



St. Joseph's Cancer Survivor Corner

St. Joseph Medical Center, The Cancer Institute

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March is Colorectal Awareness Month

Colon Cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed among men and women in the United States. Risk factors include age, most colon cancers are diagnosed in individuals age fifty and greater, a history of polyps or previous colon cancer, bowel disease such as inflammatory bowel disease, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, family history, certain genetic syndromes and race and ethnic background. African Americans and Jewish people of Eastern European descent are at greater risk. There are certain lifestyle related risk factors. These include a diet high in red meat, processed meat such as hot dogs, bologna and lunchmeat and meats cooked at high temperatures such as grilled meats, lack of exercise, being overweight, smoking, heavy alcohol use and Type 2 diabetes. To reduce your risk of colon cancer, speak to your doctor if you have a family or personal history of colon cancer and follow the recommended screening guidelines.

For individuals without a family or personal history of colon cancer or bowel disease, colonoscopy is recommended starting at age 50 and then every 10 years. Maintain a healthy diet high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, reduce high fat foods, exercise thirty minutes every day five days a week and control weight gain. Some warning signs include rectal bleeding or blood in your stool, persistent discomfort in the abdomen such as gas, cramps or pain, abdominal pain during a bowel movement, change in bowel habits including diarrhea and constipation, bowel diseases, fatigue, weakness or shortness of breath. If you are due for a screening, call you doctor today and schedule one!

To learn more about the advances in the treatment for Colorectal cancer come to our free educational program "Sharing, Caring and Surviving Colon Cancer – New Advances in Care" on March 16, 2010, 5:30p.m.– 8:30p.m. in the St. Joseph Medical Center, Noppenberger Auditorium. For more information call Donna Costa at 410-427-2548.



Distress Thermometer: What is it?

A diagnosis of cancer can bring many different feelings including anxiety, fear, worry, anger, loneliness and distress. Often diagnosis and treatment happen rather quickly not allowing for one to process or even be aware of their feelings during this time. Scheduling tests, surgery, radiation and chemotherapy can be very time consuming and overwhelming. Stopping and thinking about all that is happening may not occur in the beginning of the treatment process. That is why the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) recommends using the Distress Thermometer also known as the Brief Screening Tool and Problem List to assess distress in cancer patients at initial diagnosis and at various intervals during treatment. The tool assesses practical, family, emotional, spiritual/religious and physical problems. These problems can then be evaluated and addressed by social workers, nurses, nutritionists, spiritual care chaplains and physicians. If you are experiencing distress, please notify one of your team members so they can assist you.

To receive this newsletter electronically, please send your email address to rosemarymenton@catholichealth.net.

Resources for Cancer Survivors

www.cancerrecovery.org

Daily Devotions

www.thelydiaproject.org

www.survivorship.cancer.gov

www.cancer.net/patient/survivorship

www.canceradvocacy.org

NCCS

www.cancercare.org

www.Livestrong.org

Have you heard?

- Ballroom dancing classes are offered for free for patients and family members Thursday nights from 7-8 p.m. in Serpick Infusion
- The End of Treatment Class is offered twice a week for patients who have finished all of their treatment
- The Lydia Project offers women cancer patients a handmade quilted bag for free- for more info check with the Survivorship Nurse
- St. Joseph Survivorship Program Nurse, Rose Menton can be reached at 410-427-2011
- The book lending library is located in the infusion waiting room
- Lagniappe Project supportive Art Experiences during chemotherapy