

# Journeys

News and inspiration for  
Dignity Health Cancer Institute  
patients and family

August and September 2016



## Hippy-Dippy or Backed by Science: The Practice of Meditation

Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Today, approximately 30 million Americans—college students, schoolchildren, NFL players, even U.S. Marines—are integrating it into their daily routines. Corporations like Google, Apple, and Target have added regular meditation exercises to their meeting schedules. It is used for relaxation and stress reduction but may provide many more benefits.

The National Institute of Health defines meditation as a practice with the focus on the interaction between the brain, body, and behavior. Madhav Goyal, MD, a scientist at Johns Hopkins, describes meditation as “an active training of the mind to increase awareness.” Overall, a deep state of relaxation supports releasing stress from our bodies on a physical level. As a result, you may:

- Gain a new perspective on a stressful situation
- Build new skills to manage your stress
- Increase self-awareness
- Focus on the present
- Reduce negative emotions

For example, a study by Sara Lazar from Harvard University showed that meditators (compared to non-meditators) had thicker cortical walls and additional amounts of grey matter, which is associated with

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August is Palliative Care &  
Cancer Pain Awareness Month

September is National  
Prostate Cancer Awareness  
Month, Childhood Cancer  
Awareness Month, Ovarian/  
Gynecologic Cancer Awareness  
Month, Leukemia/Lymphoma  
Awareness Month, and Thyroid  
Cancer Awareness Month



**Dignity Health**<sup>™</sup>  
Cancer Institute  
of Greater Sacramento

The Practice of Meditation, Continued from page 1

elevated brain functioning in the areas of memory, attention, and cognition. Richard J. Davidson, a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin, discovered high levels of gamma activity in experienced meditators, which points to an increased level of ability to control thoughts and reactivity to stressful events.

Now, if you have a few minutes, rather than turning on your TV or checking your email, see what happens if you quiet your mind, pay attention to your thoughts, and notice them without reacting or judging. A few minutes of daily practice can have

a significant impact on your well-being. There is no right or wrong way to meditate – a quiet location and a comfortable posture will help you get started. In addition, you are welcome to join us for our new Time-Out & Drop-In Tuesday group meditation practices listed on the schedule in the back of this newsletter. As always, please feel free to call me in case you have any questions. Be well.

Eva Lukas  
Oncology Care Therapist



## Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month

September is Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month. Gynecological cancers include uterine, ovarian, cervical, vaginal (uncommon), and vulvar (rare).

Uterine cancer (endometrial cancer) is the most common gynecological cancer, usually beginning

in the lining of the uterus or endometrium. Screening tests are not recommended to find uterine/endometrial cancer for those women of average risk but biopsies can usually be completed for those of high risk. Women should see a doctor if they experience unusual vaginal bleeding, spotting or discharge—particularly during or after menopause.

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Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month, Continued from page 2

Risk factors include:

- Age greater than 50
- Obesity
- Diabetes or high blood pressure
- Estrogen therapy without supplemental progestin
- Menopause after age 52
- Not having had children
- Present or past use of tamoxifen

Ovarian cancer is the second most common gynecologic cancer. More women die of ovarian cancer than any other gynecological cancer. Screening tests have not been shown to prevent ovarian cancer, but for those of high risk, blood tests and ultrasounds can be ordered. Symptoms are often vague but may include abdominal bloating/swelling/pain, abnormal vaginal bleeding, or ongoing digestive problems such as gas, nausea, or stomach discomfort.

Risk factors include:

- Age greater than 50
- Family history of ovarian cancer

- History of breast or colorectal cancer
- Not having had children

Cervical cancer is almost completely preventable with regular screening. 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. Gardasil and Cervarix are vaccines that 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:

- No having regular pap tests and pelvic exams
- Multiple sex partners (or a partner with multiple partners)
- HPV infection
- Smoking

## Prostate Cancer Screening Event

“Having the advantage of an early diagnosis is crucial for the one in seven men who will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime,” says Wendy Poage, president of the Prostate Conditions Education Council. Dignity Health, in cooperation with the PCEC, will once again offer free prostate cancer screenings for all men in the month of September. Screening consists of a PSA blood test and a digital rectal examination. The event will be held at the Dignity Health Medical Office Building at 3810 J Street in Sacramento on September 23 from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Appointments are required and can be scheduled beginning September 1 by calling 916.962.8967.

## Join Us for “Let’s ROC!” Run for Ovarian Cancer 5k

Please join Team Dignity Health for the “Let’s ROC!” Run for Ovarian Cancer on September 18. The 5k run/walk event is organized by the Ovarian Cancer Education & Research Network. The mission of OCERN is to advocate for ovarian cancer research, promote education and provide a network of support for women and their families. To join Team Dignity Health, go to [letsROCrn.org](http://letsROCrn.org) and register with Team Dignity Health. For additional information, please contact Ann Chrisler at 916.556.3129.





## Prostate Cancer Prevention and Early Detection

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men (after skin cancer). It is also one of the leading causes of cancer death among men. There is no sure way to prevent prostate cancer. Many of the risk factors for prostate cancer, such as age, race, and family history can't be controlled. But there are some things you can do that might lower your overall risk.

Prostate cancer can often be found early using a simple blood test, but it's not clear if the benefits of testing all men for prostate cancer outweigh the risks, such as finding (and treating) cancers that probably never would have caused any problem. Because of this, it's important to talk to a health care provider about the uncertainties, risks, and potential benefits of prostate cancer screening before deciding whether or not to be tested.

### **Body weight, physical activity, and diet**

Some studies have found that men who are overweight may have a slightly lower risk of prostate cancer overall, but a higher risk of prostate cancers likely to be fatal. Studies have found men who are regularly physically active have a slightly lower risk of prostate cancer. Vigorous activity may have a greater effect. Several studies have suggested diets high in certain vegetables (including tomatoes, cruciferous vegetables,

soybeans, and other legumes) or fish may be linked with a lower risk of prostate cancer, especially more advanced cancers. It may also be sensible to limit calcium supplements and to not get too much calcium in the diet.

### **Aspirin**

Some research suggests men who take aspirin daily for a long time might have a lower risk of getting and dying from prostate cancer. Long-term aspirin use can have side effects, including an increased risk of bleeding in the digestive tract. While aspirin can also have other health benefits, at this time most doctors don't recommend taking it solely to try to lower prostate cancer risk.

### **What tests can detect prostate cancer early?**

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) is a substance made by cells in the prostate gland (both normal cells and cancer cells). PSA is mostly found in semen, but a small amount is also found in the blood. Most men without prostate cancer have PSA levels under 4 nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL) of blood. The chance of having prostate cancer goes up as the PSA level goes up. When prostate cancer develops, the PSA level usually goes above 4. Still, a level below 4 does not guarantee that a man doesn't have cancer. About 15% of men with a PSA below 4 will have prostate cancer on a biopsy.

American Cancer Society

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.*

## Philanthropy in Action: Supporting Cancer Patients on the Road to Treatment

Cancer is a costly illness and for many patients with limited income or familial support, getting transportation to medical appointments can be a challenge. Patients facing transportation hardship sometimes have no alternative but to decline the treatments they so desperately need. Thanks to the generosity of Mercy Foundation donors who support the Area of Greatest Need, Dignity Health Foundation was able to fund an Oncology Transportation Grant last year.

Through the grant, Mercy Cancer Institute nurse navigators are able to connect Dignity Health patients undergoing cancer treatment with the transportation services they need to obtain care. In the first ten months alone, the grant provided assistance in the form of gas cards, bus passes and transportation service vouchers to nearly 200 patients. For many, these provisions can mean the difference between life and death. To understand

this impact, Nurse Navigator Marie Froehlich, RN shares an experience of one patient:

I have a patient who has a very aggressive breast cancer and had a bilateral mastectomy. She has no support system whatsoever. She lives alone and did not even have transportation to the hospital for her surgery. With funding provided by the Mercy Foundation grant, we were able to safely discharge this patient home. Through the generosity of Mercy Foundation donors, this patient is also receiving transportation support for her chemotherapy treatments. I don't know how the patient would be able to receive the treatment she needs without this amazing assistance.

The Oncology Transportation Grant provides a stark reminder that while the latest technology and medical advances can save lives, if a patient is unable to overcome the simple hurdle of getting to their appointments, it's all for naught. Thanks to the generosity of many Mercy Foundation donors, this obstacle has been removed for hundreds of patients, allowing them to focus their energy on their health and healing.

## Gynecologic Cancer: Know the Facts

Knowing the facts about gynecologic cancer is empowering, and can even save lives. Join us for an informational event where expert physicians share key insights and new developments. The event will be host to physicians and genetic counselors, along with a massage therapist, wellness and fitness coach, and aroma therapist.

Thursday, September 8  
6 to 8 p.m.

Mercy Cancer Center  
3301 C Street, Suite 550  
Sacramento, CA 95816

For more information or to RSVP, contact Community Outreach Coordinator Angela Gianulias at 916.962.8893.

Calendar of Events

# August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>1</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>2</p> <p><b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy San Juan 8:30 to 9 a.m.</p> <p><b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy San Juan 9 to 9:30 a.m.</p> <p><b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.</p>	<p>3</p> <p><b>Legacy Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>4</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5 to 6 p.m.</p> <p><b>Breast Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 6 to 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p><b>Ostomy Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 10 a.m. to Noon</p> <p><b>Multiple Myeloma Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 10 a.m. to Noon</p>
7	<p>8</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>9</p> <p><b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.</p>	<p>10</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>11</p> <p><b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy Cancer Center 8:30 to 9 a.m.</p> <p><b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy Cancer Center 8 to 9:30 a.m.</p>	12	13
14	<p>15</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>16</p> <p><b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.</p>	<p>17</p> <p><b>Gynecologic Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>18</p> <p><b>Prostate Support Group</b> UC Davis 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy San Juan 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Breast Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 4:30 to 6 p.m.</p>	<p>19</p> <p><b>Caregiver's Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.</p>	20
21	<p>22</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>23</p> <p><b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.</p>	<p>24</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>25</p> <p><b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy Cancer Center 8:30 to 9 a.m.</p> <p><b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy Cancer Center 9 to 9:30 a.m.</p>	26	27
28	<p>29</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>30</p> <p><b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.</p>	<p>31</p> <p><b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.</p>			

Calendar of Events

# September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5 to 6 p.m. <b>Breast Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 6 to 7:30 p.m.	2	3 <b>Ostomy Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 10 a.m. to Noon <b>Multiple Myeloma Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 10 a.m. to Noon
4	5 <b>Happy Labor Day!</b>  <b>OFFICES CLOSED</b>	6 <b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy San Juan 8:30 to 9 a.m. <b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy San Juan 9 to 9:30 a.m. <b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m. <b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.	7 <b>Legacy Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	8 <b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy Cancer Center 8:30 to 9 a.m. <b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy Cancer Center 9 to 9:30 a.m.	9	10
11	12 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	13 <b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m. <b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.	14 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	15 <b>Prostate Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. <b>Yoga</b> Mercy San Juan 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. <b>Breast Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy San Juan 4:30 to 6 p.m.	16 <b>Caregiver's Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	17
18	19 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	20 <b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m. <b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.	21 <b>Gynecologic Support Group</b> Mercy Cancer Center 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	22 <b>Gentle Conditioning</b> Mercy Cancer Center 8:30 to 9 a.m. <b>Guided Imagery</b> Mercy Cancer Center 9 to 9:30 a.m.	23	24
25	26 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	27 <b>Cancer Support Group</b> Mercy Hospital of Folsom 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m. <b>Meditation Group</b> Mercy San Juan 1 to 1:45 p.m.	28 <b>Yoga</b> Mercy Cancer Center 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.	29	30	

## Calendar of Events

### Blood Cancer Support Group

Mercy San Juan Medical Center  
Conference Room 2/Russell Tower  
(next to cafeteria)

### Breast Cancer Support and Education Group

Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento  
Large Conference Room

Mercy San Juan Medical Center  
Suite 140

### Cancer Support Group

Mercy Hospital of Folsom  
Call 916.390.2661 for location

### Gentle Conditioning and Guided Imagery

Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento  
Large Conference Room

Mercy San Juan Medical Plaza  
6401 Coyle Ave, Suite 112

### Legacy Support Group

Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento  
Large Conference Room

Mercy San Juan Medical Center  
Call 855.637.2962 for location

### Living with Cancer Support Group

Woodland Memorial Hospital Cafeteria

### Multiple Myeloma Support Group

Mercy San Juan Medical Plaza  
Lukens Auditorium



### Nutrition Class

Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento  
Large Conference Room

### Ostomy Support Group

Mercy San Juan Medical Center  
Conference Room 2 (next to cafeteria)

### Prostate Cancer Support Group

Mercy San Juan Medical Plaza  
UC Davis Medical Center  
Cancer Center Auditorium

### Smoking Cessation Classes

Mercy San Juan Medical Plaza—  
916.537.5299

Mercy General Cardiopulmonary  
Rehab Department—  
916.453.4268

### Yoga

Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento  
Large Conference Room

Mercy San Juan Medical Center  
Physician's Plaza (6555 Coyle Ave.,  
Room 145)

## Locations

### Mercy Cancer Center—Sacramento

3301 C Street # 550  
Sacramento, CA 95816  
916.556.3200

### Mercy Cancer Center—Carmichael

6511 Coyle Avenue  
Carmichael, CA 95608  
916.863.8700

### Mercy General Hospital

4001 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95819  
916.453.4545

### Mercy Hospital of Folsom

1650 Creekside Drive  
Folsom, CA 95630  
916.983.7410

### Mercy San Juan Medical Center

6501 Coyle Avenue  
Carmichael, CA 95608  
916.537.3000

### Mercy San Juan Medical Plaza

6555 Coyle Avenue  
Carmichael, CA 95608  
916.537.3000

### Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital

155 Glasson Way  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
530.274.6000

### UC Davis Medical Center

4501 X Street  
Sacramento, CA 95817  
916.734.5810

### Woodland Healthcare Woodland Memorial Hospital

1325 Cottonwood Street  
Woodland, CA 95695  
530.662.3961

### Yolo Adult Day Health Center

20 N. Cottonwood Street  
Woodland, CA 95695  
530.666.8828