



Touch of Courage . . . Connection

October 2014

TAKING ACTION – EDUCATING – ADVOCATING – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

IN THIS ISSUE

Side Effects of Chemotherapy and How to Manage Them Effectively

Julie Gleason, ARNP - Cedar Valley Cancer Center

Chemotherapy is given for a variety of reasons in breast cancer management. Chemotherapy is given in the adjuvant setting when the cancer has already been removed, and we are trying to provide assurance that it will not come back. Chemotherapy is given in the neoadjuvant setting, or when the tumor needs to shrink prior to surgery. It is given in the metastatic setting to slow down disease progression, with attempts to increase quality and quantity of life.

Regardless of the reason for giving chemotherapy, side effects are undoubtedly expected, and can be bothersome. That said, side effects are manageable with the right tools. Never be afraid to speak with your doctor regarding proper management of your side effects.

Most chemotherapies cause a decrease in the blood counts. White blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets are made in your bone marrow. While chemotherapy is meant to “kill off” cancer cells, unfortunately, the chemotherapy does not target the cancer cells specifically, and healthy cells

are also “killed off” prematurely. Lower amounts of white blood cells can make you more at risk for infection. The best prevention is good hand washing, avoid sharing cups and utensils, and avoid sick people. Always call your physician for any fevers, chills, signs of infections, or other concerns. You can become very ill without a very high fever.

Lower red blood cells, also called anemia, can cause fatigue. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the rest of the body, so when decreased, you may feel more short of breath with exertion, or weak, and tired. Eating a well-balanced diet can help combat fatigue, along with getting enough rest, and continuing to exercise, when able.

Lower platelet counts may cause increasing bleeding or bruising. Be sure to notify your physician if you are taking aspirin, NSAIDs (such as Ibuprofen or Aleve), or blood thinners. Monitor for increasing bruising or bleeding of any kind, bloody noses, bleeding gums, or blood in the stools.

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My Philosophy – Keep Smiling and Stay Positive

A Survivor's Story by Chris Hermansen

My breast cancer journey started September 28, 2012 with a routine mammogram. I had just turned 44 and it had been almost three years since my last one. After being called back for an ultrasound, which I have had before and it had always been benign, the radiologist came in and said they would like to biopsy both of my breasts. The radiologist told me that it looked like there were suspicious areas in both breasts. I was in shock.

I went back to my office and talked with my coworkers as I waited for my husband to pick me up. (My coworkers are like close family. I could never have made it through without them.) My husband and I sat and cried as I told him. He held me, saying that it wasn't fair, but that we would beat it.

My biopsies came back positive. I decided to get a second opinion at Mayo. The MRI I had done showed invasive breast cancer in both breasts. Since my mother and maternal grandmother both had breast cancer, I decided to do the BRCA test. My test was positive for the BRCA gene 2.

My cancer was 8.5cm in my left breast and 4.5cm in my right breast. Since I was post-menopausal, diagnosed with bilateral breast cancer, and based on the size of the tumors, I decided on chemo before surgery. During this time my mother was battling colon cancer, yet she was so hopeful and so caring towards me. My husband accompanied me to all of my appointments and was my rock the entire time. My children, coworkers, and friends all became so important to me. I realized that I know a lot of very special people in this world.

I had a bilateral mastectomy with reconstruction, and radiation to my left breast, and had finally beaten my cancer. During this time (2013) my husband had a health scare in August and my mother was ill with terminal colon cancer. I was still tired and worn out from my radiation. On October 3, 2013 my husband passed away from a GI bleed. I was devastated. He had been so loving during our entire marriage, but even more so after I was diagnosed with breast cancer. He would hold me and we would cry

together. He let me have my sad, mad, this is not fair outbursts, and he would just hold me. My four children and I have missed him so much. Two and a half weeks later my mother passed away from colon cancer. My world was just crumbling. I have always tried to maintain such a positive attitude through this experience. People tell me how strong I am. Well, I'm not always strong, but I have found that feeling sorry for yourself just brings you down. My philosophy is to keep smiling and try to stay positive.

Four months after my husband and mother passed away, I was sick but thought it was just a cold. I went to the doctor and had multiple tests completed. I was found to have heart failure caused by chemotherapy. My heart function was 87% before treatment and after the testing it was found to be at 25%. I have been gradually increasing two of my three heart medications and will now be on them for the rest of my life. It has since been six months and I am no longer in heart failure. My hair has grown back, I have lost 25lbs, but I'm eating healthy and I feel pretty good. I am still tired from my heart medications but I believe I am one lucky girl. My cancer is gone and my heart is repairing. I have wonderful family, coworkers, and friends. God has truly blessed me and I am grateful every day to have one more day.

Tips for Coping with Cancer During the Holidays

Holidays can be stressful with all the visiting, shopping, planning, cleaning, decorating and cooking, it's easy to become tired and overwhelmed even under "normal" circumstances. Dealing with cancer and its effects on the cancer patient or their family can be challenging. Here are a few tips.

Cancer Patient –

- Acknowledge where you are. Recognize physical limitations, nausea and taste changes.
- Make plans to get together with friends, family or co-workers over the holidays. Being alone can be very difficult.

- Create new holiday traditions that make the most of your energy.
- Be innovative in shopping or gift giving. Use mail order catalogs, shop over the phone or try on-line shopping.
- Express your feelings in ways others can give you the support you need. Tears can bring a sense of relief, laughter can be relaxing and sharing can be comforting.

Go GREEN !

By Cindy Harris, a Survivor



Pulling – What it is and its Benefits

Have you ever tried "Pulling"? Or do you even know what it is? Pulling is using a unrefined, high quality oil in your mouth; similar to the way you would use mouthwash. My favorite is coconut oil. Take a tablespoon (you can start with a teaspoon) and just swish it in your mouth for 5 to 10 minutes. Best time to do this is first thing in the morning. To add this to your routine, try "pulling" while in the shower; then simply spit when your shower is done. Caution: spit into the trash or toilet, since the oil could solidify and clog your drain.

Why "pull"? The process attracts and removes bacteria, toxins and parasites that live in your mouth or lymph system and also pulls congestion and mucus from your throat and loosens up your sinuses. Pulling also helps whiten teeth and removes plaque. My dentist commented on how little plaque I had and asked if I had doubled up on my flossing.

Remember – don't swallow the oil as the swishing has all the bacteria from your teeth that isn't healthy for you.

Yes – Winter is coming! Boy do I hate the thought of it. But winter can benefit you in the spring. Remember to compost all winter long. I keep a container that seals tightly on my counter for my composting in the winter. When it gets close to full I take it to my basement to a larger plastic sealed container. This way I only have to trudge through deep snow a few times during the winter. I have less trash and good fresh dirt in the spring.



Splash of Color
Breast Cancer Support Group
4th Annual 3K Walk

Saturday, October 11, 2014
7:30 a.m.
Sullivan Park, Waterloo

Registration: \$18 for Adults
and \$10 for Students

Contact Mrs. Cathy Ketton
at 319-493-8857 for more
information or to register.

Key to Ending Breast Cancer



The Beyond Pink TEAM
cordially invites you to the
*Celebration of Accomplishments
and Recognition*

Thursday, November 6, 2014
Sunnyside Country Club
1600 Olympic Drive - Waterloo, IA 50702

5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres and Cash Bar Available

5:30 p.m.
Program:
"Key to Ending Breast Cancer,"
Survivor Story, Recognition of Survivors
and much more...

Business Casual Attire

To make a reservation for the Beyond Pink TEAM Celebration of Accomplishments, please contact Marty at 319-277-5236 or at mapanix@cfu.net

KIDS "Giving Back"

COMMUNITY SUPPORT OF BPT MISSION CONTINUES WITH FUNDRAISERS

Thank you, Addy, Dalton and Gabe!

Turning Lemons into Lemonade!



Addy Scott had a lemonade stand this summer. What she did was amazing! She gave her donations to her mom and said, "Give to Lisa, she will know what to do."

Lisa is a BPT volunteer member. Addy's gift will be helping others!



Kids Driving Out Cancer!

To honor their grandmother, Kathy Bunger, Dalton and Gabe Closson held a golf event just for KIDS! Over 50 young boys and girls attended the 1st Annual "Kids Driving Out Cancer" event. The BPT was presented with a check for \$2,500.00 from this event. Their grandmother is surely smiling down on them and is very proud!

Support Group Meeting Dates

October 6, 1:30 p.m.

Touch of Courage

Breast Cancer Support Group

2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo
Pat – 319-232-8691

October 7, 1:30 p.m.

Care & Share Cancer Support Group

Covenant Cancer Treatment Center
200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo
Jeanne – 319-272-2816

October 13, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Look Good...Feel Better

Hair-Make-up-Nails-Skin

Covenant Cancer Treatment Center
200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo
RSVP – ACS at 319-234-0990

November 3, 1:30 p.m.

Touch of Courage

Breast Cancer Support Group

2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo
Pat – 319-232-8691

November 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

November 4, 1:30 p.m.

Care & Share Cancer Support Group

Covenant Cancer Treatment Center
200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo
Jeanne – 319-272-2816

November 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

December 1, 1:30 p.m.

Touch of Courage

Breast Cancer Support Group

2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo
Pat – 319-232-8691

December 2, 1:30 p.m.

Care & Share Cancer Support Group

Covenant Cancer Treatment Center
200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo
Jeanne – 319-272-2816

January 5, 1:30 p.m.

Touch of Courage

Breast Cancer Support Group

2101 Kimball Ave, Waterloo
Pat – 319-232-8691

January 6, 1:30 p.m.

Care & Share Cancer Support Group

Covenant Cancer Treatment Center
200 E Ridgeway, Waterloo
Jeanne – 319-272-2816

January 20, 4:30-7:00 p.m.

Young Cancer Survivors

Meet – Mingle – and Learn

Unitarian Universalist Church
3912 Cedar Heights Dr., Cedar Falls
Gabbi – 319-292-225

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

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

Volunteer for BPT . . .

If you are interest in volunteering for the Beyond Pink TEAM, please visit our website at beyondpinkteam.org or contact Jessica Miller at jmiller1321@gmail.com

Truths About Breast Cancer

- Breast cancer accounts for nearly a quarter of all cancers in women.
- Men do get breast cancer.
- The mortality rate from breast cancer is higher for African American women than for white women and women of other races.
- Mammography is not prevention. Getting regular mammograms does not prevent you from getting breast cancer.
- Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) may increase your risk of breast cancer.

Upcoming Events

Join in the fun and support these upcoming fundraisers and events to benefit and recognize the Beyond Pink TEAM.

Friday, October 3 – Waterloo Black Hawks Hockey – 7:00 pm., Young Arena, Waterloo

Saturday, October 4 – Pink Ribbon Run – 8:00 a.m., Cedar Falls Community Center, registration at www.trekmanracing.com

Saturday, October 4 – UNI Soccer Pink Out – 7:00 p.m., Cedar Valley Soccer Complex, Waterloo

Sunday, October 5 – Delivering Fashion – 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m., Scheel's, Cedar Falls

Friday, October 10 – Waterloo Black Hawks Hockey – 7:00 pm., Young Arena, Waterloo

Saturday, October 11 – Splash of Color Walk – 7:30 a.m., Sullivan Park, Waterloo, registration info at www.beyondpinkteam.org or calling Cathy Ketton at 319-493-8857

Friday, October 17 – Waterloo Black Hawks Hockey – 7:00 pm., Young Arena, Waterloo – **Pink Jersey Auction**

Saturday, October 18 – UNI Football Pink Out – 4:00 p.m., UNI-Dome, Cedar Falls

Saturday, October 27 – UNI Volleyball Pink Out – 7:00 p.m., McLeod Center, Cedar Falls

Thursday, November 6 – BPT Annual Celebration – 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Sunnyside Country Club, Waterloo (see page 3 for details)

OCTOBER – Cancer Awareness or Prevention Month

Breast cancer used to be in the closet. Not very long ago, the stigma surrounding breast cancer was so strong that women and men felt that they had to hide their diagnosis.

Then things began to change thanks to some very brave women. In 1972, Shirley Temple Black held a news conference in her hospital room while she was recovering from a mastectomy. In 1974, former First Lady Betty Ford went public about her diagnosis and even let the press into her hospital room to photograph her in her housecoat.

Fast forward to 2014. The pink ribbon is universal. Countless walks, runs, relays and races take place annually. In 2014, it is safe to say we are aware. In fact, we have become complacent in our awareness.

What are we aware of? That breast cancer exists. That every woman is at risk. Awareness alone will never save us. But prevention can.

Beyond Pink TEAM (BPT) thinks it is time to acknowledge the benefit we have achieved from awareness, and move forward with a new approach. That is why local BPT members have become actively involved with the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) and NBCC has set a deadline to know how to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020. We know that the only way we can truly end this disease is to make sure no one gets it in the first place. Locally Beyond Pink TEAM has taken up this cause with the goal of seeing an end to breast cancer.

Working to prevent breast cancer from ever occurring is key. NBCC is currently working with researchers and patient advocates on the Artemis Project for a preventive breast cancer vaccine. That's right, a vaccine for breast cancer. Imagine a world where we do not have to worry about toxic treatments because no one needs to be treated. No one gets breast cancer. No one dies of breast cancer. A vaccine would do the one thing awareness cannot -- save the lives of the women and men we love.

As a local group, the Beyond Pink TEAM is making sure this national message is reaching Iowa and the Cedar Valley. Advocacy Council Chair, Christine Carpenter and other BPT members are working to inform citizens, policy makers, businesses,

educators, healthcare and community organizations about Breast Cancer Deadline 2020 and the prevention of breast cancer.

It is time to move from awareness to prevention. If much of the resources that are currently directed at breast cancer awareness were redistributed to prevention, imagine how much faster we could start saving lives. Until then, complacency will be the status quo in breast cancer. It's time to stop advocating for the disease and instead advocate for a deadline to know how to end breast cancer. That deadline is January 1, 2020.

Help us save lives. We need women and men like you, to take meaningful action. Learn more about the National Breast Cancer Coalition. Get involved. Join the "Iowa Breast Cancer Deadline 2020" Facebook group. Join BPT's Advocacy Council. Sign up for NBCC's National Action Network and receive Action Alerts with specific actions that you can take to advance the cause of knowing how to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020. Stay connected by following NBCC on Twitter and like them on Facebook. Do it for yourself. Do it for your loved ones. Do it for humanity. Do it.

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Many chemotherapies cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, or stomach upset. The same chemotherapy can give one person constipation and another person diarrhea. Keeping bowels moving regularly not only decreases stomach upset, but decreases risk of infection. If you are having trouble with nausea, SPEAK UP! Do not try to "grin and bear it." Not all nausea medications are created equally, and one might work when another didn't. Talk with your doctor about the management of your nausea, so you are able to continue to eat and drink and stay healthy throughout treatment. Nausea medications are used in combination to be most effective. Over the counter antidiarrheal medication can be used for diarrhea, and stool softeners for constipation. There are prescription medications for more severe cases. Eating smaller meals and more bland food choices may be necessary during the few days after receiving chemotherapy. Continuing to drink fluids, especially water, is important regardless. 8-10 glasses of water daily is ideal when going through chemotherapy treatment.

Poor appetite, taste changes, and mouth sores may be a side effect of your treatment.

Sometimes, you won't feel like eating, but as I mentioned above, drinking fluids is very important. Eating smaller meals throughout the day, instead of three large meals, helps you get the nutrition you need. Food may not always taste good, and you may have to alter what you're eating based on how things taste on certain days. Mouth sores can make it difficult to eat and drink. Gargling with salt water may alleviate some symptoms, but talk with your doctor as prescription medication may be necessary to heal the sores.

Hair loss is probably one of the biggest challenges for women undergoing chemotherapy treatment. Not all chemotherapies cause hair loss so talk with your doctor, or their staff, prior to starting a new therapy. Hair loss may be gradual, or abrupt, and affects all areas of the body where hair grows. It often starts after 1-2 cycles of treatment. Hair can take a while to grow back, and may not grow back the same color or texture. Make sure and talk with your clinic about the hair replacement sites in your area if you are interested in purchasing a wig. Wigs may help you gain self-confidence after losing your hair, however, wigs can become warm, and itchy, and many patients choose to wear hats, bandanas, or scarfs instead. Regardless of what you choose to wear, make sure you feel as comfortable as possible.

I suggest keeping a diary of your symptoms in order to better communicate with your physician how you're feeling on a daily basis. Write down the days you have chemotherapy, and the side effects you experience on the following days. Also keep track of what you've tried at home to alleviate the symptoms. Write down the medications you've taken, the foods you've eaten, etc. This helps your doctor take better care of you, which will help you during your battle with breast cancer.

As a reminder, there are other side effects more specific to certain chemotherapy regimens, so please listen to your provider, and ask for a specific education appointment for more information, if one is not provided for you. You deserve to know how this is going to affect you, and more importantly, how you can combat these side effects at home. Remember, every patient is different and will not have all side effects listed. Make sure to ask questions, talk with other breast cancer patients, join support groups, and discuss your needs on a regular basis with your treating physician. Be strong in your fight with breast cancer!

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

Living Beyond Breast Cancer includes a helpline, newsletter and information. Survivors Helpline: 888-753-5222 www.LBBC.org

Young Survival Coalition connects with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer. 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.cancercaare.org

Iowa Cancer Consortium offers cancer information and links to resources in Iowa. www.canceriowa.org

American Cancer Society offers cancer information and services. www.cancer.org. Local office: 319-234-0990 – 2709 University Ave, Waterloo

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.stopbreastcancer.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

M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, University of Texas offers patient and cancer information. www.mdanderson.org

Susan G. Komen for the Cure website offers cancer and social networking information and a newsletter on their website. www.komen.org

Touch of Courage • • • Connection

Cedar Valley Cancer
Committee
4756 Charolais Dr
Waterloo, IA 50701
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:

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