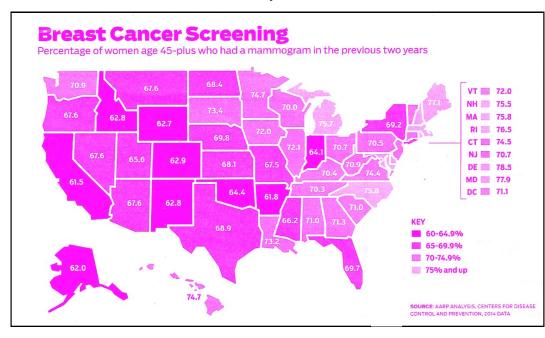




## Local Services, Local Support

# Happy Mother's Day

The moment a child is born, the mother is also born. She never existed before. The woman existed, but the mother, never. A mother is something absolutely new. -Rajneesh



**Regular Features** 

urvivor Meetings2
urvivor Story3
/ledical Update4
Complementary Care5
Iutritional Info6
lide for Awareness7
Vicomico News8
Vorcester News9
Community Support10
onor Thanks/Joke11

We hope all of you who are mothers have a wonderful time creating new memories and cherishing old with your loved one's this Mothers Day.

This is the perfect time of year to remind your mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts or any important and loved female in your life, to have their yearly mammogram if they have not done so already. According to the National Cancer Institute early detection of breast cancer with screening mammography means that treatment can be started earlier in the course of the disease, possibly before it has spread. Results from randomized clinical trials and other studies show that screening mammography can help reduce the number of deaths from breast cancer among women ages 40 to 74, especially for those over age 50.



Funding for this edition made possible by a grant from:



# SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Salisbury Office 1320 Belmont Avenue, Suite 402 Salisbury, 410-548-7880 6:30 pm, Thursday May 5th	Topic/Speaker: Facilitator:	Open Forum Kyle Beebe	
<b>Pocomoke Community Center</b> 1410 Market Street - <i>Maryland Room</i> Pocomoke, 202-247-7526	Topic/Speaker: Facilitator:	Open Forum Virginia Schneider	
5:30 pm, Thursday May 19th	*PLEASE NOTE PERMANENT DAY OF THE MONTH CHANGE		
Crisfield   If you would like to talk to someone or be mentored please call for an appointment 410-548-7880   Facilitator: Monique Welch, RN			
Atlantic Health Center Conference Room 9714 Healthway Dr - Berlin, MD	Topic/Speaker:	Sally Hawkins OTR, CHT, CLT (Occupational Therapist) Atlantic Physical Therapy	
Ocean City, 410-213-1177 1:00 pm,Wednesday May 18th	Facilitator: <b>*Lunch provided d</b>	Cindy Elliott, AGH Staff at ALL meetingsthank you AGH!	
Christ Episcopal Church 601 Church Street Cambridge, 410-463-0946	Topic/Speaker:	Open Forum	
5:30 pm, Monday May 24th	Facilitator:	Sue Todd, LCSW-C	

# **SURVIVOR STORY**

## Embracing the Positive Side of Cancer by Susan M. Krauss

Four years ago, I was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer. How vividly I remember the nega-tives: the interminable delays in getting in to see a doctor, the waiting for test results, the waiting in doctors' offices, the waiting to feel better. Then there were the side effects from chemo: mouth sores, fatigue, diarrhea, constipation, allergic reactions. And the posttreatment period brought worries about my future: What will my life look like now? Will my cancer recur? Where might it metastasize?

There were so many dark, dark days. However, not all the days were dark. Yes, cancer forever changes you. But sometimes it changes you in ways that are good.

Before my diagnosis, I was a re-cently retired high school English teacher, finally able to spend time with my grandchildren. I had reached my comfort zone. Life was happy.

Then cancer happened, and I often found myself in the company of strangers, regularly surrounded by unfamiliar doctors, chemo nurses, tech -nicians, as well as fellow comrades in the infusion room who were in various stages of hair loss and fatigue. I remem-ber sitting there one day, staring mostly, taking it all in, and feeling confused and frightened, until the lady sitting next to me struck up a conversation. This impromptu conversation ended up last-ing about sixteen hours, spread out over four chemo sessions.

I went over to her and took her hand, a perfect stranger. "Don't cry," I said. "This is a place where good things happen, where you meet some wonderful people who will help you. Try not to be afraid. You'll see. It's not as bad as you feared."

The woman was there to support her daughter who had stage IV colon cancer. A cancer survivor herself, she offered me suggestions for tasty recipes that would make my mouth sores feel better. She knew the rash on my arm was an allergic reaction and called the nurse over to have a look. I learned all about her family history; her father, brother, sister, and two children were all cancer survivors. Her late husband had battled cancer too. But he passed twenty years before I met her.

She seemed immune to bad news, calm and pragmatic. "When a problem arises, we just deal with it," she said. She was so open about her life. I found her struggle and her attitude inspiring.

At my fifth session, she wasn't there. I was seated in an outside chair near the door. After a while, a man came into the infusion room with an elderly woman; they were led in by a nurse who was showing them around the facility. They stopped near my chair, and the woman started crying. Everyone looked around in embarrassed silence. I went over to her and took her hand, a perfect stranger. "Don't cry," I said. "This is a place where good things happen, where you meet some wonderful people who will help you. Try not to be afraid. You'll see. It's not as bad as you feared."

Where did I get the courage to do that? Me, who is usually so reserved and quiet. But that woman was just the first. It happened again in a restaurant when a nearby stranger, noticing my turban, pale complexion, and pink ribbon pinned to my sweater, appeared as if she wanted to say something but couldn't find the words. I walked over to her. She was scheduled for a lumpectomy just two days later. "Try not to be afraid," I told her, and we stood there amid the din of clanking glasses and silverware scraping against plates for ten minutes talking about breast cancer.

I was becoming more verbal about this illness we didn't use to discuss. Mastectomies. Breast reconstruction. Prostheses. I listened to myself talk and realized I had something to say that might help others, just as that lady in the infusion room had helped me.

One day a friend called and asked if I could talk to a childhood friend of hers who had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer. I called the woman the next day, and we chatted as though WE had been the childhood friends. We had an instant connection, this common experience of fear, of pain and loss, of searching for hope. Over the next weeks and months, we talked often. This con-tinued even after her treatment ended. We had become great friends, and now instead of talking about cancer, we share about our families, our hopes and desires, our innermost thoughts. What a blessing she is to me.

So, you see, there are some good things that can spring to life amid the destruction of cancer. I emerged a stronger person, more willing to engage with others and share my experience with strangers who seem in need. I gained self-confidence. And I made a true friend and trusted confidante. Could there be any better side effect than that? How ironic that an insidious disease is what led me to it.

Indeed, cancer changes you. It reaches deep within and can take away part of your spirit, but that's usually temporary. The upside of cancer though, can last much longer if you are open to change and willing to embrace the positives.

Susan Krauss is a breast cancer survivor living in Reese, MI.

This article was originally published in Coping® with Cancer magazine, March/April 2016.



# MEDICAL UPDATE

## Ahead of the Curve - Clinical Trials Offer Hope, But Buy-In Is Key

#### Clinical trials are often seen as a beacon of hope—even for those battling stage IV cancers. Participating in clinical trials is a way to gain access to drugs and therapies years before they're approved for commercial use. If successful, these innovations may help you heal and set the course for the successful treatment of other patients.

My hospital has about 20 active trials running at a time, with dozens of patients participating. Treatments are administered almost every weekday. Clinical trials are available to many adults with cancer and, for the most part, the cancer needs to be tracked by imaging to capture information that may not be available by an exam and a medical history alone.

#### **Immunity Innovations**

The next big thing in clinical trial innovations: Drugs tailored specifically to patients' immune systems, often referred to as CAR T-cell therapy, which was featured in the Ken Burns documentary "Cancer: The Emperor of Maladies." Its main success has been in treating certain types of leukemia, though it hasn't been consistent in solid tumors.

Another recent breakthrough is in improving the way a patient's immune system identifies and attacks cancer. Two of the new medications for melanoma, nivolumab and pembrolizumab, for example, have fewer side effects than their peers and have helped some patients reach a point when they are considered cured—meaning, in general, the disappearance of all visible and radiology evidence of the cancer for at least five years. Here's how the drugs work: A patient's immune system is working fine in terms of fighting infections and injury, but the immune system's alarm is turned off by some cancers. Drugs like nivolumab and pembrolizumab help turn on that alarm, activating the immune system so it can recognize and fight the patient's cancer.

Today, newer types of immunotherapies are being developed that could control cancer for even more patients. Here's the exciting part: There are many types of cancer, including lung cancer, in which this therapy appears to be effective. This is the first time this new class of medications has been largely well tolerated, meaning a high number of patients did not suffer major side effects. The drugs are controlling cancer for months or even years—sometimes making it disappear completely from scans.

#### **Abnormal Behavior**

Today's state-of-the-art clinical trials also test drugs that target specific abnormalities in patients' cancer. One drug, imatinib, for patients with chronic myelogenous leukemia, has been credited with adding a decade to some lives. Currently in development—and not yet ready for human trials—are drugs targeting specific genes or abnormalities that localize to cancer more effectively than today's technology. Beyond that, there will likely be new ways to determine ideal drug treatment schedules and dosages, as well as the combination of treatments, to improve survival rates for individual patients.

#### Go All In

These clinical trials will produce results and open up new options for the general public more quickly with increased patient participation. In pediatric cancer, more than 50 percent of all patients take part in trials. With adults, participation is about three percent.

Thanks to this high level of participation in pediatric trials, we've seen major gains in pediatric cancer treatment in the last few decades. That's one reason that, today, survival rates for the most common childhood cancer, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, top 90 percent—up from less than 10 percent in the 1960s.1

So, why aren't more adult cancer patients participating in clinical trials? Not all patients qualify for trials, but there's a more significant issue at play: a major lack of awareness. That's why I advise everyone with cancer to ask their doctor: "Is this the only treatment option available to me, or are there new therapies being explored or clinical trials that I could participate in?"

The Internet has helped improve awareness and transparency of clinical trials, though this depends on the tech know-how of a patient or the provider. Almost all trials are listed on Clinical-Trials.gov. While it's a tool geared toward clinicians (I use it to locate alternative options for patients), patients can search the site, too.

Some adults don't participate in trials because they can be very time-consuming and treatment must be conducted in a very precise way. From my perspective as a doctor, there are many regulatory hurdles and logistical obstacles on the administrative side of opening a clinical trial. Increased administrative efficiency would improve access to studies and maybe even patient willingness to participate because of time concerns.

The only way for cancer researchers to determine the next step in treatment is to present and publish new information about what's working—and what's not. When you participate in a clinical trial, the final results eventually become publicly available (overall results, not patient-specific outcomes).

The key takeaway: Seek and participate in clinical trials. These studies offer you early access to potentially game-changing therapies—and pave the way for future innovations in cancer treatment. I

Glen Weiss, MD, MBA, is the Director of Clinical Research and a medical oncologist at Cancer Treatment Centers of America® in Phoenix, Arizona.

# **COMPLEMENTARY CARE**

## Mind-Body Therapies Benefit Cancer Patients at the Cellular Level

By Rachael Bieschke

Mind-body therapies such as mindfulness meditation and attending support groups are well known to offer mental benefits to cancer patients but now research shows they have a positive impact at the cellular level too.

In a study of 88 breast-cancer survivors, those who practiced mindfulness meditation or attended support groups maintained the length of their telomeres, while those who had no intervention had shorter telomeres at the end of the study.

Telomeres are protective "caps" at the ends of your chromosomes (sometimes described as the plastic tips on the ends of your shoelaces), which have been marked as a measure of aging. The shorter your telomeres become, the faster your cells age and die.

Dr. Linda E. Carlson, PhD, director of research in the Psychosocial Resources Department at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre and the study's lead author, said:

"We already know that psychosocial interventions like mindfulness meditation will help you feel better mentally, but now for the first time we have evidence that they can also influence key aspects of your biology."

So in addition to a healthy lifestyle that includes nutritious foods and exercise, cancer survivors may benefit from psychosocial interventions that provide stress reduction and emotional support. Such support groups are widely available across the United States, and if you're wondering about mindfulness meditation, it's a state of mind that allows you to "observe" your thoughts without judgment.

When you're mindful, you focus on the present moment without letting your mind wander to past events or future obligations. According to Harvard:

"The effects of mindfulness meditation tend to be dose-related — the more you practice it, the more benefits you usually experience. A less formal approach can also help you stay in the present and fully engage in your life. You can practice mindfulness at any time or during any task, whether you are eating, showering, walking, touching a partner, or playing with a child."

For best results, you may want to receive professional instruction, but you can also try this basic mindfulness meditation from Harvard Medical School. Mind-body exercises, such as yoga, can also help you to promote mindfulness by focusing on deep breathing, relaxation and slow, purposeful movements.



**X** Sit cross-legged on the floor or in a straight-backed chair

 $\boldsymbol{\Re}$  Focus on your breathing, noticing the air flowing into your nostril and out of your mouth, or your belly rising and falling with each breath

**X** Once you've become focused, slowly widen your awareness to include sounds, sensations and ideas

 $\boldsymbol{x}$  As you experience different thoughts, allow them to enter your mind without judging them as good or bad

**X** If you begin to have racing thoughts, focus once again on your breathing and then try to gradually expand your awareness again

CancerFightersThrive.com

# **NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION**

## Perfect Pairings - Great food combinations for cancer fighters. By Kelsey Allen

#### Some foods seem to be made for each other: peanut butter and jelly, mashed potatoes and gravy, spaghetti and meatballs.

But beyond tasting great, when combined, some foods pack an extra punch of nutrients.

Eating well is essential for cancer fighters because malnutrition can lead to complications such as muscle wasting, nutrient deficiencies, delays in treatment and slow wound healing. When your nutritional status is compromised, so is your immune system. But we can help improve our well-being by making smart food choices, says Jen Koffs, RD, LDN, CSO, CNSC clinical oncology dietitian at Cancer Treatment Centers of America<sup>®</sup> (CTCA) in Philadelphia.

If you're ready to match-make in your kitchen, here are some of Koffs' winning combinations.

#### **Sweet Potatoes & Rosemary**

Sweet potatoes are packed with carotenoids, a phytochemical that works as an antioxidant and improves immune system response. Carotenoids are also precursors to fat-soluble vitamins, such as vitamins A, D, E and K, so adding a little fat—such as a drizzle of olive oil—helps you absorb beneficial carotenoids. Skip the cinnamon and sugar, Koffs says. Instead, season with other spices, herbs and garlic, another cancer-fighting food.

#### Curry & Black Pepper

Many curries include turmeric, which contains curcumin, an anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compound that promotes cancer cell death and slows the growth of tumors. When combined with piperine, a compound found in black pepper, curcumin is more bioavailable (or easily absorbed).

#### Chicken & Salad

Iron deficiency anemia can be a side effect among people being treated for cancer. The good news? Your body easily absorbs heme iron, found in animal products such as chicken. But non-heme iron, found in plant foods, is harder to absorb. To maximize iron absorption, consume foods that are rich in vitamin C, such as cabbage, tomatoes and green and red bell peppers, at the same meal.

# The Fab 5: Get to know five foods that help alleviate treatment side effects.

With antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, ginger is often used to treat nausea. Try ginger tea, pickled ginger or candied ginger, says Koffs. She also recommends throwing minced or grated ginger into a stir-fry, stew or smoothie.

Taking antibiotics can negatively impact the flora that lives in your gut, Koffs says. Fermented foods such as yogurt, kombucha tea, kefir, miso, kimchi and sauerkraut can recolonize the gut with beneficial bacteria.

If you're just not hungry for anything but know you need a caloric jolt, try walnuts. They contain antioxidant properties and omega-3 fat.

If everything tastes terrible—another treatment side effect—Koffs recommends eating fruit, especially citrus fruits. Bonus: Many fruits, such as apples and blueberries, are high in fiber, which helps ease the constipation that's brought on by some cancer treatments and pain medications.

Koffs' can't skip: water. Vomiting and diarrhea can be brought on by cancer treatments, so it is important to stay hydrated.

Cancer Fighters Thrive Spring 2016 Edition

#### Lemon-Herbed Grilled Chicken Breast

Yields 4 servings



Ingredients 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts 3 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley 2 cloves garlic, minced 1 lemon, zest of 3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice 1/4 c. extra virgin olive oil 1 tsp. salt 1/2 tsp black pepper

#### Instructions

Combine everything but the chicken in a large container and mix well. Add the chicken to the marinade, cover and refrigerate for a minimum of one hour. Preheat grill 10 minutes prior to grilling. Cook for about five minutes on each side. Pair with a fresh salad.

CancerFightersThrive.com

**UPCOMING EVENT** 



#### **Upcoming Events**

Knitting Group Salisbury Office May 5th, 12 pm

May Bras for a Cause All Month

July 16th Poker Run - Ride for Awareness Texas Roadhouse 9am

October 8th Sea Gull Century Ongoing Recruitment



1870 a female In activist, writer and poet by the name of Julia Ward (she wrote the "Battle Hymn of the Republic") suggested a day of peace and strongly advocated other women to stand up against the war. From this plea she was able to get Boston to recognize mothers on the second Sunday of June.

#### Wicomico County Chapter Staff Members

Cindy Feist Interim Executive

**Amber King** Director of Fund Development

**Emily Rantz** Director of Community Relations

Natassia Feather Office Manager

Sue Revelle Mentoring Coordinator

## WICOMICO COUNTY CHAPTER NEWS

1320 Belmont Avenue, Suite 402 Salisbury, Maryland 21804 410-548-7880 Wicomico@WomenSupportingWomen.org

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY, 9:00 - 4:00

Spring has sprung and we couldn't be happier; a beautiful sunshining day is just the thing we all need after the gray, drab skies of winter.

Have you been out to the Centre at Salisbury recently? If not you must go take a look at the wonderful designs created for this years **Bras for a Cause**! Make sure to support your favorite design by making a donation there, in our office, or online at Firstgiving.com. The creativity and display of breast cancer awareness is just amazing to see. Let's spread the love and show our bra designers the support they are showing us!

\*\*SAVE THE DATE for the Bras for a Cause closing and awards ceremony June 2nd\*\*

The **Sea Gull Century** team is looking for you...contact Cindy at 410-548-7880 or cindy@womensupportingwomen.org to learn more.

Our spring **Nutrition Classes** are off to a great start. As usual, Chris and Henriette of **Habanera Farm**, are exciting our Survivors taste buds while imparting extremely helpful tips for staying healthy. We have been able to provide these classes again with funds from a grant from the **Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore** and locations provided by **Shore Appliance Connection** and **Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services**.











# WSW Staff Spotlight...

Have you noticed WSW's presence has been in the paper, on TV, and the radio A LOT recently?? That is thanks to Emily's hard work and dedication as Director of Community Relations.

Anyone who has been to an event before knows that a key part to its success is a good time and Emily makes it happen! With her charisma and outgoing personality she makes sure everyone has a good time and never feels left out. Her smile and laughter are always a guarantee and her vivaciousness never fails to brighten our survivors day when they come into the office. There is so much that Emily brings to our team and we are so happy she is here to brighten all of our days!

## WORCESTER COUNTY HAPPENINGS

### 410-213-1177

#### Worcester@WomenSupportingWomen.org



#### **Upcoming Events**

Survivor Meeting April 20th, 1:00 pm

Atlantic Health Center @ AGH Conference Room 9714 Healthway Dr Berlin, MD

410-548-7880 Please call to reserve lunch

## MENTORING MINUTE

#### Geese Offer Us Wonderful Lessons

Geese can give us some wonderful lessons. They support each other in a way that human beings cannot imagine.

As each goose flaps its wings it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it. If we had as much sense as a goose, we would stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We would be willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position. It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership.

As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. We need to make sure our honking is encouraging.

In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core value and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

When a goose gets sick, wounded, or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

We should stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Author Unkown

Sue Revelle - Mentoring Coordinator

# **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**



Delmar Girls Basketball presents a check from their annual Pink Game during the month of March



The Parsons Group presents a check from an ongoing snack drive being held in honor of Mary Mills



Jim Chaney presents a check to Cindy from the annual "Pain in the Neck Run" held by Robin and Steve Wilkinson



Scott West and Ashley Webb present a check to Emily and Cindy from their "Delmarva Strikes Out Cancer" Event





SU Track & Field head coach, Jim Jones, presents the results of his new do courtesy of their winning their national championship. He offered to shave his head to raise money for local non-profits.

# **DONOR THANKS**



"Hi Sarah, listen I only have a minute. I'm about to get picked up for a blind date, can you call me in a half hour just in case it's going bad? Yes? Ok great!" Raquel gave herself a quick spray of perfume, checked herself out one more time in the mirror, and headed outside to wait for the guy. Sure enough after twenty minutes Raquel was discreetly checking her watch. After ten more long minutes her phone finally buzzed. Raquel listened for a few seconds, grimly pursed her lips, and turned to her date, "I feel terrible, but my Grandmother is terribly sick, and I must go home now." "No problem!" Said her date with a big grin, "in a few more minutes my dog was going to get run over!"



NONPROFIT ORG PAID SALISBURY MD 21801 PERMIT NO 146

WomenSupportingWomen.org

1320 Belmont Avenue ♥ Suite 402 Salisbury, MD 21804 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Please contact the office if you are not reading or if you no longer wish to receive our newsletter. Thank you.

410-548-7880 or Tassia@womensupportingwomen.org

# Women Supporting Women 2015 Board of Directors

Penny Bradford, President Colleen Brewington, Secretary Pam Heying, Treasurer Billye Sarbanes, Past President Susan Revelle, Co-founder Melodie Carter Lynn Creasy Judy Herman Mike Liang Cindy Lunsford Julie McKamey Jenni Pastusak Karri Todd Lenita Wesson

# Follow Us: Facebook Instagram