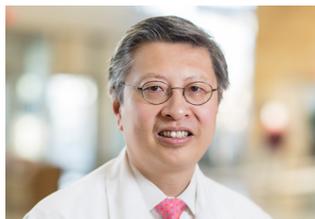


Your resource for living well. Cancer Care

A quarterly newsletter from Mercy's David C. Pratt Cancer Center | Fall 2017



By Shawn Hu, MD

With recent additions to our oncology staff, Mercy has expanded and strengthened its gynecological oncology and breast cancer surgery in St. Louis. Please join me to welcome Kevin Easley, MD, and Mark Doherty, MD, who are providing a full range of surgical and chemotherapeutic treatments for ovarian cancer, cervical cancer, endometrial cancer and other GYN cancers. We are also excited to have Abigail Hoffman, MD, join our breast surgery group adding another fellowship-trained breast surgeon at Mercy.

Mercy has a tradition of providing our patients with the most current cancer treatments and cutting edge technologies.

In this issue of the newsletter, we are highlighting the importance of survivorship follow-up with our radiation oncology doctors as well as the exciting immunotherapy that is being used here in treating a variety of cancers. At Mercy, we are always at the forefront of medicine.



Immunotherapy

*By Keith Hecht | Pharmacist
Mercy Hospital St. Louis*

Immunotherapy is a new type of cancer drug therapy that has been getting a lot of attention. These medications, known as programmed death inhibitors, work in a new way, by recruiting the immune system to attack cancer.

One of the ways cancer is able to grow in the body is by evading the immune system. Cancer is able to do so because it comes from our own normal cells, making it harder for the immune system to recognize the cancer. When the immune system does recognize the cancer, the cancer fights back. The cancer can turn off certain cells of our immune system (called T-lymphocytes) by activating a "kill switch" on the T-lymphocyte cell. This kill switch is called the programmed-death receptor. This new class of medications, the programmed death (PD) inhibitors, blocks the cancer from triggering the kill switch, keeping the T-lymphocytes active and able to fight the cancer.

Because the PD inhibitors are keeping the immune

system active to fight against cancer, these therapies have the potential to be used in many different kinds of cancer. Cancers treated by PD inhibitors include lung cancer, melanoma, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, head and neck cancer, colorectal cancer and Hodgkin's lymphoma. Studies are underway in a variety of other cancers as well. Not all patients with these cancers are good candidates to receive a PD inhibitor. At this time, the PD inhibitors are only used in patients with very advanced cancer, cancers that have spread through the body or that have returned after another therapy was tried first.

PD inhibitors are not like what most people think of when they consider chemotherapy. Unlike traditional chemotherapy, they do not directly kill cells. This means typical side effects caused by chemotherapy are not as much of a concern for patients receiving these medications. They do not weaken the immune system, cause anemia, or make your hair fall out. However,

these new medications are not without side effects. Most side effects of PD inhibitors occur because the immune system is kept in a more alert state. This can cause the immune system to hurt normal parts of the body. Parts of the body that may be affected include the skin, lungs, colon, liver, thyroid gland, adrenal glands, pancreas, kidneys and brain. The oncology team monitors patients receiving these medications carefully to detect potential problems early. Side effects patients may experience include rash, itching, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or bone aches, cough, or shortness of breath.

The PD inhibitors are a promising new class of anti-cancer medications. They have shown the ability to fight many different types of cancer in a new and innovative way. They do not cause the same side effects as typical chemotherapy but they are not without risk. These medications are not for everyone, but in the right patients they offer a new weapon in the fight against cancer.



Your life is our life's work.

Cancer Programs at Mercy October, November and December 2017

Register online for all programs at mercy.net/CancerClassesSTL

Special Programs

Registration online is required for all classes, support groups and special programs at mercy.net/CancerClassesSTL

Cancer Center Orientation

Classes held monthly
1st Thursday | 10 - 11 a.m.
2nd Tuesday | 8 - 9 a.m.
3rd Friday | 1 - 2 p.m.
4th Thursday | 5 - 6 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Are you getting ready to start cancer treatment? If so, please come to an orientation session where you can learn what to expect from treatment. Side effects and ways to deal with the side effects will also be discussed. The program will be presented by an Oncology Certified Nurse. A complimentary Cancer Patient Education Booklet will be provided. A tour of the cancer center is included.

Registration online is required.

Stories of Hope

Wednesday, October 25
6 - 8 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
Atrium

At Mercy, we celebrate all cancer survivors every day! Join us for a free dinner, live music and compelling patient stories. Several survivors will share what they have learned on their journey and invite you to share how you live life to the fullest every day.

You and one guest may attend.

Registration online is required by **Monday, October 16.**

Cancer and Fatigue

In Partnership with Cancer Support Community



Thursdays, October 26, November 2 and 9 | **1-3 p.m.**

For best experience, please commit to all three sessions.

Cancer-related fatigue can take a severe toll on quality of life and is one of the most common side effects of treatment. This three-week series will give you the opportunity to experience how strategies that use thoughts, feelings, and behavior can reduce the experience of cancer related fatigue. This class is based on research supported by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Registration online is required. For more information, call **314.238.2000.**

Relax and Rejuvenate: A Day of Renewal for Women Cancer Survivors

In Partnership with Cancer Support Community



Saturday, November 18
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Mercy Hospital
Von Gontard Conference Center
McAuley South
621 S. New Ballas Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63141

Join us for a full day retreat to relax, refresh and renew your body and spirit with other women cancer survivors. We will have a variety of speakers and interactive sessions in exercise, self-expression and self-care. This FREE program is a collaborative program offered by Mercy Oncology Services and Cancer Support Community. Continental breakfast, lunch and snacks provided. (Previous attendees may not register)

Please register online by **Friday, November 10.** If you have any questions, call **314.251.6400.**

Medicare 101

Monday, October 2 | **10 - 11 a.m.**
OR

Tuesday, October 3 | **3 - 4 p.m.**

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

What is Medicare? Discover answers for your questions about Medicare health coverage for seniors and people under the age of 65 with disabilities, Medicare health plan options, supplemental insurance, Medicare savings programs, extra help for prescription drug coverage and any other questions you may have related to Medicare. Light refreshments included.

Facilitated by Stacy Haberstroh, licensed insurance broker and owner and founder of Senior Insurance Concepts.

Registration online is required by **Tuesday, September 29.**

A Holiday Twist: Fun, Friends and Food

Wednesday, December 20
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Join us for a free "white elephant" party!

Bring one wrapped "white elephant gift." It might be a humorous item, or from the dollar store or a used item from home. The term white elephant refers to a gift whose maintenance costs exceed its usefulness (think re-gifting). One theory of historians suggests that Ezra Cornell brought the term into popular gatherings as early as 1828.

Come lift your spirits, find humor and enjoy a bite to eat in the company of others who share the cancer journey.

Registration online is required.

Frankly Speaking About Cancer: What Do I Tell The Kids?



Tuesday, October 10
6- 8p.m. (Meal provided)

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Come learn about the ways children understand information about cancer at different developmental stages. Danielle Hodges, LMSW, Families Connect program manager, will discuss strategies about having cancer-related conversations. She will also address ways for families to cope with emotional distress and optimize support systems. "Frankly Speaking About Cancer: What do I Tell the Kids?" is made possible through an unrestricted educational grant from Amgen.

Survivorship and Healthy Lifestyle



Tuesdays, November 28, December 5 and December 12
6 - 8 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

This three-week group is an opportunity to explore the benefits of a healthy lifestyle after treatment finishes. Discussion will include nutrition, starting an exercise plan and stress management. For the best experience, please commit to all three sessions.

Registration online is required. For more information, call **314.238.2000.**

Fun, Friends and Food

Wednesday, October 18
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Come lift your spirits and enjoy a bite to eat in the company of others who share the cancer journey.

Registration online is required.

Support Groups

Breast Cancer Support/Networking Group

In Partnership with Cancer Support Community



October 11, November 8 and December 13

November 8: Open to Options with Kelly O'Neal, LMSW

(Second Wednesday each month) | **5:30 - 7 p.m.**
(Salad provided)

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
Cancer Information Center
Suite 1440

An educational and emotionally safe group, in collaboration with Mercy, for women newly-diagnosed and survivors, female family and friends.

Registration online is required.

Head and Neck Support Group

Come Get Your Spiritual Groove On!

Thursday, October 26
5:30 - 7 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
Cancer Information Center
Suite 1440

Join Chaplain Susan Stucco as she reminds us of the joy of spirituality!

Registration online is required.

HOLIDAY BREAK:
No meeting on November 23 or December 28. See you in 2018!

Thyroid Cancer Support Group

October 21, November 18 and December 16
(3rd Saturday of each month)
10 - 11:30 a.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

For more information, go to StLouis-MO@thyca.org

Registration online is required at mercy.net/CancerClassesSTL

Prostate Cancer Support/Networking Group

In Partnership with Cancer Support Community



October 5, November 2 and December 7 | (1st Thursday of each month) | **6:30 - 8 p.m.**

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
Cancer Information Center
Suite 1440

This group features speakers and follow-up discussions on important topics such as treatment options, quality of life, incontinence, intimacy concerns and fear of recurrence.

Register online. For more information, call **314.238.2000**.

Lymphedema Support Group

Wednesday, October 11
6 - 7:15 p.m.

Assistive devices for applying and removing compression garments

Wednesday, December 13
12 - 1:15 p.m.

Holiday Party

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Meetings are run by a certified lymphedema therapist with Mercy Hospital

Register online. For more information, call **314.251.6571, option 1**.

Young Adult Cancer Survivors (YACS) Program

Yoga Basics

Monday October 23 | **7 - 9 p.m.**

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Join us for an evening of rhythmic breathing, gentle stretching and mental focus. You and a guest can learn to ease physical and emotional tension. Light dinner will be served. Wear comfortable clothing, bring a yoga mat if

you have one and make sure you have doctor's clearance if needed. Facilitated by certified yoga instructor, Kathy Kessler.

Registration is required by Friday, October 20.

****NO PROGRAM IN NOVEMBER****

YACS Holiday Party

Thursday, December 14
6 - 8 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

The holiday season is busy, especially for those of us juggling families and careers. Join us for a break and help celebrate the holiday season with a white elephant party with your fellow Young Adult Survivors! Bring one wrapped "white elephant gift." It might be a humorous item, something from the dollar store, or a used item from home that is worthy of a new home. One guest is invited and is welcome to bring a gift to exchange as well. Dinner will be served.

Registration online required by Monday, December 11.



Look Good Feel Better

October 23, November 27 and December 18
(4th Monday of each month)
2 - 4 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Join us for an ACS sponsored free program that teaches female cancer patients beauty techniques to help restore their appearance and self-image during chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Registration online is required.

Look Good Feel Better

October 2 | **10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Mercy Clayton-Clarkson Bldg.
15945 Clayton Rd. | Suite 120
Ballwin, MO 63011

Join us for an ACS sponsored free program that teaches female cancer patients beauty techniques to help restore their appearance and self-image

during chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Registration online is required. For more information, please call **636.256.5029**.

Survivorship Series

You are a cancer survivor from the moment of diagnosis and there are millions of people like you in the United States! Whether you are looking for support and information during treatment, or transitioning into a new normal after treatment, this program will focus on topics related to physical and emotional changes and creating a wellness plan for a healthy lifestyle.

**** See Special Program for October**

****No meeting in November and December**

Q and A about Long Term Effects of Chemotherapy

Tuesday, October 17
5:30 - 7 p.m.

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
First Floor Conference Room

Come share with other survivors and learn answers from an expert about fatigue, pain, sexual dysfunction, cognitive changes and neuropathy. Presented by Laura Hooper, NP.

Registration online is required.

Mercy Integrative Therapies

Services:

Therapeutic Massage:
\$48 - \$78/hr

Acupuncture:

- For cancer-related side effects \$30 per session
- For non cancer related issues \$45 - \$60 per session

Healing Touch: \$50/hr
Call for additional services and appointments:

David C. Pratt Cancer Center
314.251.6571 | Option 1
Clayton and Clarkson Road
636.256.5200

Mason and Olive: 314.251.8911
Tesson Ferry and I-270
314.467.3860 | Option 2

Not all services are offered at all locations. Please call location for services offered.



Follow-up after Radiation Treatments

By Matthew Johnson, MD
Radiation Oncologist, Mercy Hospital St. Louis

Radiation therapy can feel quite long due to the long treatment course, the side effects experienced and the need for treatments five days per week. On the final day of radiation, most patients feel quite relieved. Then, after making it to the final treatment day, the reward is another doctor visit?!

Follow-up is an important and integral part of cancer care; yet, for many patients, these visits are associated with significant anxiety and cause further interruption to work schedules and family life that have already been impacted by cancer treatment. Despite this, regular oncology follow-up should be considered highly important. The follow-up schedule that is best for you is dependent on many factors and should be discussed with your physician. Many important issues may be addressed during a follow-up visit, such as:

- **Monitoring for recurrence:** Cancer recurrence can be identified in many ways and can include CT scan, PET scan, lab testing and physical exam. These are the parts of follow-up that can cause anxiety and worry many years

after cancer treatment, especially when imaging or other testing is involved. This is a very normal and common response. While the likelihood of recurrence depends on the tumor type and stage, early detection of a recurrence can mean having additional treatment options available; therefore, monitoring is a significant part of oncology follow-up.

- **Managing long term side effects:** Although cancer treatment continues to improve, many patients experience lingering effects of cancer treatment. These changes may be both physical and emotional. Although some of these effects cannot be changed, there are many that can be improved. One important role of follow-up visits is to identify and improve these effects. After an effect is identified, your physician may help create an individualized plan to manage it through physical therapy, use of medication, support groups, acupuncture, massage, lymphedema therapy, stretching and many more.

- **Discussion of a healthy lifestyle and strategies to reduce cancer risk:** Depending on your type of cancer, there may be steps that you can take to further reduce your risk of cancer in the future. These can be discussed with your physician, and may include smoking cessation, exercise/activity, dietary alteration or other changes.
- **Minimizing the impact of cancer on your daily life:** While it is common for follow-up discussions to center on physical health, your physician can also discuss emotional health, spiritual health and social needs as well. There are many resources both at Mercy and within the community to help patients readjust to life after cancer treatment.
- **Answering questions:** We want to help answer any lingering or new questions that you have! Bring a written list of questions that you have thought of since your last visit. Otherwise, they are easily forgotten once you walk through the Cancer Center doors.

Although follow-up can cause anxiety and stress, these visits are an important part of your cancer care plan. Be sure to share your concerns and thoughts openly and honestly at these visits to get the most out of them. See you in follow-up!

New Cancer Providers

Mercy Clinic GYN Oncology
607 S. New Ballas Rd.
Suite 2350
St. Louis, MO 63141
314.251.4260



Mark Doherty, MD
GYN Oncology



Kevin Easley, MD
GYN Oncology



Kelly Ball, WHNP
GYN Oncology

Mercy Clinic Breast Surgery Clayton-Clarkson
15945 Clayton Rd. | Suite 120
Ballwin, MO 63011
636.256.5000



Abigail Hoffman, MD
Breast Surgery

Pastoral Services

Chaplain Susan Stucco is now available in **Suite 3170** at the David C. Pratt Center

Monday, Wednesday and Friday:
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday:
12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

You may also reach the chaplain by phone Monday - Friday between 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at **314.251.6947** or **314.251.6470**.

Appointments may be scheduled for times not listed above by calling the chaplain.

Feel free to stop by her office before or after your appointments if you need spiritual care or support.

Also, try our **mercy.net/echaplain**.