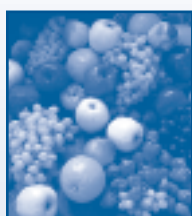


together

Summer 2007: Volume 7 Number 2

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Life in Full Bloom

By Carol Chaffin

On a sunny day in April, Arlene Dunlop plants geraniums in her yard in Neptune Beach, Fla. Moving the dirt with her spade and pushing the roots into their new foundation, she revels in the warmth of the sun, the vibrant colors of the blooms and the feel of the breeze in her hair.

After battling cancer for years, Dunlop, 77, does not take days like these for granted.

"I'm just so happy to be here," she says. Dunlop was diagnosed with stage II breast cancer in 1997. She underwent a mastectomy and four chemotherapy sessions combined with tamoxifen, a drug that reduces breast cancer recurrence by blocking estrogen receptors. The treatment was a success, and her cancer went into remission. But in the spring of 1999, a routine follow-up blood test detected something amiss. Further tests determined she had cancer in her ovaries, pelvis and the lymph nodes in her chest. The cancer most likely had spread either from the original breast cancer or from a separate ovarian cancer. Her therapy was switched from tamoxifen to an aromatase inhibitor, an alternative form of hormonal treatment in postmenopausal women with breast cancer.

With no history of either cancer in her family, Dunlop was surprised by the diagnosis. But the number of treatment options she had available to her and the positive outlook she and her oncologist Dr. Gerado Colon-Otero shared carried her through. Now her cancers are in remission, and she is spending as much time as she can in her garden.

"It's so hard to put into words how lucky I feel to be in remission — I feel so fortunate to still be around," says Dunlop.

Thanks to advances in treatments over the past few years, many cancer patients are getting back to what's important in their lives. What used to be a dire diagnosis now is often one of hope because of the promising drugs and therapies oncologists can offer.

"A diagnosis of a metastatic cancer used to be thought of as equivalent to a death sentence 30 years ago," says Dr. Colon-Otero, oncologist at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville. "That is not the case any more. We have more treatment options these days. Instead of seeing patients with short survival, more and more are having prolonged survival that includes multiple treatments over time."



Breast and ovarian cancer survivor
Arlene Dunlop says her optimism
has helped her live with cancer.

This issue of **together** newsletter was sponsored by Join the Journey, a Rochester Minnesota-based non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness of breast cancer among women of all ages and supporting area breast cancer survivors.



Family Fights Breast Cancer Together

By Chris Hinz

Janet Vittone doesn't have to look any further than her family portrait to know about breast cancer. After all, four of the five women — Vittone, her mother and two of her sisters — have the disease. But what is truly breathtaking about this picture is that they were all diagnosed within one year.

Just as Vittone, a Mayo Clinic Rochester physician, was finishing her own post-chemotherapy radiation in 2002, her younger sister, Jill, and then her mother, Charlotte, learned that they too had breast cancer. If that wasn't enough, by the end of the year, her oldest sister, Julann, would hear the same news.

One-by-one, at Vittone's insistence, they traveled from their home turf in Michigan to Mayo Clinic's Breast Diagnostic Center in Rochester, Minn. Several diagnostic tests confirmed the suspicious mammograms and biopsies they saw back home. Mayo surgeons followed up immediately with a mastectomy on Jill and lumpectomy on Charlotte.

When Julann underwent a double preventive mastectomy, little did she suspect that Mayo surgeons would find a previously undetected lobular cancer. Since this type of malignancy is harder to pinpoint than more common ductal carcinomas, finding and removing it was a lucky stroke. They caught it at stage one.

Such timely action can do much for a woman's peace of mind, as can having proximity to important ancillary services. In time, the Vittones tapped Mayo's genetic counselors to assess their individual risks. The sisters had no clues as to their mother's family health history since she was adopted. But they were able to determine — from Vittone's index blood sample — that none carried BRCA1 or BRCA2 — the only abnormal genes known to significantly increase the risk for breast and ovarian cancers.

Even so, Vittone and her older sister underwent preventive hysterectomies. In addition, like Julann, Jill and their only cancer-free sibling, Jean, she opted for a preventive mastectomy on her remaining breast, a step she suggests to others.



In 2002 Julann (upper left), Janet (upper right) and Jill (bottom left) were all treated for breast cancer at Mayo Clinic along with their mother, Charlotte. Jean (bottom right) opted for a preventive mastectomy.

What advice does this physician and cancer survivor have for others? Be diligent with monthly breast self-exams and undergo screening mammograms. Since Vittone found her lump at age 38, she knows that one is never too young to be proactive. In fact, 25 percent of breast cancer occurs in women under 40, regardless of familial connections.

Around five years later, the sisters and their mother remain cancer-free and strive to use their stories as a means to educate women about the importance of screening and early detection. "When I bring up my family, some of my patients even start to cry," Vittone says. "I just say, 'It's OK — we're all fine.' Then I use our experience to educate them about their own breasts."

Eating Well With Cancer

By Jacalyn See, registered dietitian

Q. If someone does not eat meat or finds that cancer treatment affects the taste of meat, what are some alternative sources of protein?

A. Many people find the taste of meat unappetizing during or after cancer treatment or simply choose not to eat meat. Not eating meat is okay as long as you get protein from other sources, including:

- Dairy products, such as cheese, milk, cottage cheese, yogurt
- Eggs
- Fish
- Legumes, which include all sorts of dry beans, peas and peanuts/peanut butter
- Nuts
- Poultry
- Shellfish
- Soy foods, including veggie burgers and tofu (soybeans are legumes)

Some people find the taste of meat more appealing when it is mixed with other foods in a casserole, stew, stir-fry or chili. Flavor can be enhanced by using condiments such as soy sauce or barbecue sauce. Experimenting may be necessary to find new tastes that appeal to you. If the odor of meat is the cause, try protein foods eaten cold or at room temperature such as tuna salad, deviled eggs, cheese or cold meats.

Adding Flavor to Help Enhance Appetite

Cancer treatment can decrease one's appetite or alter one's taste. Tangy seasonings or savory herbs can enhance the flavor of foods. Marinating (soaking foods in seasoned liquid) can add flavor and tenderness to meats and vegetables. Use marinades to make bland foods more interesting or to mask other flavors.

Soy Sauce Marinade

1/2 cup soy sauce
1/2 cup water
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon salad oil
1/4 teaspoon liquid hot pepper sauce (optional)
1 garlic clove (crushed)
Dash of pepper

Combine ingredients. Use to marinate beef, pork or chicken before cooking.
Makes 1-1/4 cups marinade.

Vegetable Marinade

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
6 tablespoons lemon juice or vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon onion juice (or 1/4 onion, chopped)

Combine ingredients. Makes about 1/2 cup marinade for use on raw or cooked vegetables.

Breast & Gynecologic Cancer Support Opportunities

When faced with cancer, many individuals benefit from sharing their stories with others who can relate through similar cancer experiences. The below featured breast and gynecologic cancer support opportunities offer a support network for women and their families when they may need it most.

Arizona

Breast

Reaching Out

This American Cancer Society program supports women with breast cancer during and after treatment. Meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month at Banner Desert Medical Center, Radiation Oncology Dept., first floor, 1400 S. Dobson Rd., Mesa, Ariz. For more information, call 480-512-5578.

Reaching Out Together

Offering support to spouses of breast cancer patients, this group meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the Cancer Resource Center, 18700 N. 64 Dr., Suite #105, Glendale, Ariz. For more information, call 623-561-7123.

Reach to Recovery

American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery program helps individuals with breast cancer cope with their diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Trained volunteers include breast cancer survivors who have not only survived the disease, but those who continue to live productive lives. For more information on this nationwide program, call 800-227-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

Bosom Buddies

This survivor-to-survivor support program is designed to inform, educate and provide emotional support to women diagnosed with breast cancer. Meetings are held the third Saturday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon at Simon Medical Imaging, 9201 E. Mountain View Rd., Suite 137, Scottsdale, Ariz. For more information or for additional Arizona meeting locations, call 480-473-4835 or visit www.bosombuddies-az.org.

Gynecologic

Sun City Support Group

Open to the public for support and discussion, this group offers support for gynecologic cancer survivors the first Thursday of the month from 1 to 3 p.m. at Sun Health Community Education Center, 13632 N. 99th Ave., Phoenix. For more information, call 623-876-4999.

Phoenix Ovarian Network Group

Patients and family members meet to discuss support services and the latest treatment options during these meetings held the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Wellness Community Center, 360 East Palm Ln., Phoenix. For more information, call 602-712-1006.

Florida

Breast

Ribbons and Roses Breast Cancer Support Group

Providing mutual support and social interaction for women with breast cancer, this group meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the last Tuesday of the month at the Pablo Creek Regional Library, 13295 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville, Fla. For more information, call 904-542-7857.

Breast Cancer Support Group

Professional guest speakers offer support to women affected by breast cancer during this support group held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. the first Monday of the month at Baptist Medical Center, 800 Prudential Dr., Jacksonville, Fla. For more information, call 904-627-1592.

Bosom Buddies

This survivor-to-survivor support program is designed to inform, educate and provide emotional support to women diagnosed with breast cancer. Meetings are held Mondays from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Womens Center of Jacksonville, 5644 Colcord Ave., Jacksonville, Fla. For more information, call 904-722-3000.

Gynecologic

Gynecological Cancer Support Group

This group provides mutual support and social interaction for women with gynecological cancer. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Mayo Clinic, Cannady Bldg., 4500 San Pablo Rd., Jacksonville, Fla. For more information, call 904-953-2978.

Minnesota

Breast

Breast Cancer Support Group

Women with breast cancer can share their emotions and experiences during these meetings held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month at the Sandra J. Schulze American Cancer Society Hope Lodge, 411 Second St. N.W., Rochester, Minn. For more information, call 800-227-2345.

Gynecologic

Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA) Support Groups

Young Survivors Network

Offering support for issues faced by young ovarian cancer survivors, the Young Survivors Network meets the third Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA) office, 4604 Chicago Ave. South, Minneapolis.

Lois Wooden Ovarian Cancer Support Group

The Lois Wooden Ovarian Cancer Support Group meets the first and third Wednesday of the month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at United Hospital, Cancer Resource Center, 550 Osborne Road, Fridley, Minn.

Ovarian Cancer Support Group

This support group meets the first and third Tuesday of the month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Macalester College, Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul.

Monticello Daytime Ovarian Cancer Support Group

This daytime group for women living with ovarian cancer meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon at 261 East Broadway, Monticello, Minn.

Daughter's Group

This support group for women who have lost their mothers to ovarian cancer meets the third Wednesday of the month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the MOCA office, 4604 Chicago Ave. South, Minneapolis.

Coming Soon: Southeastern Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Survivors Support Group

For more information, visit www.mnovarian.org.

For more information on the above MOCA support groups, call 612-822-0500, e-mail klarson@mnovarian.org, or visit www.mnovarian.org.

Pink Ribbon Mentorship Program

Riding a wave of concern for others in their situation, members of Rochester's "Making Waves" dragon boat team of breast cancer survivors worked with Mayo Clinic Volunteer Services to pilot the Pink Ribbon Mentorship Program in Rochester, Minn. Volunteer mentors are trained to provide encouragement to breast cancer patients and their support networks — from treatment through recovery.

A grassroots, patient-generated program, all mentors have received breast cancer treatment at Mayo Clinic. Founded in December 2006, the program currently has 22 volunteer mentors but is seeking more. To date, the program has assisted nearly 75 women.

Mentors who are also survivors are uniquely prepared for their work through their own experiences. They know the emotional and physical challenges that accompany breast cancer first-hand, which helps them prepare for the in-person emotional, informational and experiential support that they provide.

This program is a collaborative effort between Mayo Clinic and Join the Journey and the American Cancer Society.

For more information, call 507-538-9950 or e-mail pinkribbonmentors@mayo.edu.





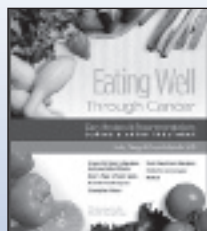
Cancer Terms

Aromatase inhibitors	Aromatase inhibitors are used as a type of hormone therapy for postmenopausal women who have hormone-dependent breast cancer.
Ductal carcinoma	The most common type of breast cancer. It begins in the cells that line the milk ducts in the breast.
Hysterectomy	Surgery to remove the uterus and, sometimes, the cervix.
Luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LH-RH) agonist	A drug that inhibits the secretion of sex hormones. In women, LH-RH agonist causes the levels of estrogen and other sex hormones to fall.
Lobular carcinoma	Cancer that begins in the lobules (the glands that make milk) of the breast.
Lumpectomy	Surgery to remove the tumor and a small amount of normal tissue around it.
Modified radical mastectomy	Surgery for breast cancer in which the breast, most or all of the lymph nodes under the arm, and the lining over the chest muscles are removed.
Radical mastectomy	Surgery for breast cancer in which the breast, chest muscles, and all of the lymph nodes under the arm are removed.

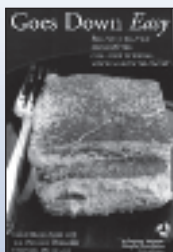
Definitions obtained from <http://www.cancer.gov>.

Resources

Cookbooks



Eating Well Through Cancer: Easy Recipes and Recommendations
by Holly Clegg and Gerald Miletello



Goes Down Easy
by Elise Mecklinger with The Princess Margaret Hospital Dietitians



What to Eat if You Have Cancer: Healing Foods That Boost Your Immune System
by Maureen Keane and Daniella Chace

Web Sites

People Living with Cancer
www.plwc.org

Chemocare
www.chemocare.com

Durable Medical Equipment

When you need a little extra help

By **Jeri Lensing**



Durable medical equipment is equipment designed for in-home use. Examples include hospital beds, walkers, commodes, and wheel chairs. Some pieces are available to rent, such as hospital beds, while others, such as commodes, need to be purchased.

Durable medical equipment is often used to assist in recovery following surgery, during treatment or to enhance comfort care. It is important to discuss the need or desire to use durable medical equipment with a patient's health care team in order to determine the best type of equipment for the circumstance.

Durable medical equipment insurance coverage varies with insurance plans. Before placing an order with a medical supply company, it is important to become familiar with the patient's insurance coverage plan. All insurance plans including Medicare and private payers require a written prescription from a patient's health care provider. The organization or agency will order the equipment from a medical supply company, which typically delivers to a patient's home. Upon discharge, a patient's discharge team may be responsible for ordering equipment for use at home.

American Cancer Society Navigators can help uninsured patients, or those whose plans do not include durable medical equipment coverage by locating loan closets or organizations that can help defray costs of renting or purchasing durable medical equipment.

A loan closet is a small collection of donated medical equipment typically available free of charge and maintained by a local volunteer organization.



When borrowing from a loan closet, consider the following:

- Check the equipment for missing pieces or loose screws
- Find out who maintains the equipment as well as if and when it has had a safety check
- Make sure that the equipment has been thoroughly cleaned
- Determine who is responsible if the equipment breaks during use

For more information on durable medical equipment, contact a local American Cancer Society Navigator at 800-227-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.



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Arizona*



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Calendar of Events

September

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation
800-366-2223 • www.candlelighters.org

Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month

Gynecologic Cancer Foundation
800-444-4441 • www.thegcf.org

Leukemia and Lymphoma Awareness Month

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
800-955-4572 • www.LLS.org

National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

National Ovarian Cancer Coalition
888-OVARIAN • www.ovarian.org

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

National Prostate Cancer Coalition
888-245-9455 • www.fightprostatecancer.org

16 Join the Journey Ten Mile Breast Cancer Awareness Walk

16-22 Prostate Cancer Awareness Week

Prostate Cancer Education Council
866-477-6788 • www.pcaw.com

October

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

19 National Mammography Day
www.nbcam.org

November

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Lung Cancer Alliance
800-298-2436 • www.lungcanceralliance.org

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
877-272-6226 • www.pancan.org

3 Lymphoma Workshop: Understanding Lymphoma Basics and Current Treatment Options

Bloomington, Minn • 800-500-9976
www.lymphoma.org/MNworkshop2007

3 Women's Cancers 2007: Merging Science and Care Conference

Event Spotlight

September 16, 2007

Join the Journey Ten Mile Breast Cancer Awareness Walk Rochester, Minn.

Join the Journey will sponsor its third annual Ten Mile Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on Sunday, September 16, 2007, from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mayo High School in Rochester, Minn.

Over 700 participated in the 2006 walk, which raised over \$77,000, enabling the group to provide 2,000 copies of *Mayo Clinic's Guide to Women's Cancers* to newly-diagnosed breast cancer patients.

For more information, visit www.jointhejourney.us, call 507-281-4800, or e-mail jointhejourney@charter.net.

November 3, 2007

Women's Cancers 2007: Merging Science and Care Rochester, Minn.

Mayo Clinic Women's Cancer Program will host Women's Cancers 2007: Merging Science and Care on Saturday, Nov. 3. This educational event will focus on current topics in cancer care, promising research and ways to cope with cancer and its effects.

This year's keynote presenter is DeeDee Jonrowe, who is a leading competitive dog-sled racer and a breast cancer survivor. For more information or to register, call 507-266-4886.

together

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The mission of Mayo Clinic Cancer Center is to provide compassionate, state-of-the-art care for the patient with cancer today and continued advancements in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure of cancer in the future. The programs and services of the Cancer Center span the three Mayo Clinic campuses in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota.

together newsletter provides educational information for cancer patients, their family, caregivers and friends. Physicians, staff and cancer patients write the articles. To view the **together** newsletter online, visit www.mayoclinic.org/cancer-education-rst.

To submit story ideas, provide feedback or unsubscribe, call 507-266-9288 or e-mail canceredprogram@mayo.edu.



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