



# Touch of Courage . . . Connection

July  
2015

TAKING ACTION – EDUCATING – ADVOCATING – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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## Hypofractionation – What it is and is it Beneficial?

By Cassandra Foens, MD FACR - Covenant Cancer Treatment Center

*ASTRO statement suggests shorter courses of treatment were effective in older women with early stage, low risk breast cancer.*

Since 2013, a new radiation therapy option for some breast cancer patients has been available - it is called hypofractionation. Conventional fractionation has been defined as a dose of 180-200 rads a day to a total dose of around 6000 rads. Therefore it usually took about 6 weeks to deliver whole breast treatment. Hypofractionation is a regimen where fewer, higher dose treatments are given looking for the same biological effect. We have known since the early 1900s that side effects of radiation were related to not only total dose but the size of the daily dose - and long experience suggested that 180-200 rads per day seemed to be the safest when it came to balancing best outcomes with the fewest late complications - that is why it became the standard or conventional fractionation scheme. However many of our assumptions about radiation were based on animal studies and equipment

that would no longer be appropriate in the modern era.

Starting in the 1980s countries like Canada and Great Britain began looking at shorter courses of radiation. Initially these countries needed to treat patients faster because they had fewer treatment centers and shorter courses decreased the length of waiting lists at those centers. However these centers soon realized that their patients were doing just as well as those treated in the US with longer courses. They had the same chance of being cured of their cancer, and no worse risk of late side effects with the shorter, higher dose courses. Instead of 6-6.5 weeks, these patients were getting treatment done in as little as 4 weeks. There were no research studies done in the US however on this method of treatment until the early 2000s. Ultimately these studies predicted the same results as the Canadians and Europeans had seen.

In Dec 2011, ASTRO (American Society for Radiation Oncology) published a consensus statement on the use of

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## Paying it Forward – A Survivor's Story

by Debra (DJ) Corson

In review of a previous survivor's story I wrote, it's easy to see that I was in a very different place then as compared with today—8 years later.

The article, along with my journal and the bi-monthly emails I wrote to friends and family about my breast cancer journey, all serve to remind me of the shock, fear, learning, spirituality and hope I experienced on the way to getting well again. These writings were therapeutic then and they help me stay grounded today.

I don't refer to cancer as a "gift" because a gift is something I consider wonderful enough to give someone else; and cancer is definitely not that! However, having had breast cancer and not knowing whether I would ever be OK again, I'm reminded to be abundantly grateful for every day and to not take anyone or anything for granted.

The Beyond Pink TEAM was instrumental in providing emotional support throughout my journey. Today, I "pay it forward" by providing emotional support to other women with breast cancer, by continuing to educate myself about prevention and re-occurrence and by advocating to end this horrible disease by 2020.

(See the April 2008 "Touch of Courage" issue on [www.beyondpinkteam.org](http://www.beyondpinkteam.org) under Education tab for DJ's survivor story, "Scars, Marks and Tattoos.")

### Hypofractionation- Continued from page 1

hypofractionation in breast cancer, suggesting that shorter courses of treatment were effective in older women with early stage, low risk breast cancer. This recommendation really took off in Sept 2013 when the first five Choosing Wisely guidelines for Radiation Oncology were published. Choosing

Wisely is a national initiative ([www.choosingwisely.org](http://www.choosingwisely.org)) that encourages patients and physicians to look at tests and treatments that were being done that either did not benefit patients or were felt to be unnecessary or not cost effective. In that first set of guidelines was a recommendation on hypofractionation in breast cancer. ASTRO recommended that women over 50 years old who had early stage breast cancer be offered shorter course treatment - what we call hypofractionation. Since then, the number of women in the US getting hypofractionation has been increasing every year.

So - who should get hypofractionation? Right now the recommendations based on the Dec 2011 paper are as follows - women 50 years and older with invasive breast cancers, negative lymph nodes and no indications for chemotherapy may be considered for shorter courses. Some women should not get hypofractionation. Younger women, women with high grade cancers, women with positive lymph nodes, women who need chemotherapy, or women with DCIS are not considered candidates for hypofractionation, although women with DCIS (in situ cancers) might be candidates for short course treatment - the panel felt they did not have enough data to make a recommendation for DCIS either way although since that time more research may suggest that women with DCIS are OK for hypofractionation. Also women with diseases like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis may not be good candidates for hypofractionation because they already are at increased risk for late side effects from radiation.

Hypofractionation is now being offered at the Covenant Cancer Treatment Center in Radiation Oncology and many of our patients are benefitting from the shorter course of therapy. Although not all women should get hypofractionation, if it is offered, it is because we feel it is safe and effective therapy for our patients.

## Go GREEN !

By Cindy Harris, a Survivor



### Green Advice for Your Garden Plants

**Protect your young plants in the garden** - Keeping the rabbits away from the new tender leaves in the garden is a concern now. Using bottomless milk jugs or other containers around each plant until the plant leaves get large really helps. Rabbits don't like the larger leaves. Human hair on each plant will keep them away too.

**Food for your plants** - If you like to feed your plants, sprinkle 2 tablespoons of Epsom salts around the base of tomatoes, roses, evergreens, azaleas, rhododendrons and trees. Also, if you have a fish tank, every time you clean it out pour that water on you plants, they will love the fish fertilizer.

Use a glass jar and put all your egg shells in it and cover them with water, let stand for about a month adding shells as used and water as needed. Don't put the lid on very tight. Then mix 1 cup shell water to 1 gal plain water and use.

Your coffee grounds are great sprinkled around the base of plants or even dug in by the roots. A box of dollar store green tea mixed with 2 gallons water is very good too. Just remember, even with natural plant foods, too much is damaging. Every few weeks or just once a month is good.

## Learning to Shift the Conversation Toward A Cure for Breast Cancer

By Jacque Bakker and Gowri Betrabet Gulwadi

On May 2, 2015, five members from the Beyond Pink TEAM (BYPT) arrived in Washington D.C. to step up to the challenge of ending breast cancer by attending the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) 2015 Annual Advocate Leadership Summit. This three-day training course with educational and strategy building sessions provided attendees with information and background about breast cancer along with tools and tactics for playing a strong leadership role within the breast cancer community.

NBCC is a collaboration of activists, survivors, researchers, policy makers, grassroots and national organizations that come together as “disruptive innovators” for social change. NBCC has always been the major agent for change in breast cancer and now they are driven by a deadline. Breast Cancer Deadline 2020 was announced about 5 years ago, the goal was to know how to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020. The intent is to stop people from getting breast cancer in the first place and stop people from dying of breast cancer. At the NBCC Advocate Leadership Summit, progress at the halfway point was heard during 3 days of sessions, workshops and conversations. Speakers from across the globe gave us opportunities to gain new insight into the issues essential to achieving the goals of the Breast Cancer Deadline 2020.

It was exciting to hear all about cancer immunology and immunotherapy. In our first workshop a researcher explained terminology and basic concepts of immunology. Next, we heard all about applications of immunologic approaches in cancer prevention and therapeutics. From there it all kept building, with more and more exciting research. We heard about immunotherapy providing cancer patients with treatments that have the potential to control and cure

cancer. These are called breakthrough approaches in oncology.



*Above Lori Seawel, Gowri Betrabet Gulwadi, Kristin Teig Torres, Christine Carpenter and Jacque Bakker.*

Many sessions helped us create a detailed picture of what it takes to be an educated advocate. We learned about the importance of demanding that scientific report meets criteria for good quality and rigor, and that we must develop critical appraisal skills when reviewing proposals and research articles. We felt so fortunate to be a part of this wonderful opportunity to learn from the experts!

Even though some of us had attended previous summits, the best part for all of us this year was understanding how important our role is in the legislative process. On the last day we headed to Capitol Hill to lobby for breast cancer research and a cure, to ensure that our nation's limited research dollars are leveraged to accelerate progress and help ensure our position as the worldwide leader in medical and scientific advancement. We asked for support from our Iowa Congressmen and Senators, thanked them for their

support and their time with us, and informed and educated them with facts and trends we had learned at the summit.

As advocates we are eager to share with our communities the knowledge we gained and help everyone move beyond the limitations of breast cancer awareness towards research for a cure. Our voice makes a difference in the lives of our sisters, daughters, mothers, granddaughters and friends. They are depending on us. We all can work together, we know it may be difficult, but it will be worth it. Together we wish to create a world where no one has to hear the words, “you have breast cancer.”



*Pictured above BPT Advocates, Jacque Bakker, Gowri Betrabet Gulwadi, Christine Carpenter, Kristin Teig Torres and Lori Seawel with Dr. Susan Love, (center front). Dr Love is a well-known breast cancer author and patient advocate and president of The Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation, which focuses on breast cancer prevention and research into eradicating the disease.*





## Hearts of Hope



Hearts of Hope are helping to provide comfort and healing to breast cancer patients after a mastectomy, lumpectomy or biopsy. Made of flannel and sewed by members of the Touch of Courage support group, they can be positioned under the arm or over the incision under a seat belt for comfort. So far the group has made about 50 pillows and left them at the local hospitals and doctors' offices for patients and they have been very well received. The project is funded completely by donations which can be made in the form of pink flannel fabric or a gift card from Jo-Anns or Hancock Fabric Shops. Please contact Pat Buls at 319-232-8691 or plbuls45@gmail.com for more information.

## Upcoming Events and Fundraisers benefiting the Beyond Pink TEAM!



Join the NEISCA for their annual **Pretty in Pink Horse Show** on Saturday, August 1, 2015 at the D & R Areana, 2577 Joplin Avenue, Denver, IA (**new location**) beginning at 9:00 a.m..

**Sunday, October 4 – Delivering Fashion – Ladies Night Out at Scheels, Viking Road Plaza, Cedar Falls**

**Date TBD – Splash of Color Walk**

**Date TBD – UNI Volleyball Pink Out**

*For additional information, check BPT website, [www.beyondpinkteam.org](http://www.beyondpinkteam.org) and BPT Facebook page for updates and details for these October events.*



Mark your calendars for **Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>** for the **Pink Ribbon Registration Kick Off** at the Pump Haus Pub & Grill, 311 Main Street, Cedar Falls from 5-7 pm. On **Saturday, October 3, 2015** will be the **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Pink Ribbon Run** presented by Oakridge Realtors and University of Iowa Community Credit Union in the Cedar Valley. This event is for survivors, families, friends and runners/walkers who want to show their support for all breast cancer survivors in the Cedar Valley. Proceeds will be given to the Beyond Pink TEAM to continue their financial support for all breast cancer survivors in treatment.

## Winning at the Ball Park!

The BPT and fans hit a homerun at the June 1st Waterloo Buck's Pink Out game! Games, activities and pink jerseys were all part of the game. Thank you Waterloo Buck's for hosting the Pink Out game to benefit BPT and those we serve.



Games and Pink Ribbon Tattoos



Survivor Sarah Jochumsen threw out the first pitch to begin the game. Kristin Teig Torres, survivor, sang the National Anthem to begin the festivities.

## Support Group Meeting Dates

**July 6, 1:30 p.m.**

**Touch of Courage**  
**Breast Cancer Support Group**  
 2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo  
 Pat – 319-232-8691

**July 7, 1:30 p.m.**

**Care & Share Cancer Support Group**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo  
 Jeanne – 319-272-2816

**August 3, 1:30 p.m.**

**Touch of Courage**  
**Breast Cancer Support Group**  
 2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo  
 Pat – 319-232-8691

**August 3, 4:45-6:45 p.m.**

**Grundy Area Cancer Support Group**  
**Support for ALL cancers**  
 Grundy County Hospital – Grundy Center  
 Kristi – 319-824-4129

**August 4, 1:30 p.m.**

**Care & Share Cancer Support Group**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo  
 Jeanne – 319-272-2816

**August 10, 1:30-3:30 p.m.**

**Look Good ...Feel Better Hair – Make-up – Nails – Skin**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway Avenue, Waterloo  
 RSVP at 319-493-8857

**August 13, 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Splash of Color – Women of Color Breast Cancer Support Group**  
 Waterloo Public Library, Waterloo  
 Cathy – 319-493-8857

**September 1, 1:30 p.m.**

**Care & Share Cancer Support Group**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo  
 Jeanne – 319-272-2816

**September 7, 1:30 p.m.**

**Touch of Courage**  
**Breast Cancer Support Group**  
 2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo  
 Pat – 319-232-8691

**September 15, 4:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Young Cancer Survivors Meet, Mingle and Learn**  
 Unitarian Universalist Church  
 3912 Cedar Heights Dr., Cedar Falls  
 Gabbi – 319-232-2225

**October 5, 1:30 p.m.**

**Touch of Courage**  
**Breast Cancer Support Group**  
 2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo  
 Pat – 319-232-8691

**October 6, 1:30 p.m.**

**Care & Share Cancer Support Group**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo  
 Jeanne – 319-272-2816

**October 12, 1:30-3:30 p.m.**

**Look Good ...Feel Better Hair – Make-up – Nails – Skin**  
 Covenant Cancer Treatment Center  
 200 E Ridgeway Avenue, Waterloo  
 RSVP at 319-493-8857

## Looking for a Speaker . . .

If you are interested in having a Beyond Pink TEAM representative speak at your Church, organization or group, please contact Lori Seawel at [lori.seawel@seawel.com](mailto:lori.seawel@seawel.com).

## Want to do a Fundraiser for BPT . . .

If you would like to host a fundraiser to benefit the Beyond Pink TEAM, please contact Marty Mullnix at [mapanix@cfu.net](mailto:mapanix@cfu.net).

## Volunteer for BPT . . .

If you are interested in volunteering for the Beyond Pink TEAM, please visit our website at [beyondpinkteam.org](http://beyondpinkteam.org) or contact Marty Mullnix at [mapanix@cfu.net](mailto:mapanix@cfu.net).

## Beyond Pink TEAM Advocates Make a Difference in Washington, DC

Beyond Pink TEAM advocates left the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) Leadership Summit energized about Breast Cancer Deadline 2020. In fact, we have decided to bring some of the phenomenal plenary sessions back to the Cedar Valley. Save the date, Thursday, April 7, 2016, from 5-8 p.m. and join the conversation on Cutting Edge Approaches to Cancer Care. Watch for more information in our next newsletter.

Lobby Day once again was a great success! All five Beyond Pink TEAM advocates took to Capitol Hill moving from House to Senate offices to meet with Members and staff and urge support for Breast Cancer Deadline 2020 and NBCC's legislative agenda. Six meetings were held resulting in an increase in cosponsors for our #1 legislative priority, The Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act, H.R.1197. To date all of Iowa's members of the House have endorsed Breast Cancer Deadline 2020 and are cosponsors of H.R. 1197. Please thank Representatives Rod Blum, Dave Loebsack, Steve King and David Young for their support for ending breast cancer. In the Senate we presented Senator Chuck Grassley with an award for his leadership role in sponsoring The Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act (S.746). We know "Grassley Works" so we are pleased he has said he is going to work to get this done.

Now we need each of you to build on this momentum by urging Senator Joni Ernst to co-sponsor this bipartisan legislation that will help ensure our nation's limited research dollars are leveraged to accelerate progress already begun. Please act today! Then share this action with family, friends and colleagues and ask them to do the same.

Please email

**[Andrea\\_Hechavaria@Ernst.senate.gov](mailto:Andrea_Hechavaria@Ernst.senate.gov)**  
 with the following message:

Dear Senator Ernst. In order to know how to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020 we must all work together. I encourage you to join me in supporting this goal by becoming a cosponsor of S. 746/H.R. 1197, the Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act. I look forward to your response. (Include your name and address)

**MISSION – Beyond Pink TEAM is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide breast cancer prevention, education, support and advocacy for comprehensive, quality health care for ALL in the Cedar Valley and surrounding communities.**

**Resources** – Information, support, counseling, and educational materials are available from the following:

**Beyond Pink TEAM** is a local breast cancer organization providing a variety of services. Our website lists services we provide as well as other services available in the Cedar Valley. [www.beyondpinkTEAM.org](http://www.beyondpinkTEAM.org)

**Living Beyond Breast Cancer** includes a helpline, newsletter and information. Survivors Helpline: 888-753-5222 [www.LBBC.org](http://www.LBBC.org)

**Young Survival Coalition** connects with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer. [www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

**Cancer Care** is a national nonprofit organization offering counseling, support, financial assistance and education to individuals with cancer and their families. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**Iowa Cancer Consortium** offers cancer information and links to resources in Iowa. [www.canceriowa.org](http://www.canceriowa.org)

**American Cancer Society** offers cancer information and services. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

**National Breast Cancer Coalition** The NBCC's mission is to eradicate breast cancer by focusing the government, research institutions and consumer advocates on breast cancer. It encourages advocacy for action and change. [www.breastcancerdeadline2020.org](http://www.breastcancerdeadline2020.org)

**National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN)** provides state-of-the-art treatment information in easy-to-understand language to people with cancer and their caregivers. [NCCN.org/patients](http://NCCN.org/patients)

**Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation** offers clear, comprehensive information on breast cancer prevention, detection, treatment and long-term survivorship as well as reliable, up-to-date health information. [www.dslrf.org/breastcancer/](http://www.dslrf.org/breastcancer/)

**National Cancer Institute's** website offers information about cancer, breast cancer, clinical trials, cancer statistics, research and funding, and the latest news. They will also answer your questions by calling 1-800-4CANCER. [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

# Touch of Courage • • • Connection

Cedar Valley Cancer  
Committee  
4756 Charolais Dr  
Waterloo, IA 50701  
[www.beyondpinkTEAM.org](http://www.beyondpinkTEAM.org)

Connect with us...Your support financially or through volunteering is both needed and appreciated. Please feel free to complete the following and forward to Cedar Valley Cancer Committee at address listed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to participate with the Beyond Pink TEAM by:

- Writing a survivor story for the newsletter
- Volunteering: *(Check all that apply)*
  - Assisting with Support Groups
  - Education (Health Fairs/Presentations)
  - Development (Publicity)
  - Advocacy – Deadline 2020
  - Events (Fundraisers, Annual Luncheon, Projects and more)
- Writing letters or making phone calls to legislators for breast cancer issues, through the Iowa Breast Cancer Advocacy Network.
- Making a donation. Make checks payable to: Beyond Pink TEAM  
*(all donations are tax deductible)*
  - BPT Fund
  - NBBC Scholarship Fund
  - Area of Need