

HOW TO REACH US

If you have any suggestions for topics, articles or just need to talk to us, please feel free to contact us. You can reach **LET'S TALK..... NEWSLETTER** at Forum Health's Cancer CareCenters by calling (330) 884-4152 or (800) 222-4603.

WE'RE THERE FOR YOU

Written by Nancy L. Hospodar, Corporate Clinical Executive, Cancer Services

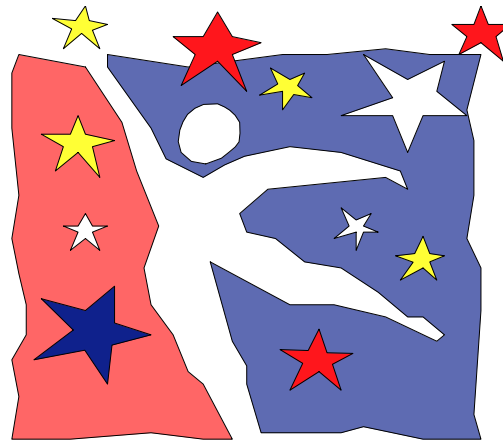
The Cancer CareCenters at Forum Health are very unique. Our oncologists (radiation, medical and pediatric) are all hospital based. This allows all services to be provided at our hospital sites. It also gives our cancer specialists the opportunity to interact with other doctors such as surgeons, pulmonologists, infectious disease specialists and other subspecialists in caring for patients.

The Cancer CareCenters are managed by one program director at both Northside Medical Center and Trumbull Memorial Hospital allowing the same outstanding standard of care. The Corporate Clinical Executive of Cancer Services works very closely with the physicians and staff at both hospitals ensuring that clinical excellence and compassionate care is provided.

The Cancer Care Team is made up of doctors that are cancer specialists, specially trained and certified oncology nurses, master's prepared oncology nurses, patient and community educator, clinical oncology pharmacists, certified radiation therapy technologists, dosimetrists, physicists, social workers, dietitians, and medical assistants. We all work together to provide service to our cancer patients and families.

We provide many community programs independently and in collaboration with the American Cancer Society. Our philosophy is to educate and support the community at large with the goal of cancer prevention and early detection and support. Our team of experts are available at any time as a resource.

Our team approach to care lightens the burden for our patients and makes an easier journey throughout treatment and beyond.



NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVOR'S DAY AND THE RELAY FOR LIFE

*Written by Deborah M. Dashko, RN, BA, LPC, CPDS,
OCN, CHES, HNC*

It's a time for remembrance and a time for celebration! Friday, May 16th promises to be the biggest and best National Cancer Survivor's Day (NCSD) ever! It will be part of the Relay for Life (RFL) at the Boardman Middle School on Market St. in Boardman, Ohio. On this day, we pause to celebrate the lives of all the people around the world who are living with a history of cancer, and focus attention on the issues of survivorship. It is also a time to acknowledge those professionals dedicated to cancer treatment, research and support services. A "survivor" is anyone living with a history of cancer.....from the moment of diagnosis throughout the remainder of life.

I am extending a warm invitation to everyone in our area to come celebrate the precious "gift of life". The Relay for Life, which is the premier fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, will start at 6:00 PM. National Cancer Survivor's Day is "kicked off" at the opening ceremonies of Relay For Life. This evening will be filled with joy, fun and camaraderie. There will be some wonderful surprises, food, laughter and entertainment. The Struthers Singers will be back again this year to perform. We need you to be part of this! We need our seasoned survivors to welcome our new survivors with hope and encouragement. Walter Mock, a leukemia cancer survivor of Akron, is our keynote speaker. This event promises to bring hope, inspiration and empowerment.

So mark your calendar now! You won't want to miss it. Bring your family and get ready to PARTY!

OTHER RELAYS FOR LIFE IN MAHONING, TRUMBULL AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES INCLUDE:

- April 25-26 •Youngstown State University
- May 9-10 •Austintown Middle School
•Niles McKinley High School
- May 16-17 •Warren Harding
- May 30-31 •Liberty High School
- June 6-7 •Cortland/Lakeview High School
•East Liverpool High School
- June 20-21 •HispanicRelay/CampbellHigh School
- June27-28 •Sebring High School
Columbiana/Columbiana County Fairgrounds
•Lisbon/Columbiana County Fairgrounds
- August 29-30 •Lordstown High School

HEREDITARY RISK OF BREAST AND OVARIAN CANCER

Written by Heather Mikesell, M.S., Genetic Consultant

While the majority of women with breast or ovarian cancer develop the disease sporadically, between 5 – 10% develop the disease because they have a genetic alteration, or mutation. We all have genetic blueprints, or genes, that code for our unique characteristics like eye and hair color and that tell our body how to function and develop. Some of our genes regulate cell growth and division. If there is a mutation in one of these genes, cells may grow and divide inappropriately, possibly leading to cancer. Mutations in two such genes, BRCA1 and BRCA2, have been associated with an increase in risk for developing cancer, and may be inherited from an individual's father or mother. In fact, half of women with hereditary risk inherited the mutation from their father, and there is often little or no history of breast or ovarian cancer in their mother's family.

The risk for developing breast cancer by the age of 70 in the general population is approximately 10%. However, studies have shown that if a woman has

a mutation in either BRCA1 or BRCA2, her chance of developing breast cancer by age 70 approaches 56% - 87%. Her risk for ovarian cancer is also increased (from less than 2% to 27% - 44%). Therefore, knowledge of a mutation in BRCA1 or BRCA2 is still important for women already diagnosed with breast cancer since they are at an increased risk for a second breast cancer or ovarian cancer. Measures can be taken to reduce their risks.

Based on results of medical studies, specific medical management recommendations have been made for women who carry a mutation in either BRCA1 or BRCA2 including:

- increased surveillance
- chemoprevention, such as the use of the drug tamoxifen
- risk-reducing surgery, such as mastectomy and/or oophorectomy

The American Society of Clinical Oncology recommends that genetic testing be offered when:

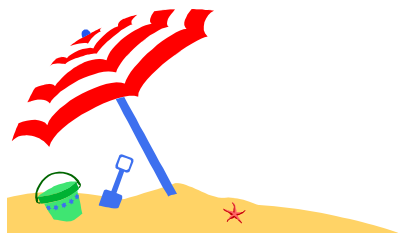
- the chance that the test will identify a mutation in either BRCA1 or BRCA2 is 10% or greater (based on family and medical history)
- the test can be adequately interpreted
- the test result will influence medical management of the patient or relatives.

These conditions may be met in families where two or more women have breast cancer diagnosed before age 50 or ovarian cancer diagnosed at any age. It is critical to accurately assess any family history for younger women diagnosed with breast cancer, or ovarian cancer at any age, in order to identify possible hereditary risk. Moreover, women who learn that they did not inherit the mutation identified in their family also benefit, because their risk will be reduced to approximately the general population risk, despite their family history (their specific risk should be modified based on their medical, environmental and reproductive history).

Many individuals who seek information about genetics and cancer express concern over the implications of a positive test for insurance and employment. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 prohibits group health plans from denying or limiting coverage based on genetic information. In addition, the majority of states, including Ohio, have passed laws to provide further protection against "genetic discrimination".

Recent studies have demonstrated that genetic susceptibility testing is no more likely to result in adverse consequences for health insurance or employment than other medical tests.

Individuals interested in having their family history assessed for possible hereditary risk of cancer should talk with their doctor, or contact Heather Mikesell, M.S., Genetic Consultant at Forum Health (330-884-3106).



MAY IS NATIONAL SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

In honor of National Skin Cancer Awareness Month, Forum Health's Cancer CareCenters, in collaboration with the American Cancer Society are holding various skin screenings throughout Mahoning and Trumbull counties during the month.

Mahoning County:

•Wednesday, May 28th, 5:00 to 7:00 PM, at Youngstown Community Health Center

Trumbull County:

•Tuesday, May 6th, 6:00 – 8:00 PM at St. Joseph Cancer Center

For more information and to schedule an appointment today, please call the American Cancer Society at (888) 227-6446.

MEMORIAL SERVICES TO BE HELD

Written by Rev. Jim Melick, ThD, BCC, Corporate Director of Pastoral Services

Research shows us that the rates for new cancer cases and deaths are declining in the United States, but some are still losing the battle of cancer. Every person who dies leaves behind family and friends who experience grief as a result of their loss. For this reason Forum Health has two planned memorial services.

This year's Memorial Service for Northside/Tod Hospitals and the Western Reserve Care System will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Youngstown at 3 PM., April 27, 2003.

A Memorial Service for Trumbull Memorial and Hillside hospitals will be held Sunday, May 4, 2003. This service will be held at SS.Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Warren at 3 PM.

The Memorial Services will offer an opportunity for those attending to be surrounded by others, who have experienced grief from the loss of a loved one.

The service for comfort and healing will provide a special time to honor, remember and celebrate the life of a loved one or friend.

HOW SAFE ARE MACROBIOTIC DIETS AND SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS

Written by Debbie Gilbert, Dietitian, MS, RD, LD

At recent cancer programs, the following questions were asked by participants.

Will following a macrobiotic diet help cure my cancer?

A macrobiotic diet is generally vegetarian and consists largely of whole grains, cereals and cooked vegetables, usually organically grown, with occasional helpings of fresh whitemeat fish, nut, seeds, pickles, Asian condiments and nonstimulating and nonaromatic teas. Macrobiotic principles also prescribe specific ways of cooking food using pot, pans and utensils made only from certain materials such as wood, glass, ceramic, stainless steel and enameled pieces.

There is no scientific evidence that a macrobiotic diet is effective in treating cancer. It can lower fat intake and increase fiber, so it can provide general health benefits associated with low fat, high fiber diets. However, strict macrobiotic diets that include no animal products may result in nutritional deficiencies such as inadequate intake of protein, Vit D, zinc, calcium, iron, and vitamin B12. The danger may be magnified for people with cancer who often have increased nutritional and caloric requirements. Relying on this type of treatment alone, and avoiding conventional medical care may have serious health consequences.

What is the role of shiitake mushroom and cancer?

Shiitake mushrooms, or commonly known as Japanese mushrooms, are the second most commonly cultivated edible mushroom in the world. Extracts from the mushroom, and sometimes the whole mushrooms itself, are used in herbal remedies.

In the current news, Shiitake mushrooms are being promoted to fight the development and progression of cancer and AIDS by boosting the body's immune system. These mushrooms are also said to help prevent heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels and treating infections by producing interferon (a group of natural proteins that inhibits viruses from multiplying).

Animal studies have found antitumor, cholesterol lowering, and virus inhibiting effects of the active compounds in shiitake mushrooms. However, clinical studies are needed to determine if these effects can be beneficial for people with cancer and other diseases. More human trials are necessary to understand which compounds have antitumor effects for which type of cancers and at what dosages.

Are there any possible problems or complications?

Shiitake mushrooms, and their extracts are general considered safe, but some people have been known to develop allergic reactions affecting the skin, nose, throat and lungs.

Source: American Cancer Society's Guide to Complementary and Alternative Cancer Methods. Copyright American Cancer Society 2000.

LET FREEDOM RING!

Written by Deborah M. Dashko, RN, BA, LPC, CPDS, OCN, CHES, HNC

I have been thinking a lot about freedom over the past few weeks. I am sure it has everything to do with our country being at war. It has everything to do with the soldiers, men and women, who are out there fighting for each and every one of us. My thoughts and prayers go out to them and their families, for whom I am so grateful.

What does freedom mean to you? Is it living in America, with all it's rights and opportunities? Is it inner liberation.... from fear, doubt, anger, pride, prejudice, and self-obsession? Is freedom the sum of a thousand liberties we take for granted? Like opening a bank account, enrolling in a course to learn something new, wearing clothing we like, changing doctors or religions or your hair color, saying NO! Half the world has no idea what it means to have a choice. How fortunate are we?

The great thing is that we have freedom! The pity is that we often forget that. This month, let us praise our freedom....freedom of soul, body, mind, speech and thought. Let us thank our Higher Power.

In Webster's dictionary, "freedom" is defined as the condition of being free; at liberty; not bound or constrained; not under obligation or necessity. It is also defined as political independence; possession of civil rights; unrestricted use or access. Below are some practical suggestions to incorporate "freedom" into our lives. Try them!

- Live free: Go for a day without spending money. Find free activities, barter your services; make do with what you already own.
- Release whatever you may be holding back...old attitudes, false assumptions, a dated haircut, tight shoes.
- Freedom of speech is your essential right. Exercise it on behalf of those without a voice...children, the elderly, the forgotten, the oppressed.
- Remember the lyrics "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." Get rid of whatever isn't working and get ready to soar!
- Yoga is an ancient path to inner freedom. Try 15 to 30 minutes of meditation and postures daily. Gradually increase the time.
- Experience how lucky you are to live in a free society. Log onto www.hrw.org (Human Rights Watch) to see examples of oppression abroad and learn what you can do to help.
- Be a rebel with a cause. Fight dogmatism, repression, and abuse wherever you see it, begin with yourself. If necessary, start an inner revolution.

