for all the patients at the Mercy Cancer Center on Valentine's Day. All were so grateful with the blankets, stuffed animals, and beautiful coffee cups filled with candy, playing cards, and notepads. The gifts were offered to the patients as a way to give back to the community in honor of Lorraine's husband, Jules, who sadly passed away from colon cancer on February 14, 2009. Lorraine and Jules were childhood sweethearts. Thank you so much to the Katz family for your thoughtful donations from all the staff and patients at the Mercy Cancer Center.

The Power of Food: New Product Trends for 2019

Written by: Susan Liebert, MS, RD, CSO, CDE

There are a number of interesting new food trends for 2019, some of which support recommendations to reduce the risk of cancer. Look for them on grocery shelves during the year.

Foods with Added Probiotics

- Probiotics added to granola, oatmeal, nut butters, and protein bars
- Products: Good Belly crunch bars, Purely Elizabeth probiotic granola (vegan probiotic strain)
- Probiotics in fermented foods/beverages can help support healthy gastrointestinal tract and immune system function

Plant-based Frozen Treats

- Made with avocado, hummus, coconut bases
- Products: Cocowhip soft serve, Cado Avocado frozen dessert
- Research has found higher intakes of fruits and vegetables as well as plant-based protein linked to reduced cancer risk

Increase in Types of Seed Butters

- Butters made from hemp, sesame, sunflower, and pumpkin seeds
- Seeds are a good source of mono and polyunsaturated fat. They also contain fiber, protein, as well as vitamins and minerals (B complex, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, calcium, vitamin E, zinc).

Food with Less Sugar, Increased Use of Natural Sweeteners (Honey, Agave)

- This includes no calorie sweeteners from plants (stevia, monk fruit)
- Used in jams, cereal, yogurt, beverages
- Reduced sugar can help with weight loss, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome

Increased Variety of Foods with Plant-based Protein

- Good Catch fish free tuna as well as fish free burgers made with 6 legume blend + vegan algae oil (high in protein, omega 3's)
- Green Street plant-based meal bowls with quinoa, lentils, and chickpeas
- Healthy Choice has frozen vegan and vegetarian bowls with protein from beans, grains, and cheese that are on shelves now
- Research has found higher intakes of plant-based protein linked to reduced cancer risk

Eastern Star Donation

Deborah Osborne and Sherel Harris from the Eastern Star Rose Chapter #292 delivered many colorful port pals to the Mercy Cancer Center infusion nurses. The small cushion-like port pals are used over patient IV ports and attachable to seatbelts when needed for comfort and avoidance of chafing. Patients with ports are so grateful to the Eastern Star members for their kind donation and thoughtfulness.



Dignity Health Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Unveils New Infusion Center

Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital recently revealed its new expanded infusion center in the ambulatory treatment center. The new space includes 12 treatment chairs and one private room for injections; and it features a nourishment

center and in-department pharmacist for patient access. The infusion center will enable hospital staff to serve 18 patients at one time. Patients will enjoy a beautiful view of local hills and the skyline.

Prior to the expansion, the center had space for 8 patients and required use of a Med Surg room for overflow. At the open house event, guests enjoyed a blessing and candle ceremony while a harpist played music in the background.

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- Control what you can. Some people say that putting their lives back in order makes them feel less fearful. Being involved in your health care, getting back to your normal life, and making changes in your lifestyle are among the things you can control.

Health Problems from Cancer Treatment

Some cancer treatments may cause health problems later. These may be long-term side effects. These problems might not appear right away, and some don't show up until years after treatment. Ask your cancer care team:

- If treatments you had put you at risk for short- or long-term health problems
- What those problems are and how you can recognize them
- What you should do if you notice them
- What you can do to be as healthy as you can

Get Support

Emotional support can be a powerful tool for both cancer survivors and their families. Talking with others who are in situations like yours can help ease loneliness. There are many kinds of support programs, including individual or group counseling and support groups. Support in any form allows you to express your feelings and develop coping skills.

Support Groups

Some groups are formal and focus on learning about cancer or dealing with feelings. Others are informal and social. Some groups are made up of only people with cancer or only caregivers, while some include spouses, family members,

or friends. Other groups focus on certain types of cancer or stages of disease. Studies have found that people who take part in support groups have an improved quality of life, including better sleep and appetite.

Counseling

Some people feel better having a person-to-person connection with a counselor who can give one-on-one attention and encouragement. Your cancer care team may be able to recommend a counselor who works with cancer survivors.

Spirituality and Religion

Religion can be a great source of strength for some people. Some find new faith during a cancer experience. Others find that cancer informs their existing faith or their faith provides newfound strength. If you are a religious person, a minister, rabbi, other leader of your faith, or a trained pastoral counselor can help you identify your spiritual needs and find spiritual support. Spirituality is important to many people, even those who don't practice a formal religion. Meditation, practicing gratitude, helping others, and spending time in nature are just a few of the many ways that people address spiritual needs.

Bottom Line

Keep in mind that you are a cancer survivor and remember the good news: You are one of millions of Americans alive today who has had cancer, and the survival rate is improving all the time. Like most of them, you and the people around you can adjust to and lead a fulfilling life after cancer.

Article provided by:



Grass Valley Cancer Center Resources

A Cancer diagnosis impacts not only the patient but loved ones as well. Families and other interested patients are welcome to utilize these resources. Services are offered at no cost to cancer patients, family members, and caregivers. For information on any of the groups or classes below (where another number is not given) call Rebecca Parsons at **530.274.6656**.

CANCER CENTER LENDING LIBRARY

THE ART OF HEALING WITH Nanci Shandera, PhD

8-week courses, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
drnanci@earthspiritcenter.com or EarthSpiritCenter.com

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP WITH Linda Meyers, LCSW

Wednesdays, 3 – 4:30 p.m.
Contact: 530.478.1273

CARE SUPPORT GROUP WITH Jeanine Bryant, MS FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF CANCER PATIENTS

Wednesdays, 3 – 4:30 p.m.
Contact: 530.274.6654

COMFORT CUISINE MEALS

Delicious, nutritious, homemade meals for patients and caregivers. Frozen, individual portions, ready to reheat.
Pick up in the Cancer Center

G.A.T.E.: GRIEVING AND TRANSITIONING EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE TO CANCER WITH Jeanine Bryant, MS

Tuesdays, 3:30 – 5 p.m.
Contact: 530.274.6654

HARP CLASSES WITH Lisa Stine

Fridays, weekly for 12 weeks
Contact: Lisa Stine, 530.632.6226

KIDSCOPE: FOR CHILDREN IMPACTED BY CANCER WITH Jeanine Bryant, MS

Contact: 530.274.6654

NUTRITIONAL CONSULTATIONS

KELLEY KULL, RD, CDE

Available for appointment
Contact: 530.274.6600

ONCOLOGY NURSE NAVIGATORS

Mindi Soares, RN
Contact: 530.274.6179

Linda Aeschliman, RN
(Breast Cancer Patients)
Contact: 530.274.6657

ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORKER

REBECCA PARSONS LCSW, OSW-C

Referrals to community resources,
individual and family counseling
Contact: 530.274.6656

OVARIAN CANCER GROUP

Third Sunday of each month, 1 – 3 p.m.
Contact: Rebecca Parsons, 530.274.6656

PROSTATE DISCUSSION GROUP WITH MARY PETERSON, LMFT

Fourth Thursday of each month 4:30 – 6 p.m.
Contact: 530.478.1880

TRANSFORMATIONAL WHOLENESS WITH Nanci Shandera, PhD

Tuesdays, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Contact: 530.265.9097
drnanci@earthspiritcenter.com
EarthSpiritCenter.com

WOMAN TO WOMAN: SHARING THE CANCER EXPERIENCE WITH Jeanine Bryant, MS

Wednesdays, 9:30 – 11 a.m.
Contact: 530.274.6654

WRITING TO HEAL WITH Molly Fisk CREATIVE WRITING CLASS

8 weekly classes
Thursdays, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Contact: 530.265.8751

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

CANCER AID THRIFT SHOP

Provides financial assistance, equipment, etc.
Contact: 530.273.2365

HOPE BEARERS

Christ-centered cancer and chronic illness support group
Third Saturday of the month
11 a.m. Foothill Church
Contact: Amy & Wayne, 530.518.0519
or Sally, 530.273.1468

Dignity Health Cancer Institute Complementary Classes & Support Groups

For more information on any of the listings below, call **916.962.8892**. If you're looking for support from our Oncology Nurse Navigators, please call **833.DHCINAV** or email **DHCINAV@dignityhealth.org**.

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

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

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6403 Coyle Avenue, Carmichael, CA 95608

4th Tuesday of every month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center, Large Conference Room

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

CAREGIVER 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

FOLSOM CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Every Thursday, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

1675 Creekside Dr., Boardroom

Folsom, CA 95630

GYNECOLOGIC CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

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

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

INTIMACY AFTER CANCER TREATMENT

Wednesday, May 22, 6 – 8 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

To RSVP, call 916.962.8893

LIVING WITH CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

1st Monday of every month, Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Woodland Healthcare Cancer Center

Haarberg Building, Conference Room

515 Fairchild Ct., Woodland, CA 95695

Lunch will be provided

LUNG AND ESOPHAGEAL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

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

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

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

Call 855.637.2962 for location

MULTIPLE MYELOMA SUPPORT GROUP

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

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6555 Coyle Avenue, Ste. 140, Carmichael, 95608

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

(MSJ = Mar 21, May 16, Jul 18, Sep 19, Nov 21)

(UCD = Apr 18, Jun 20, Aug 15, Oct 17, Dec 19)

STRESS REDUCTION & MINDFULNESS COURSE

Thursdays May 2-June 6, 4:30 – 6 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

Preregistration required; call 916.962.8892 to RSVP

YOGA CLASSES

Every Monday & Wednesday, 5 – 6 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center

3301 C Street, Sacramento, 95816

CANCER PATIENT SPECIALTY FACIALS

Facial options include: Naturally Soothing Facial, Nature's Bounty Fruits & Nuts with Honey & Milk Facial, 12-Flower Facial, Multi-Vitamin Hydrating Facial, Maui Spa Facial

All facials \$30. Call 916.536.2400 for an appointment. 2200 Sunrise Blvd, Suite 250, Gold River, CA



Mercy Medical Group.
A Service of Dignity Health Medical Foundation