

# Connections Quarterly

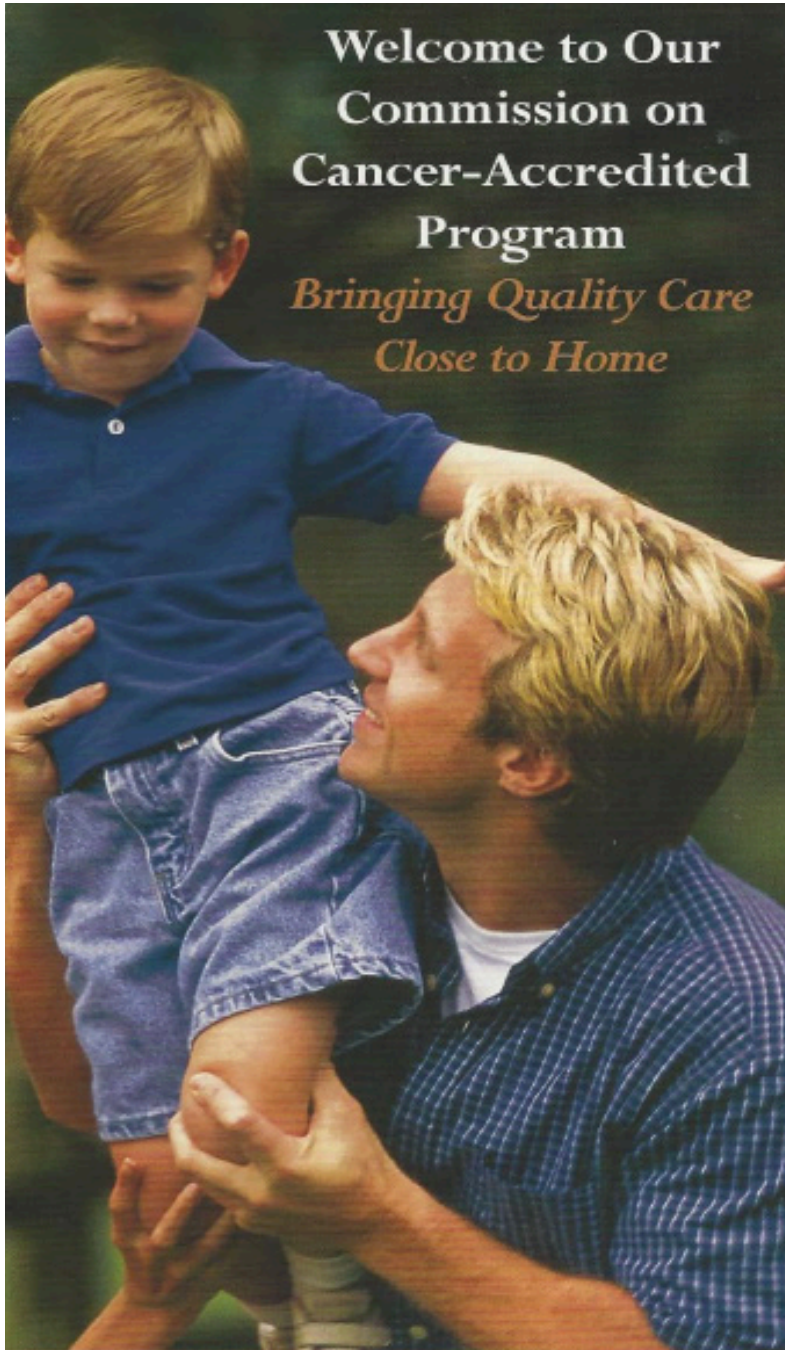
WINTER 2017-18 ISSUE 64



Glens Falls Hospital  
C.R. WOOD CANCER CENTER



Welcome to Our  
Commission on  
Cancer-Accredited  
Program  
*Bringing Quality Care  
Close to Home*



Commission  
on Cancer®

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For more information  
about the Connections  
Quarterly newsletter or  
the C.R. Wood Cancer  
Center please call  
**518.926.6640**

# What is an Accredited Cancer Program?

By Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN

Accreditation by the Commission on Cancer (CoC), a program of the American College of Surgeons, demonstrates a cancer program's commitment to providing high quality, multidisciplinary, patient-centered cancer care. The C.R. Wood Cancer Center has been recognized as an accredited cancer program, and has maintained this accreditation status as a Comprehensive Community Cancer Program for the last 25 years. Only one in four cancer programs at hospitals across the United States receive this special accreditation.

Currently there are more than 1,500 CoC Accredited Cancer programs in the United States and Puerto Rico. CoC accreditation is nationally recognized by organizations including the National Cancer Institute, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Quality Forum, American Cancer Society, and The Joint Commission, as having established data-driven performance measures for the provision of quality cancer care.

The CoC standards set the framework for a program that provides high-quality, patient-centered care and access to the full scope of cancer care services required to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, and support.

## RECEIVING CARE AT A COC-ACCREDITED CANCER PROGRAM ENSURES THAT PATIENTS WILL RECEIVE:

- Comprehensive care, including a range of state of the art services and equipment
- A multi-specialty team approach to coordinate the best treatment options
- Information about clinical trials and new treatment options
- Access to cancer related information, education, and support
- A cancer registry that collects data on type and stage of cancers and treatment results and offers lifelong patient follow-up
- Ongoing monitoring and improvement of care

The CoC encourages its accredited cancer programs to continually improve their quality of patient care by implementing programs that cover the full spectrum of cancer care services. These programs include prevention, early detection, pretreatment evaluation, staging and optimal treatment, clinical research, genetics, and rehabilitation, surveillance for recurrent disease, psychosocial support, nurse navigation, survivorship and end of life care. In addition, the CoC regularly monitors the quality of patient care delivered in accredited cancer programs to improve cancer care related outcomes.

## STANDARDS SET FORTH BY THE COC INCLUDE:

### Program Management

Through multidisciplinary discussions at quarterly cancer committee meetings that oversee all aspects of an oncology program.

### Clinical Services

Reviews quality pathology reporting, Oncology certified professionals; including nursing, clinical research, genetics, oncology data management, breast center technicians and radiologists. Also includes a palliative care program.

### Continuum of Care Services

Includes patient navigation, psychosocial distress screening, and survivorship care plans.

### Patient Outcomes

Prevention programs (tobacco cessation programs are available at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center), screening programs (annual skin cancer screening, high-risk lung cancer screening, mammography services are a few available through Glens Falls Hospital), cancer center liaison physician and accountability measures that insure high quality care and patient centered outcomes. Also sets guidelines for quality improvement measures and compliance with evidence based guidelines for care.



With a diagnosis of cancer, you or your loved one will be faced with many difficult medical decisions and emotional situations. To help make things easier, you can be assured that you won't need to travel great distances from home because you can receive the care that you need right here in your own community.

No one can guarantee the outcome of any type of treatment, but by coming to our CoC Accredited Cancer Program, you can be sure that you will receive the best quality of care. For more information about the Commission on Cancer, visit [www.facs.org/cancer/index.html](http://www.facs.org/cancer/index.html) or contact the Oncology Data Management team of the C.R. Wood Cancer Center at 518-926-6632

**“You can be assured that you won't need to travel great distances from home because you can receive the care that you need right here in your own community.”**



## Neulasta and Neulasta OnPro

by John Adamchick, Pharmacist at the CR Wood Cancer Center

Several types of chemotherapy can decrease the amount of white blood cells in a patient's body. White blood cells help the body to fight infections. When the white blood cell count is decreased, there is an increased risk for infections.

Neulasta is a medication that may be prescribed to patients after they receive chemotherapy to help reduce the risk of infection caused by a decrease in white blood cells. Neulasta is a man-made form of granulocyte colony stimulating factor (G-CSF). G-CSF is a substance that helps to stimulate white blood cell production in the body. Neulasta is given as a subcutaneous (under the skin) shot in the outer area of the upper arm, the abdomen, the front of the thigh or the upper area of the buttocks. It should be given at least 24 hours after chemotherapy and not within 2 weeks of the next dose of chemotherapy. Patients often have to return to the clinic 24 hours after chemotherapy to receive a dose of Neulasta.

In 2014, a medication kit called Neulasta OnPro was released that eliminates the need for clinic return and additional copay. Neulasta OnPro is a kit that contains a dose of Neulasta and a drug delivery system called an On-Body Injector (OBI). The OBI can be applied to the patient the SAME day that chemotherapy is administered but the device will not release the dose until 27 hours after chemotherapy. A nurse will activate the OBI by filling it with a dose of Neulasta supplied in the kit. Once activated, a small screen will indicate to the nurse that the OBI is ready to be applied to an appropriate injection site on the patient's body. The nurse will then pull back two pieces of adhesive backing which will expose adhesive and a small automatic needle.

Once the OBI is applied to the patient's body a beeping noise will sound. This beeping sound indicates that the device's short needle will insert a cannula (small soft tube) into the skin. The cannula will allow for the medication to be delivered 27 hours after placement. Once the cannula is inserted, a long beep will sound and an indicator light will turn green. While the cannula remains in place in the skin, the needle retracts back into the OBI. An indicator light on the OBI will flash green every 5 seconds for approximately 27 hours to indicate the device is working. After about 27 hours, the dose of Neulasta is ready to be delivered. At that time the OBI will beep indicating that the delivery of the dose will start in 2 minutes. It takes about 45 minutes for the full dose of Neulasta to be administered.

When the dose delivery is complete, the OBI will beep and the indicator light will be solid green. The OBI can then be removed and discarded in a sharps container. Ask your nurse for a Neulasta OnPro kit information sheet for more details.





# Understanding the Nutrition Label

Source: Eatright.org

## Start with the Serving Size

Look here for both the serving size (the amount people typically eat at one time) and the number of servings in the package. Compare your portion size (the amount you actually eat) to the serving size listed on the panel. If the serving size is one cup and you eat two cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat and other nutrients listed on the label.

## Check Out the Total Calories

Find out how many calories are in a single serving. It's smart to cut back on calories if you are watching your weight.

## Let the Percent Daily Values Be Your Guide

Daily Values (DV) are average levels of nutrients for a person eating 2,000 calories a day. A food item with a 5 percent DV of fat provides 5 percent of the total fat that a person consuming 2,000 calories a day should eat. Percent DV are for the entire day, not just one meal or snack. You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. For some nutrients you may need more or less than 100 percent DV.

## The High and Low of Daily Values

Low is 5 percent or less. Aim low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium. High is 20 percent or more. Aim high in vitamins, minerals and fiber. Limit Saturated Fat, Added Sugars and Sodium. Eating less saturated fat, added sugars and sodium may help reduce your risk for chronic disease. Saturated fat and trans fat are linked to an increased risk of heart disease. Eating too much added sugar makes it difficult to meet nutrient needs within your calorie requirement. High levels of sodium can add up to high blood pressure. Remember to aim for low percentage DV of these nutrients.

## Carbohydrates

There are three types of carbohydrates: sugars, starches and fiber. Eat whole-grain breads, cereals, rice and pasta plus fruits and vegetables.

## Get Enough Vitamins, Minerals and Fiber

Eat more fiber, potassium, vitamin D, calcium and iron to maintain good health and help reduce your risk of certain health problems such as osteoporosis and anemia. Choose more fruits and vegetables to get more of these nutrients. Remember to aim high for percentage DV of these nutrients.

## Protein

A percentage Daily Value for protein is not required on the label. Eat moderate portions of lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese, plus beans and peas, peanut butter, seeds and soy products.

## Sugars

Simple carbohydrates, or sugars, occur naturally in foods such as fruit juice (fructose) and milk (lactose) or come from refined sources such as table sugar (sucrose) or corn syrup. Added sugars will be included on the Nutrition Facts label in 2018. The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming no more than 10 percent of daily calories from added sugars.

## Check the Ingredient List

Foods with more than one ingredient must have an ingredient list on the label. Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight. Those in the largest amounts are listed first. This information is particularly helpful to individuals with food sensitivities, those who wish to avoid pork or shellfish, limit added sugars or people who prefer vegetarian eating.

## Nutrition Facts

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 8 servings per container      |                      |
| <b>Serving size</b>           | <b>2/3 cup (55g)</b> |
| <b>Amount per serving</b>     |                      |
| <b>Calories</b>               | <b>230</b>           |
| % Daily Value*                |                      |
| <b>Total Fat</b> 8g           | <b>10%</b>           |
| Saturated Fat 1g              | <b>5%</b>            |
| Trans Fat 0g                  |                      |
| <b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg        | <b>0%</b>            |
| <b>Sodium</b> 160mg           | <b>7%</b>            |
| <b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g | <b>13%</b>           |
| Dietary Fiber 4g              | <b>14%</b>           |
| Total Sugars 12g              |                      |
| Includes 10g Added Sugars     | <b>20%</b>           |
| <b>Protein</b> 3g             |                      |
| Vitamin D 2mcg                | <b>10%</b>           |
| Calcium 260mg                 | <b>20%</b>           |
| Iron 8mg                      | <b>45%</b>           |
| Potassium 235mg               | <b>6%</b>            |

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

## No Matter How Scary, Keeping Yourself Balanced is Key

by Kami Hawkins



I was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer called clear cell carcinoma. It was a stage Ic ovarian cancer. I had surgery with Dr. Timmins on April 25, 2017. I then consulted with Dr. Gillani at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center and both doctors agreed that I would need chemotherapy, in the form of carboplatin and Taxol; followed by radiation to prevent the cancer from returning. I started my first round of chemotherapy in June, and I had a reaction to the Taxol. The doctors then tried docetaxel, which I also reacted to. Third time's a charm! They finally switched me to Abraxane which I was able to tolerate and complete all 6 cycles of chemotherapy on November 1st. After a short break it was off to 6 weeks of radiation starting on November 27th.

My doctors have been my guides, starting with Dr. Mihindu. He has always been a guiding force with my family. He oversaw my grandmother's care and well being until her passing at age 94. He helped my mom through her kidney disease by helping her manage with nutrition alone. I was fortunate to have a great surgical team at St. Peter's with Dr. Timmins and his staff. I believe

that he helped save my life. The medical Oncology Team of Dr. Gillani and Elizabeth Reinhardt, PA, along with the chemo nurses, nurse navigators, and Lisa at the reception desk have been helpful in guiding me through this journey.

Lisa at the front desk is that constant reminder to me that there is life after treatment. Dr. Taylor in the Radiation Oncology Department gave me information overload. He researched my type of rare cancer and when I met with him he confidently stated, "After reading your report and doing some global research, I said to myself, I can help this woman." I am very fortunate to have this medical professional willing to take the time to research and treat me as an individual. That gives me hope.

Cancer is not my major. Can I go back to the fashion institute? This diagnosis has taught me that I have to be my own cancer advocate and find out what works for me, to help get me through treatment and into a healthy new me afterwards. What I have learned is that no

matter how scary things seem when you are first diagnosed—keeping balance is important. Try to forget you have cancer and have fun. Embrace the seasons. Feel the crisp fall air, enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the holiday season. Remember to live every day.

When I started loosing my hair, my friends came with me to my head shaving party. We went out to lunch, wore all the same sunhats, had a great boat ride and watched the sunset over the lake. It made an emotional day one of fond memories and happy times. Here is my thought on being bald. When I started this journey I had beautiful long straight hair. I tried to get a wig to match, but found I did not like it in the end. I have chosen to work with scarfs and hats that are easy to wear, beautiful and securely stay on.

Nothing worse then worrying that your wig will fly off in a windstorm! Makeup is key; all you need is a little blush, learn how to draw on eyebrows to define your face. Think about your own personal style and amp it up. Wearing head wraps and big earrings brings me back to my hippie days in high school. This brings back great memories of a fun time and takes me back to my roots.

Nutrition is high on the list of wellness activities that have helped me get through treatments. I used Wellco products. They are plant based nourishing protein powders. I drank these every day with a frozen banana and almond milk. I reviewed the ingredients of this product with the dietician at the cancer center, Andrea, and she agreed that it would be helpful. Eating what you like is a great way to keep your nutrition up during treatment. Focus on healthy substitutions and choices that you like. Easy substitutions, like fresh berries instead of jam on your bagels. I personally try to minimize sugars and increase my protein intake.

On the days that I found I had some nausea, I ate some So Delicious Ice cream. They make a 1% sugar ice cream in vanilla and chocolate that is wonderfully delicious. The freezing of my tongue during eating this ice cream helped minimize my nausea. I am not always positive. That is hard to do and takes a lot of energy. In the middle of the night I tend to wake up and I am scared. I live alone so my biggest source of comfort and



support is my loving cat, Yves (named after the designer Yves St Larnet). Yves is 13 going on 3 and he helps calm me down and reminds me to refocus on getting through the next minute, hour or day. I lost my mom a year ago to colon cancer. My mom was my best friend and the only family I had. My friends became my family.

When I was diagnosed, the memories of her struggles clouded my ability to see positive outcomes. I have worked with the professionals at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center to help me understand that my cancer is different than hers. I hope that with my cancer the doctors continue to educate me about my numbers and scan results, so I can be my own advocate. Prayer and my church family have been instrumental in my ability to get through treatments. A member of my church attended every chemotherapy with me. I will always be thankful for the love and support they have given me during my treatments. Times when I feel down and angry that I have cancer, I drink a cup of the Super Elixir calming tea from Wellco. The tea has lemon balm, hops, valerian root, passion fruit, skullcap, mango and lemon and works to calm my fears. Through a lot of reading, I've found that Valerian really helps as a sleeping agent.

Remember to live every day, embrace the seasons, eat to nourish yourself and your soul, find your own personal source of support and be your own



## SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS BY APPOINTMENT

**Care Management**

For: Continuing care needs, transportation and financial concerns  
 Info: Karen Cook, LMSW | 518-926-6619

**Chemotherapy Education Class**

For: Individuals & family starting chemotherapy  
 Meets: Tuesdays at 4:00 P.M. in the Cancer Center Library or by appointment at your convenience  
 Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639  
 Lisa Haase, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6563  
 Nicole Molinero, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6629

**Clinical Research**

For: Anyone interested in learning about clinical trials  
 Info: Beth Brundage, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6644

**Genetics Counseling**

For: Anyone concerned about their personal or family history of cancer  
 Info: Rebecca Kerr, MSc, CGC | 518-926-6574

**Nutrition Counseling**

For: Anyone interested in dietary counseling  
 Info: Andrea Chowske, RD, CD-N | 518-926-2635

**Pastoral Care**

For: Anyone interested in spiritual counseling  
 Info: 518-926-3531

**Patient Insurance Assistance**

For: Referrals, prior authorizations, billing, insurance questions  
 Info: 518-926-6639

**Psychosocial Oncology**

For: Counseling for patients and/or their families  
 Info: Gerry Florio, Ph.D.  
 Call: 518-926-6640 for an appointment

**Nurse Navigators**

For: Individuals & family diagnosed with any cancer  
 Meets: By appointment or stop by  
 Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639  
 Lisa Haase, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6563  
 Nicole Molinero RN, OCN® | 518-926-6629

**Spa Services at Cindy's Healing Place Massage Therapy**

For: Cancer patients during and after treatment  
 Meets: By appointment at Cindy's Healing Place  
 Info: 518-926-6640

**Uniquely You® Boutique & Salon**

For: Any cancer patient  
 Free wigs, hats & turbans, skin & hair care  
 Meets: By appointment on Tuesdays in the C. R. Wood Cancer Center  
 Info: 518-926-6640

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

**CG Men's Retreat**

For: Men living with and beyond cancer  
 Meets: One weekend each year in the Fall  
 Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

**Cindy's Comfort Camp**

For: Children and teens ages 6-17 years who have experienced the death or serious illness of a parent or close relative  
 Meets: One weekend each Spring and Fall at the Double "H" Hole in the Woods Ranch in Lake Luzerne  
 Info: 518-926-6640

**Cindy's Retreat**

For: Women living with and beyond cancer  
 Meets: One weekend each Spring and Fall at Silver Bay on Lake George  
 Info: Karen Cook, LMSW | 518-926-6619

**Breast Cancer Survivors Luncheon**

For: Breast Cancer Survivors and a guest  
 Meets: One Saturday in October  
 Info: Lisa Haase, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6563

**Survivor Breakfast**

For: Any cancer survivor and a guest  
 Meets: One Saturday in June  
 Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

**Summer Picnic**

For: Any cancer survivor and their family  
 Meets: One Wednesday in August  
 Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

**Holiday Party**

For: Any cancer survivor and their family  
 Meets: One Wednesday in December  
 Info: Lisa Haase, RN, OCN® | 518-926-6563



These groups are open-ended and you may come as you wish. You may want to call if you are new or you have not come for some time to make sure that the schedule or location has not changed.

### DISCUSSION GROUPS

#### ABC Support Group *After Breast Cancer*

For: Individuals with breast cancer  
Meets: 4th Monday each month  
6:00 P.M. | Cancer Center Waiting Room  
Info: Lisa Haase, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6563

#### Blood Cancer Support Group

For: Individuals & family diagnosed with lymphoma, leukemia or multiple myeloma  
Meets: 2nd Wednesday each month  
6:00 P.M. | Community Learning Center, Side A  
Info: Karen Cook, LMSW 518 | 926-6619

#### Prostate Cancer Awareness Group

For: Men with prostate cancer and their families  
Meets: 3rd Thursday each month  
7:00 P.M. | Cancer Center Library  
Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

#### Rays of Hope

For: Women with ovarian cancer  
Meets: 3rd Wednesday each month  
4:00 P.M. | Cancer Center Library  
Info: Mary Davis | 518-656-9321  
Carol Smith | 518-793-0565

#### Round Table Support Group

For: Individuals with any cancer and their families  
Meets: 1st Wednesday each month  
4:00 P.M. | Cancer Center Library  
Info: Karen Cook, LMSW | 518-926-6619

#### Tobacco Cessation

Info: Whether you're thinking about quitting or ready to quit, call the NYS Smokers' Quit Line for help and support  
1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)

### ACTIVITY GROUPS

#### Healthy Steps®

For: Gentle exercise for individuals with a cancer diagnosis  
Meets: Tuesdays at 10:00 A.M. | Community Learning Center (Side B)  
Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

#### Tai Chi and Relaxation/Meditation

For: Anyone interested  
Meets: Monday afternoon at 3:30 P.M. and 5:30 P.M.  
Community Learning Center (Side B)  
Info: 518-926-1000

#### Twisted Twirlers

For: Individuals diagnosed with any cancer and caregivers who would like to join this Hall of Fame twirling group. New twirlers are always welcome!  
Meets: 11:30 A.M. | 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month  
Community Learning Center (Side B)  
Info: Barbara Ringer | 518-792-7437

#### Ways of Seeing - Arts and Crafts Workshop

For: Individuals & family diagnosed with any cancer who want to enjoy the life affirming pleasures of creating art  
Meets: 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month at 11:30 A.M.  
Cancer Center Library  
Info: Vickie Yattaw, RN, BSN, OCN® | 518-926-6639

### QUIT FOR LIFE *Stop Smoking Program*

A 4 week program for anyone who would like to quit smoking. Please note: pre-registration is required.

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018,  
Tuesday nights from 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.  
in the C.R. Wood Cancer Center Library.

For information or to register, please call Lisa Haase, RN, BSN, OCN® at 518-926-6563.

# HEAD AND NECK CANCER



## Head and Neck Cancer

By Christopher Mason, DO—Medical Oncologist C.R. Wood Cancer Center

In the United States this year, there will be over 60,000 new cases of oral cavity, pharynx, and larynx cancers, known collectively as head and neck cancers. This type of cancer represents almost 4% of all cancers diagnosed in the US. Most cancers of the head and neck area are squamous cell carcinomas.

Unfortunately, there is no generally accepted screening program for these diseases as there is in breast, prostate, or colon cancer. Visual exam as part of a routine physical and dental exam remain the best way to diagnosis the disease. However, these cancers are very preventable by lifestyle modification.

The single biggest risk factor for head and neck cancer is tobacco use. If a person smokes a pack of cigarettes per day, his/her risk is 10 times that of a nonsmoker. The risk of cancer is directly related to the amount of tobacco exposure. Smoke from cigarettes, pipes and cigars all increase a person's risk of obtaining this cancer. Chewing tobacco and snuff increase the risk of oral cavity and pharynx cancer.

Studies have found that even exposure to secondhand smoke might increase a person's risk over time. There is some evidence that there is a genetic predisposition to the carcinogenic effects of tobacco.

Alcohol drinkers have a 2-5 times greater risk of head and neck cancer than nondrinkers. It is thought that people who consume 50 grams or more of alcohol per day (approximately 3.5 or more drinks per day) have an increased risk. A standard drink (12 ounces of beer, 8 ounces of malt liquor, 5 ounces of wine, 1.5 ounces, or a "shot" of 80-proof liquor) contains about 14 grams of alcohol.

People who use both tobacco and alcohol have the highest risk of all. Combining these two habits does not just add both risks together, it multiplies them. It is estimated that 60-70% of oropharyngeal cancer is related to a contagious virus called human papillomavirus (HPV). The virus is most commonly transmitted through sexual contact. Most people with HPV never develop symptoms or health problems. Most HPV infections (9 out of 10) go away by themselves within two years. In some people, HPV infection can stay latent for many years and eventually lead to the development of cancer. HPV has been shown to cause squamous cancers of the tonsils and tongue base, cervix, vagina, vulva, penis, and anus. It is estimated that about 40-60% of 18-59 year olds in the US have been infected with HPV.

There are over 40 strains of HPV, but only a few have been shown to cause cancer. There are several HPV vaccines available to prevent

infection of these high risk strains and thereby reduce the likelihood of developing cancer later in life. The vaccine works better if given at a young age, so the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that all boys and girls ages 11 or 12 years get vaccinated. There is no benefit of receiving the vaccine after 26 years of age. The vaccine must be given prior to HPV exposure.

A single prospective study has shown a reduction in oral HPV infection with vaccination, but no studies have yet to prove that the vaccine reduces the incidence of head and neck cancer. HPV induced carcinogenesis takes decades to produce cancer, so it may be that long before the benefits actualize. The health care community is already seeing a reduction in the incidence of cervical pre-cancerous lesions in HPV vaccinated teens.

Other risk factors for head and neck cancer include EBV infection, hepatitis C virus infection, occupational or environmental exposures (pesticides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, etc.), radiation exposure and poor dietary habits. Symptoms of head and neck cancer vary depending on the primary site. Common symptoms include the following: enlarged lymph nodes, neck mass, mouth pain, loosening teeth, pain or difficulty when chewing or swallowing, weight loss, ill-fitting dentures, ear pain, hoarse voice, chronic cough, nosebleeds or coughing up blood.

To make a diagnosis, doctors must perform a thorough exam of the nasal and oral cavity; floor of the mouth, tongue, tonsils, tongue base, palate, and posterior pharyngeal wall with a flexible laryngoscope. This is usually performed by an otolaryngologist (ENT) specialist.

A needle biopsy can be performed at the time of examination to make the diagnosis. Imaging studies like CT or PET scans are usually performed to determine the depth of invasion, involvement of lymph nodes, and the presence of distant metastasis.

Patients are treated with all modalities available, including chemotherapy, radiation therapy and in some cases surgery. Multidisciplinary care aimed at encouraging good nutrition and managing treatment related side effects (pain, dry mouth, swallowing problems, depression) helps improve outcomes. Many patients meet with the hospital's excellent team of nutritionists, speech language pathologists, audiologists and physical therapists to ensure a good outcome.

Quality of life is very important to all individuals, but especially patients with head and neck cancer because the basic functions of tasting, smelling, chewing and swallowing are an important part of the enjoyment of food. Treatment efforts are aimed at not only improving the outcomes of patients with head and neck cancer, but also maintaining and improving patients' quality of life. With HPV vaccination, tobacco cessation, and a reduction in alcohol use, it may be possible to eradicate this disease for future generations.

## REFERENCES

NCCN guidelines version 2.2017

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov) (NIH cancer causes and prevention)

[www.uptodate.com](http://www.uptodate.com) (Nov 14, 2017) McQuillan G, Kruszon-Moran D, Markowitz LE, et al. Prevalence of HPV in Adults Aged 18–69: United States, 2011–2014. NCHS Data Brief, No 280. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health





*Save the Date*

## **PINK IN THE RINK**

January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 7:00pm at  
the Cool Insuring Arena in Glens Falls

Mark your calendars for the annual Pink in the Rink! A portion of ticket proceeds from this Adirondack Thunder hockey game will be donated to the C.R. Wood Cancer Center.



*Save the Date*

## **CINDY'S RETREAT**

April 27-28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Silver Bay  
YMCA Resort and Conference Center

For any woman at any time after a diagnosis of cancer. A great weekend away to connect with others, relax, unwind and refresh. For more information please call Karen Cook, LMSW at 518-926-6619.



*Save the Date*

## **CINDY'S COMFORT CAMP**

A special weekend for children & teens living with a parent or sibling with a serious illness. This is a free, weekend overnight camp, located at the Double H Hole in the Woods Ranch in Lake Luzerne, for children and teens ages 6 - 17. Next camp will be scheduled for May. For more information contact us at: 518-926-6640.

## CLINICAL RESEARCH

"Participating in a clinical trial has been a good thing. The support that Beth (Clinical Research Nurse) gives when I need to call and ask a question is wonderful. She contacts Dr. Gillani then I get a call back. The peace of mind when you have cancer is a wonderful feeling. I would participate in a clinical trial again to help the next patient!"

**Cecilia L.**

## GENETICS PROGRAM

"The C.R. Wood Cancer Center is an amazing place with kind and caring people. My experience with my genetic testing was very informative, clearly explained and efficient. The outcome was positive news but I know I would be comfortable going back there if it ever becomes necessary in the future. Thank you for all you do!"

**Anonymous**

"My mother died of cancer back in 2011. Since that time two of my sisters developed breast cancer. Both of them decided to have genetic testing. One of my sisters came back with a risk for melanoma and pancreatic cancer. I was concerned with these findings and made an appointment with Rebecca. Rebecca is a wealth of knowledge in her field. She took a family history from me and thought it would be a good idea to have the testing done. I agreed and thought it would be the right thing to do for myself and my children. She directed me to Colors...Hereditary Cancer Test. I'm one of the lucky ones...no mutations were identified. That being said, I will continue to see all of my doctors on a regular basis and be proactive in a healthy lifestyle. I would highly recommend the C.R. Wood Genetic Counseling Center. It made me a little more knowledgeable about myself and will help my children and grandchildren in the future."

**Joann R.**

"The C.R. Wood Cancer Center provides excellent care through chemotherapy, radiation therapy and other treatments supervised by a terrific team of doctors and nurses. Genetic counseling is a key part of all the vital services for patients, and I'm grateful for Rebecca's role in my care."

**Betsy F.**

"Any cancer patient wonders "why me?" in the down moments when we're focused on what those renegade cells are doing to our bodies. My family has a history of breast cancer, and in a way my own diagnosis in 2016 seemed like a foregone conclusion. But what if my cancer has the potential to continue into the next generations? I had to know so I could share the information that might save someone's life.

I met with Rebecca Kerr, Glens Falls Hospital's genetic counselor several months ago and went over a long list of relatives and their health problems. A simple blood test was sent to a lab specializing in gene studies. Within a month I received a detailed report that showed that I'm not a carrier of the most prevalent genes that are associated with breast cancer, a huge relief. But there was one mutation that has been linked to breast, colon and other cancers that was identified in the report. The findings were not definitive for a direct correlation, which Rebecca and I discussed candidly.

Cancer research makes new discoveries every day for treatment options, and genetic studies reveal new insights on the disease. About two months after the initial report from the lab, as explained in a clear and thoughtful letter from Rebecca, I learned that I have a gene mutation that is truly associated with significantly higher risks for certain cancers. The letter gave important advice on screening that I shared with family, and I am more alert to my own increased risks. The news didn't make me panic but presented ways I can work toward positive outcomes—and a longer, healthier life.

I had heard about genetic testing and thought it would be a beneficial test to do. I made an appointment with Rebecca Kerr, the genetics counselor at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center at Glens Falls Hospital. What a nice experience it was. Rebecca was very interesting and very knowledgeable explaining the procedure. For anyone interested in genetic testing, I would highly recommend Rebecca and the C.R. Wood Cancer Center as the place to go. We are very fortunate to have this beneficial service available at our local hospital."

**Janice N.**

- Q.** I live about 40 miles away from the hospital and I'm worried about the cost of gas, is there any help available?
- A.** For our patients in active treatment, we offer a weekly \$25.00 gas card during active treatments. Please contact Lisa Haase at 518-926-6563.
- Q.** Transportation is an issue for me. I do not drive and I do not have people that could drive me to appointments. How can the C.R. Wood Cancer Center help?
- A.** Our nurse navigators are happy to assist you with your transportation needs. We work with various agencies to arrange transportation to ensure our patients can be at all medical appointments.
- Q.** I think I need to apply for secondary insurance/prescription coverage, who do I contact?
- A.** The Southern Adirondack Independent Living (SAIL) is a great resource for our patients, and they can be reached at 518-792-3537.
- Q.** I am concerned that I will not be able to afford my copays for visits and medications, what type of help is available?
- A.** Glens Falls Hospital offers an income based sliding scale discount that can be applied to copays for visits and prescriptions. The C.R. Wood Cancer Center also offers assistance to patients through the use of donated funds. Please contact our nurse navigators for more information.
- Q.** I would like to talk to others who may be experiencing similar issues, What type of support groups are available?
- A.** The C.R. Wood Cancer Center offers a number of support groups which can be found in our newsletter, on line or by contacting our team of nurse navigators.
- Q.** I am done with my chemotherapy, but still feel a little foggy. Is there a group that I can work with?
- A.** Yes, our speech therapists work with our patients to help "re-train" the brain to improve the foggiess after chemotherapy.
- Q.** Over my treatment, I lost strength and muscle tone. Does the Cancer Center provide discounted gym memberships?
- A.** The C.R. Wood Cancer Center has a Forever Strong membership at either the Glens Falls YMCA or the Glens Falls Hospital Wellness Center at a reduced rate.
- Q.** My treatment is most likely going to cause my hair to fall out. I have no idea how to order a wig, can you help?
- A.** Not only does the C.R. Wood Cancer Center have its own boutique, we also cover the cost of a wig.
- Please call 518-926-6640 to make an appointment. For all other available resources, see pages 8 & 9 of this newsletter.**



## Clinical Research at the C.R. Wood Cancer Center

If you have been diagnosed with cancer, you may want to talk to your physician about taking part in a clinical trial. Clinical trials may offer treatment options for patients with cancer that are not otherwise available.

- If you have just found out that you have cancer, the time to think about a clinical trial is before you make a treatment decision. Talk with your doctor about all your options, including a clinical trial. Other clinical trials are looking for people who have already been treated for their cancer.
- If you have already had one or more forms of cancer treatment and are looking for a new treatment option, there may still be a clinical trial for you to think about.

Please call our research office at 518-926-6644 or 518-926-6701 for more information about clinical trials available at Glens Falls Hospital, or visit our website at: [www.glensfallshospital.org/CRWood-Cancer-Center/clinical-research/clinical-research.cfm](http://www.glensfallshospital.org/CRWood-Cancer-Center/clinical-research/clinical-research.cfm).

Visit the National Cancer Institute website for other clinical trials at [www.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials](http://www.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials).

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## The Cancer Services Program

Men and women who are uninsured, meet eligibility criteria and are in need of treatment for breast, cervical, colorectal or prostate cancer screening, may be eligible for full Medicaid coverage through the Medicaid Cancer Treatment Program. Coverage is arranged through the Cancer Services Program Case Manager and will last for the entire treatment period. Glens Falls Hospital provides a New York State Department of Health Cancer Services Program grant that funds breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings and follow-up testing at no cost for uninsured women and men. If you or someone you love is without health insurance, call today at: 1-800-882-0121 or 518-926-6570.

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Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our mailing list.

## MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

If it is an emergency, please call 911. When you call during clinic hours (8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. weekdays) you will reach the telephone triage nurse. Her phone number is 518-926-6620, the number you are given to call if you have any questions or problems.

When you call you will very likely need to leave a message as she is often busy with other patients who have also called. Please try to speak clearly (without rushing) giving the following information in the message to help her assist you efficiently:

- Your name, or the name of the person you are calling about (please spell the last name)
- Date of birth
- Your doctor's name (not the PA because they work with multiple doctors)
- Your phone number (or where she can best get back to you)
- The reason why you are calling

If you are calling for a medication refill, please also include:

- The name and location of the pharmacy you use
- The medication and the dose

You will need to allow 48 hours to have the medications refilled. Most prescriptions will be sent to your pharmacy by e-mail (e-scribed). If it is a medication that cannot be sent electronically, we will call you back with instructions.

If you are having a medical problem, we will try to call you back within 2 hours. Please be patient as sometimes many calls come in within a short period of time.

### **My Health Record (<https://glensfalls.iqhealth.com>)**

Allow 48 hours for a response. If you are having a medical problem that needs prompt attention, it is better to call us and leave a message. My Health Record is designed to provide a brief summary of your most recent visit with your doctor. Unfortunately, it is not an efficient forum for a detailed discussion with your care team. It is better to call with questions or, if appropriate, wait to discuss them at your next visit. Many doctors return their calls (especially test and lab results) at the end of their clinic or at lunch time, so it may be a few hours before they get back to you.

When you call, you can let us know if it is okay for them to leave a message with the results on your answering machine. If you call after hours and need a response, (evenings, nights, or weekends) please tell the answering service to page the on-call doctor. No one is available to check messages during off hours so it will not be received until the next business day.

## RADIATION ONCOLOGY

Patients receiving radiation therapy who have questions during clinic hours (8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. weekdays) should call the Radiation Therapy Department at 518-926-6670 and ask to speak to a nurse. You will be directed to Kelle Engel RN, BSN, OCN, or Kit Howard, RN, OCN. If they are not available to speak with you, please leave a brief message with a call back number. You should expect a call back within 20 to 30 minutes.

If it is an emergency, please call 911. If you have questions or concerns after the department closes or on the weekend, please call the same number, 518-926-6670. An answering service will take your information along with a phone number and a radiation oncologist will return your call. Please do not wait with a problem. The radiation oncologists are on call to address any of your concerns.