

Your resource for living well. Cancer Care

A quarterly newsletter from Mercy Hospital South David M. Sindelar Cancer Center | Spring 2022



This is an edition near and dear to my heart. Spring is in the air bringing longer sunny days, trees and plants blooming, wildlife spawning. Blossoming all around us and awakening of the senses, a wonderful season, sparing

the allergy sufferers. With the spring, we are also emerging from two years of living with the pandemic, and I believe we have seen a shift in priorities and likely a driver in the Great Resignation. The priority of self and self-care, something that is so easily pushed to the back burner with busy lives and fulfilling the needs of others, is incredibly important for everyone, but particularly in cancer patients.

When we were developing the Sindelar Cancer Center,

clearly it needed to house advanced cancer treating technologies administered by experts within their dedicated field, but it was also built with survivorship and self-care in mind. With the pandemic apparently easing and restrictions following, we will hopefully be able to provide the services we have dreamed of offering from day number one.

Look for more opportunities to gather in support classes, exercise classes,

cooking classes and other opportunities to help you – focus on you and your spiritual, psychological, and physical health. You deserve that time, and you need that time, because if you are not taking care of yourself, then you are also not giving your best self to all those around you.

Wishing you all the best of health and happiness.

God Bless.

Welcome our New Providers

Chelsie Mulholland,
MMS, PA-C, CGRA
Breast Surgery
Sindelar Cancer Center



Chelsie Mulholland is a Physician Assistant at the Sindelar Breast Surgery

Center who specializes in breast cancer. She attended Saint Louis University

obtaining her Master of Medical Science. Her career began in Los Angeles, CA where she worked at City of Hope in Surgical Oncology. During that time, she worked alongside surgeons consulting patients with familial breast cancer. She completed additional training in genetic cancer risk assessment and can provide genetic testing for patients who meet criteria.

For patients with a family history of breast cancer and questions regarding their risk, they can schedule a consultation for personalized risk assessment and implementation of high-risk screening for breast cancer.

Chelsie is excited to join Mercy and share her passion for breast cancer patients and breast cancer genetics. You can reach Chelsie at 314.525.1545 to schedule a consultation.

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Self-Care and Why it is so Important

As we begin 2022 and reflect on the last few years, they have brought a bit of stress to say the least. From pandemic worries to employment and financial concerns, and general life stressors. Either you or a loved one may have received a new cancer diagnosis. Others have had ongoing cancer treatments. There have been limited moments of tranquility or serenity for any of us.

Now the seasons are changing once again. It is going to begin to get warmer and soon we will see more daylight time and less darkness. Even still it is not surprising that we find ourselves irritable, anxious, or even having some feelings of being depressed.

We often hear about self-care and the importance of taking care of ourselves. How is that even possible when

we already have so much going on in our daily lives? Often articles on self-care offer suggestions such as reading a book, watching a movie, a massage, yoga, art, or cooking classes. The recommendations are endless and can feel overwhelming when we already have pressure on us. Who has the time??

Rather than listing out various suggestions to engage in self-care, we would like to offer a different approach. Simply, just for a moment, think about putting yourself first. Are you done laughing? We understand that might sound a bit selfish or even completely impossible. We must remember that while

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SPECIAL NOTE:

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, mercy has partnered with the cancer support community for our support groups. All meetings are held using zoom. Cancer support community will assist you in signing up for zoom. <http://cancersupportstl.org/>

Support Groups

In partnership with Cancer Support Community



Head And Neck Cancer Monthly Meeting

3rd Tuesday of each month
5:30 - 7 p.m.

This group offers a caring support group that features speakers and discussions about living well with head and neck cancer and managing side effects. Family and friends are welcome.

Register Here <https://zoom.us/j/94357428557?pwd=Mkp2UnAvSW9hSVJZdks5Tmpt1T25PZz09>

Stress Less Monthly Group Meeting

2nd Tuesdays of each month
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Stress and anxiety are a part of everyday life, especially when you are impacted by cancer. In this monthly workshop, learn simple ways to reduce the pressure you feel in your life.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/vJAlduyorTgvPhuXve4VVVo4PpzglipqJKQ>

Transition to Survivorship Monthly Group Meeting

3rd Thursday of each month
6:30 - 8 p.m.

A workshop for people who have completed active treatment or are on maintenance treatment provides an opportunity to connect with others who are coping with finding a new normal and moving toward wellness in mind, body and spirit.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJElf--qrDwoS-AzFAYa8e51UWpDrKB1cQ>

Other Support Groups Available Through Cancer Support Community

Support Groups

Weekly and monthly support groups are being offered through the HIPAA-compliant TeleMentalhealth platform, Zoom.

If you are interested in joining a weekly support group, please email us at info@cancersupportstl.org.

If you are interested in joining a monthly support group please visit our [online calendar](#) or [use link below](#):

Bereavement Monthly Group

First Thursdays
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwsdeGgpz8vEtMm-8xUlfi9QclijA64-ICC>

Brain Tumor Monthly Group

Fourth Thursdays
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMpdOmqpzMoHdJ6QkQC9GdU97HQQfiVqAiS>

Breast Cancer Monthly Group

Second Wednesdays
5:30 - 7 p.m.

Register here: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/uJlsc-iqqD0spuuoHW02eP_KSF6TXhmMhQ

Families Connect Parent Monthly Group

First Tuesdays
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0vcOGgpjsrGtc0l3ux3CnodTOZP38LzA9q>

Gynecological Cancer Monthly Group

Third Mondays
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkde-trToqGNwW4COkaP27k5qggr8xQN7L>

Jason Brightfield Young Adult Monthly Group

Wednesdays, January 26,
February 16, March 23
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwld->

Lung Cancer Monthly Group

Second Thursdays
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApC0irqTguqbEWF8nkTICdCO2doghSzw>

Pancreatic Cancer Monthly Group

Fourth Mondays
Noon - 1:30 PM

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/u5Qkf--hqjou4H3ssgGdPsehTECBvoTjHw>

Prostate Cancer Monthly Group

First Thursdays
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Register here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/up0sc0ihrTgvBi0v43BOChrZHwAJ4pLVrA>

Self-Care and Why it is so Important

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we are busy taking care of others, getting them to doctor's appointments, and doing school classes with our children in the living room, our health and mental wellness are just as important.

It is not a selfish act to think about yourself and do what feels right for you. It might be something as simple as taking a deep breath and slowly breathing out, or just

visualizing your favorite place or person. After that instant you can move forward with a more relaxed and even more focused attitude.

The concept of self-care is to allow us all to find a better way to cope with daily stressors. Unfortunately, we often become overwhelmed with the many different options that are suggested for self-care and feel we



do not have time for any of them. When that happens, nothing changes and we remain irritable, anxious, and depressed. Taking that

second for our wellbeing can provide us with some quietness that will then bring calmness and peacefulness within ourselves that we may not otherwise have.

Someone once told me the easiest way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. The same is true for self-care. Start with just a second and at that moment put yourself first. You each give so much of yourself to others, and it is important to remember that you deserve time for yourself too.

Healthy Sleeping Habits

Sleep Tips: 6 steps to better sleep

You're not doomed to toss and turn every night. Consider simple tips for better sleep, from setting a sleep schedule to including physical activity in your daily routine.

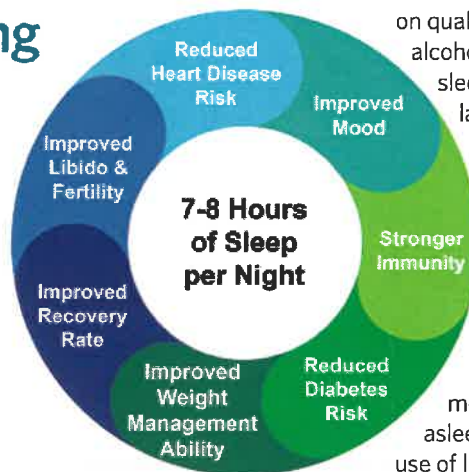
There are several factors that can interfere with a good night's sleep — from work stress and family responsibilities to unexpected challenges in your daily life. It's no wonder that quality sleep is sometimes elusive.

While you might not be able to control the factors that interfere with your sleep, you can adopt habits that encourage better sleep. Start with these simple tips.

1. Stick to a sleep schedule

Set aside no more than eight hours for sleep. The recommended amount of sleep for a healthy adult is at least seven hours. Most people don't need more than eight hours in bed to achieve this goal.

Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.



Try to limit the difference in your sleep schedule on weeknights and weekends to no more than one hour. Being consistent reinforces your body's sleep-wake cycle.

If you don't fall asleep within about 20 minutes, leave your bedroom, and do something relaxing. Read or listen to soothing music. Go back to bed when you're tired. Repeat as needed.

2. Pay attention to what you eat and drink

Don't go to bed hungry or stuffed. Avoid heavy or large meals within a couple of hours of bedtime. Your discomfort might keep you up.

Nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol deserve caution, too. The stimulating effects of nicotine and caffeine take hours to wear off and can wreak havoc

on quality sleep. Even though alcohol might make you feel sleepy, it can disrupt sleep later in the night.

3. Create a restful environment

Create a room that's ideal for sleeping. Often, this means cool, dark, and quiet. Exposure to light might make it more challenging to fall asleep. Avoid prolonged use of light-emitting screens just before bedtime. Consider using room-darkening shades, earplugs, a fan, or other devices to create an environment that suits your needs.

Doing calming activities before bedtime, such as taking a bath or using relaxation techniques, might promote better sleep.

4. Limit daytime naps

Long daytime naps can interfere with nighttime sleep. If you choose to nap, limit yourself to up to 30 minutes and avoid doing so late in the day.

If you work nights, however, you might need to nap late in the day before work to help make up your sleep debt.

5. Include physical activity in your daily routine

Regular physical activity can promote better sleep. Avoid being active too close to bedtime.

Spending time outside every day might be helpful, too.

6. Manage worries

Try to resolve your worries or concerns before bedtime. Jot down what's on your mind and then set it aside for tomorrow so you can clear your mind to rest.

Stress management might help. Start with the basics, such as getting organized, setting priorities, and delegating tasks. Meditation also can ease anxiety.

Know when to contact your doctor

Nearly everyone has an occasional sleepless night — but if you often have trouble sleeping, contact your doctor. Identifying and treating any underlying causes can help you get the better sleep you deserve.

Cancer Screenings

Cervical Cancer

Screening saves lives, and people with a cervix should be screened for cervical cancer. HPV and Pap tests can catch cervical cancer early when it may be easier to treat. Regular screenings can even find and remove lesions before they become cancer. Screening should start at age 25.

HPV, or human papillomavirus, is a common virus that can cause six types of cancer, including cervical cancer. (Other cancers caused by HPV include throat, vaginal, vulvar, anal, and penile cancers.)

HPV vaccination can prevent more than 90% of HPV cancers when given at the recommended ages. It works best when given between ages 9 and 12. Children and young adults – boys and girls – age 13

through 26 who have not been vaccinated, or who haven't gotten all their doses, should get the vaccine as soon as possible. The vaccine is safe and effective and provides long-lasting protection against HPV cancers.

Cervical Cancer screening reminders:

- Regular screening tests for cancer can save your life. Regular cancer screening can detect certain cancers before they start and can catch cancer early when it may be easier to treat. Talk to a doctor about getting on track with regular cancer screening.
- 1 in 3 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. Cancer screening is safe, effective, and should be a regular part of your life. Common cancers

like breast, colorectal, cervical and lung can be screened for regularly.

- Everyone with a cervix age 25-65 should have regular cervical cancer screening, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, or sexual activity. Cervical cancer is preventable. Talk to a doctor about what cancer screening tests you need.

Colorectal Cancer Screening

March is right around the corner and with that comes colon cancer awareness month.

Colon cancer is one of the few cancers that can be prevented by screenings and early detection. According to the American Cancer Society, screening for colorectal cancer should begin at the age of 45, or earlier if you have a family history of the disease or have been found to be in the high-risk category.

Many colorectal cancer deaths can be prevented by early and regular screenings. Colonoscopies locate and remove polyps, which are tiny growths that can become cancerous. Stool-based screening methods check for blood or other signs of cancer in your stool. The goal in screening is to find colon and rectal cancer in its earliest stages and to remove polyps before they become cancerous.

Though colorectal cancer can be prevented, there are certain lifestyle choices that can increase your risk. These factors include, but are not limited to obesity, smoking, drinking alcohol in excess of 2 or more drinks per day, eating a diet high in fat and red meats or low in fiber, grains, vegetables, and fruit.

Talk with your physician about ordering your colorectal cancer screening today.

Welcome Shadow to the Sindelar Cancer Center

The David M. Sindelar Cancer Center is proud to welcome Shadow to our outstanding team.

Shadow is a 3-year-old English Labrador Retriever and the first facility animal for Mercy South Hospital.

Shadow was raised by Duo Dogs, a St. Louis- based nonprofit that connects dogs with people bringing positive changes within communities. Shadows soothing presence helps bring a sense of serenity, eases strain, and generates many smiles and joy for patients, coworkers, and visitors.

Science has documented how animal interactions can bring positive health benefits such as decreasing pain, lowering blood pressure, helping to

alleviate depression, lessening fatigue, and even improving heart health. In a 2015 study in the Journal of Community and Supportive Oncology, researchers followed patients who were visited by therapy animals while receiving chemotherapy and radiation. Principal researcher, Dr. Steward Fleishman called this study, "the first such definitive study in cancer." They found that having an animal visit significantly improved their quality of life while it also humanized a high-tech treatment. Another 2015 study in the Sage Journals looked at how animal-assisted therapy



helped women with breast cancer. Researchers determined that the presence of a therapy animal acted as an icebreaker and helped with starting difficult conversations and "promoted increased communication with health professionals."

Therapy animals may be especially beneficial to cancer patients by:

- Easing their anxiety and elevating their mood.
- Offering company and comfort, thereby lessening

feelings of isolation or loneliness.

- Providing a distraction from pain, stress, or boredom.
- Relaxing them, especially since petting or snuggling with a soft, friendly animal may release endorphins that have a calming effect.
- Motivating them to get better.
- Increasing socialization and encouraging communication.

Many thanks to Duo Dogs for such amazing training and care of Shadow and to the Boniface Foundation for the generous support in helping to bring Shadow to Mercy South Hospital.

Be on the lookout for Shadow at the Sindelar Cancer Center.

Mercy Hospital South | David M. Sindelar Cancer Center

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