



THE HAROLD LEEVER
REGIONAL CANCER
CENTER
2002-2017

Spring 2017

Aware!

Prevention and awareness information from The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center, a joint partnership of Saint Mary's Hospital and Waterbury Hospital



Five Things Every Woman Needs to Know about Breast and Lung Cancer

in this Issue

- Page 2** Ask the Doctors
- Page 3** Cancer Screening Guidelines for Women
- Page 4** Creating a Nutritional Arsenal of Superfoods in your Kitchen
- Page 6** Celebrating 15 Years of Care
- Page 7** HLRCC Happenings
- Page 9** A Community of Caring
- Page 10** Community Events & Monthly Support Groups

One in three women will develop cancer in her lifetime.

But there is hope. With many screening tools available to women of all ages and with greater awareness of our own bodies, prevention and early intervention are becoming increasingly possible.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when it comes to two of the most common forms of cancer affecting women:

1 Breast cancer is NOT the leading form of cancer deaths among women.

Surprised? With pink ribbons adorning just about everything, there's much awareness about the disease. But when it comes to women's cancer deaths, the biggest cause is lung cancer, which claims twice as many women every year as breast cancer.

Part of this can be attributed to the fact that lung cancers are most often detected in their advanced stages. Early detection and quick interventions can have a huge impact. The Leever Cancer Center, working with area pulmonologists and radiologists, has recently championed a lung cancer screening program that's now being used by area physicians to find high-risk patients who are eligible to receive a low-dose CT scan. Ask your doctor how this test (covered by Medicare and Medicaid) can help detect the disease in its most treatable stages.

2 There's an easy way to prevent some lung cancers – and it has NOTHING to do with smoking.

So are cigarettes and secondhand exposure the only "smoking" guns when it comes to lung cancer? Experts say that although smoking continues to be the greatest risk factor (learn about our free ongoing

Continued on page 2 ▶

ask the Doctors

Ferdinando (Fred) Urbano, MD, Pulmonologist, Waterbury Pulmonary Associates and Elisa Benzoni, DO, Obstetrician-Gynecologist, Specialists in Women's Health Care, PC, answer your questions about smoking and how family history can impact your health.



Ferdinando (Fred) Urbano, MD
Pulmonologist,
Waterbury Pulmonary
Associates

Q I've been a two-pack-a-day smoker for almost 30 years. Does it really matter whether I quit or not at this point? Isn't the damage already done?

Dr. Urbano: You'll be glad to know that the body begins the long process of healing itself almost immediately after your last cigarette. The American Lung Association says that within 20 minutes of quitting, your heart rate drops to a normal level. Within two weeks to three months, your lung function begins to improve. Within five to 15 years of quitting, your risk of stroke is decreased to that of a non-smoker – and within 10 years, your risk of dying from lung cancer is cut down to about half that of a smoker's. So the answer is no – it's never too late to reap the benefits of quitting.

To learn more about Leever's free ongoing smoking cessation program, visit the calendar on our website: leevercancercenter.org.



Elisa Benzoni, DO
Obstetrician-
Gynecologist,
Specialists in Women's
Health Care, PC

Q I am 40 and recently had my first mammogram. The registration paperwork asked questions about my family history. I was prepared to report that my aunt had breast cancer, but the level of detail they wanted to know – did she carry gene mutations, what type of cancer (thought all breast cancers were the same!) and age of diagnosis – went well beyond my knowledge! Is it enough to say that my aunt had cancer – or is this level of information crucial?

Dr. Benzoni: If you have the ability to speak with your aunt, I would highly recommend doing so. Ask her not only for the details of her own illness, but find out what other cancers and illnesses have been in prior generations – grandparents and other aunts and uncles. Tracking this information down might not be easy but may be well worth it in the end.

Think of every additional piece of information you uncover as another clue doctors can use to more accurately screen or treat you should you develop breast cancer yourself. And don't forget to write down your own health history to pass down to your children.

Five Things... Continued from page 1

smoking cessation groups at leevercancercenter.org), nearly 15 percent of lung cancers are found in people who have never picked up a cigarette in their life. Why?

While we may not fully understand all the reasons, we do know of one risk agent lurking in many Connecticut homes. It's radon... and long-term exposure to high levels can increase your lung cancer risk. Testing your home for this odorless gas is a simple way to determine if a mitigation system is needed to keep your family breathing safely.

3 The rate of female breast cancer in Connecticut is higher than in most other states.

It's not known for sure why, but it's an important statistic to remind us of the importance of staying on top of your mammogram schedule.

4 You are your own breast advocate.

For many years breast screening guidelines have been subject to debate among leading experts.

Each month, our Leever Breast Program Leadership Group meets to ensure that Leever continues to achieve the high standards set forth by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers. Having carefully studied and considered the various guidelines recommended by several professional societies, our Leever breast specialists urge all women over the age of 40 to receive annual mammograms. Women with a strong family history of breast cancer should talk with their doctor about screening at earlier ages.

But guidelines and screening tools are only effective when used. When it comes to your own health, you are your own best advocate. Be aware of

Cancer Screening Guidelines *for women*

The following cancer screening guidelines* are recommended for women at average risk for cancer (unless otherwise specified) and without any specific symptoms. Women who are at increased risk for certain cancers may need to follow a different screening schedule, such as starting at an earlier age or being screened more often. Those with symptoms that could be related to cancer should see their doctor right away.

Colon and Rectal Cancer:

Beginning at age 50, follow one of these five testing schedules:

- ▶ Yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT)
- ▶ Flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years
- ▶ Yearly FOBT or FIT, plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years
- ▶ Double-contrast barium enema every 5 years
- ▶ Colonoscopy every 10 years. All positive tests should be followed up with colonoscopy.

Consult your doctor about starting colorectal screening earlier and/or undergoing screening more often if you have risk factors:

- ▶ Personal history of colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps
- ▶ Strong family history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- ▶ Personal history of chronic inflammatory bowel disease
- ▶ Family history of hereditary colorectal cancer syndrome

Lung Cancer:

The American Cancer Society does not recommend tests to check for lung cancer in people who are at average risk. But we do have screening guidelines for those who are at high risk of lung cancer due to cigarette smoking. Screening might be right for you if you:

- ▶ Are 55 to 74 years of age
- ▶ Are in good health
- ▶ Have at least a 30 pack-year smoking history AND are either still smoking or have quit within the last 15 years (A pack-year is the number of cigarette packs smoked

each day multiplied, by the number of years a person has smoked. Someone who smoked a pack of cigarettes per day for 30 years has a 30 pack-year smoking history, as does someone who smoked two packs a day for 15 years.)

Screening is done with an annual low-dose CT scan (LDCT) of the chest. If you fit the list above, talk to a health care provider if you want to start screening.

Breast Cancer:

- ▶ Yearly mammograms starting at age 40
- ▶ Clinical breast exam (CBE) should be part of a periodic health exam every year for women 40 and older.
- ▶ Breast self-exam (BSE) is an option for women starting in their 20s; women should know how their breasts normally feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider.

Women at increased risk should talk with their doctor about the benefits and limitations of starting mammography screening earlier and/or having additional tests (i.e., breast ultrasound and MRI).

Cervical Cancer:

- ▶ All women should begin cervical cancer screening about three years after beginning vaginal intercourse but no later than 21 years of age.
- ▶ Screening should be done every year with the regular Pap test or every two years using the newer liquid-based Pap test. In addition, the HPV test is also recommended every three years.

Endometrial (Uterine) Cancer:

The American Cancer Society recommends that at the time of menopause, all women should be informed about the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer and strongly encouraged to report any unexpected bleeding or spotting to their doctors. For women with or at high risk for hereditary non-polyposis colon cancer (HNPCC), annual screening should be offered for endometrial cancer with endometrial biopsy beginning at age 55.

* These are general guidelines. Discuss your personal schedule for screening guidelines with your primary care doctor.

your cancer risk factors and proactively ask for the screenings you need.

5 If you're dense, take action.

Dr. Nancy Cappello, founder of Are You Dense?, explained that about 40 percent of women in the U.S. have dense breast tissue. It's a population of women, she notes, that could benefit from additional screenings to help reveal

tumors that may otherwise remain hidden by dense tissue on a mammogram.

So what to do? Cappello advises all women to request a copy of their mammography report generated by their radiologist. "Connecticut law mandates radiologist reports to include information on breast density. If dense tissue is noted, ask your doctor to order an ultrasound or MRI."

Creating a Nutritional Arsenal of Superfoods in Your Kitchen

By Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO

Many people diagnosed with cancer are besieged with “free advice” from well-meaning friends and family who offer suggestions on foods to eat or avoid that may prevent their cancer from growing or coming back. There are dozens of diets and thousands of supplements being promoted that often lack the clinical evidence to back up their grandiose claims, but with the vast amounts of information on the internet, people are confused and overwhelmed.

What CAN you do to give your body what it needs to reduce inflammation, maintain your immune system, and provide the top disease fighters in the form of antioxidants and phyto (plant) nutrients? You may not need to go any further than your supermarket to buy “superfoods” that provide a powerhouse of disease-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals. They are often more beneficial (and less costly) than taking their extracts in supplement form.

Stock your fridge and pantry with some of the following:

Apples: A great source of fiber and vitamin C, apples also provide cancer-fighting phytochemicals/antioxidants, 30% of which are in the skin. The soluble fiber pectin, as well as insoluble fiber in apples, may play a role in preventing colorectal, lung, breast, and head and neck cancers. As the old saying goes, eat an apple a day and (maybe) keep the doctor away.

Blueberries (and other berries): These little blue fruits pack a powerhouse of antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-cancer muscle. They contain fiber, vitamins C and K, and many cancer-protective phytonutrients. Try to eat a half cup a day, either in a smoothie, your cereal, a salad, or just by themselves.

Broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables: This large and expansive family of vegetables includes broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, turnips, Brussels sprouts, and kale. Their sulfurous smell when cooked comes from sulforaphanes, potent antioxidants being researched for its role in cancer prevention. They also contain vitamin C, vitamin K and lots of fiber. Eat them raw or cooked.

Carrots: Around for over 5000 years, carrots are among the most popular vegetables in the U.S., due to the relatively recent introduction of baby carrots. Rich in beta carotene (giving them their orange color), carrots are also great sources of vitamins A, K and fiber. Shredded carrots add crunch and sweetness to any salad!

Dark green leafy vegetables: Spinach, kale, romaine, greens, chicory, and Swiss chard are packed with fiber,

Eat a Rainbow! 7 out of 10 Americans don't eat enough color.



Goal: Eat one or two foods from each color group daily.

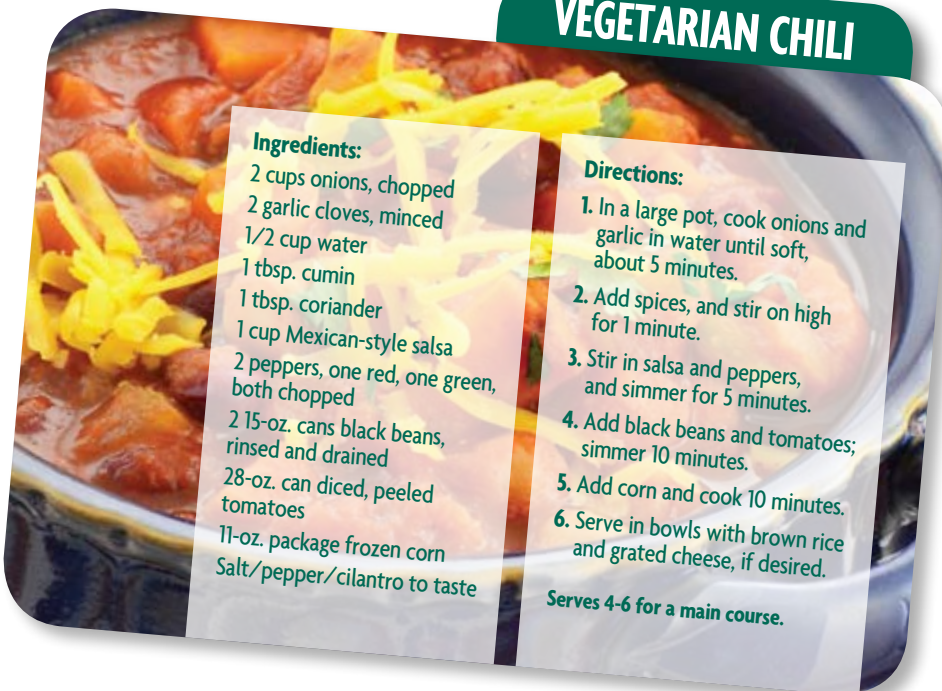
RED BENEFITS: Supports prostate, urinary tract and DNA health. Protects against cancer and heart disease.

ORANGE-YELLOW BENEFITS: Good for eye health, healthy immune function, growth and development.

GREEN BENEFITS: Supports eye health, arterial function, lung health, liver function and cell health. Helps wound healing and gum health.

BLUE-PURPLE BENEFITS: Good for heart, brain, bone, arteries and cognitive health. Fights cancer and supports healthy aging.

VEGETARIAN CHILI



Ingredients:
 2 cups onions, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 1/2 cup water
 1 tbsp. cumin
 1 tbsp. coriander
 1 cup Mexican-style salsa
 2 peppers, one red, one green, both chopped
 2 15-oz. cans black beans, rinsed and drained
 28-oz. can diced, peeled tomatoes
 11-oz. package frozen corn
 Salt/pepper/cilantro to taste

Directions:
 1. In a large pot, cook onions and garlic in water until soft, about 5 minutes.
 2. Add spices, and stir on high for 1 minute.
 3. Stir in salsa and peppers, and simmer for 5 minutes.
 4. Add black beans and tomatoes; simmer 10 minutes.
 5. Add corn and cook 10 minutes.
 6. Serve in bowls with brown rice and grated cheese, if desired.
 Serves 4-6 for a main course.

folate, and carotenoids. They appear to play a role in preventing breast, skin, lung, and stomach cancers, and are delicious cooked or raw.

Dry beans, split peas, and lentils:

They come in a multitude of shapes and colors, and are actually the seeds of legume plants. They contain protein (a half cup gives you the same protein as 1 ounce of meat, fish or chicken), large amounts of fiber, folate, and phytochemicals and may help to prevent colon cancer by maintaining gut health.

Flaxseed: These tiny brown nutty-flavored seeds, which must be ground up, are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids and lignans, which may play a role in blocking hormone-related cancers. They contain protein and fiber, and may also help to lower cholesterol. Add them to your smoothie or cereal.

Garlic: A member of the allium family, along with onions, shallots, scallions, leeks, and chives, garlic is a staple of many cuisines. The active ingredient, allyl sulfide, has been studied for its role in cancer prevention, colon health, and heart disease. For best results, crush the garlic, and allow it to sit for several minutes before using.

Soy: Soy beans, which come in many forms (edamame, tofu, and soy milk, just to name a few), are a staple of the Asian diet. In addition to helping lower cholesterol, they may be protective against colon cancer and hormone-sensitive cancers (breast and prostate). Contrary to what many people believe, they do not need to be avoided by women with hormone sensitive breast cancer if consumed in one of the forms listed.

Winter squash: Known for their rich orange-colored flesh, members of the winter squash family (acorn, butternut and spaghetti, just to name a few) are rich in beta-carotene (plant form of vitamin A), vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. They help prevent eye damage

by filtering out UV rays, and their high antioxidant content appears to help lower the risk of head, neck, and lung cancers.

Tea: Tea comes from the plant *Camellia sinensis*, which is a warm-weather evergreen. Although there are hundreds of varieties, they fall into four basic categories: black, green, oolong, and white. There are many phytochemicals in tea being studied for their role in cancer prevention. Most notable is EGCG (epigallocatechin) in green tea, but black tea is loaded with antioxidants too. Regular tea is a source of caffeine and, like coffee, may need to be restricted in some people.

Tomatoes: Tomatoes are the second most widely consumed vegetable in the U.S. They can be eaten cooked and raw and are a staple in the Mediterranean diet. They are packed with vitamins A and C, potassium, and an antioxidant called lycopene, which gives them their trademark red color. There has been a lot of ongoing research on their role in preventing prostate cancer, especially when cooked.

Nuts: All nuts are great sources of plant protein, healthy fats (omega-3s), fiber, and antioxidants. In particular, walnuts play a significant role in a heart-healthy eating plan. They may also play a role in the prevention of breast and colon cancer, and should be considered an important player in anyone's diet (unless you are allergic!).

Whole grains: There are many whole grains: brown rice, oatmeal, whole wheat, barley, and millet, just to name a few that are available to consumers. They are a great source of fiber, magnesium, B vitamins, and phytochemicals, and are being researched for their role in the prevention of heart disease and cancer. The fiber-rich bran and germ, found only in the whole grain, are where the most nutrition is located. Avoid whole wheat grains if you have celiac disease or are gluten sensitive.

Try to incorporate a few of these foods every day, and change it up daily, to maximize the benefit of the naturally occurring antioxidants and phytochemicals in these superfoods. Think of it as providing a natural defense against disease.

We know that there are no guarantees, but let food and its healing powers be your partner.

Questions about nutrition? Contact Leever's nutritionist, Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO, at 203-575-5510 or email her at ksabbath@leevercancercenter.org.

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF CARE!



Photo: Robert Falchetti Studio

BORN OF NECESSITY, NURTURED BY THE VISIONARY LEADERSHIP OF SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL AND WATERBURY HOSPITAL, and taking root through a spirit of collaboration and a commitment to excellence, The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center turns 15 this year.

"It is an exciting milestone," notes Leever Cancer Center Executive Director Kevin Kniery. "With each passing year, we have added new programs, new technologies, and new protocols that have solidified our position as a leader in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. And while we may pause to reflect on our growth and achievements over the past 15 years, we will certainly not rest on our laurels. Each day, our extraordinary team strives to be better than the day before — to be leaders and innovators, and to offer our patients the very best in cancer care."

The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center is, by design, a community center. It reflects the combined resources and full commitment of Waterbury's two hospitals, united in a fight against cancer that is patient- and family-centered, and driven by exceptional physicians, nurses, care and support teams, and business leaders. It is a hub of activity, offering educational programs, support services, community, and friendship, all anchored by the most advanced cancer-fighting technologies and protocols.

In our first 15 years, we grew our physical footprint with the addition of a 5,000-square-foot PET/CT Diagnostic Center—the first dedicated PET/CT in a radiation oncology department in the state of Connecticut — and conducted a successful "Generations of Hope" capital campaign to bring

The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center is much more than high-tech equipment housed in a beautiful building close to home. Our people are the heart and soul of the Leever Cancer Center: our physicians, medical receptionists, medical assistants, oncology certified nurses, medical dosimetrists, medical physicists, radiation therapists, dieticians, social workers, and administrators. As we've said from the beginning, the Leever Cancer Center is "the right team, right here."

cutting-edge breast cancer therapy to our facility. We established a program and roster of educational speakers and conferences, grew our patient resource library, and expanded our counseling, nutrition, and survivorship services. We strengthened our partnership with the American Cancer Society through their in-house office, and built an impressive list of national accreditations, which includes nods from the American College of Radiology, the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC), and the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. Proudly and significantly, we established "Stepping Forward" in 2012, a program dedicated to the unique needs of cancer survivors.

And so much more.

We have come a long way in our first 15 years, and are excited by the possibilities that the next 15 years hold. Thousands of patients have passed through the doors of the Leever Cancer Center since we opened them on October 8, 2002. Each patient's experience was unique to their individual circumstance. What they found at the Leever Cancer Center, however, was universal: we are — and will always be — a place with heart, in the heart of Greater Waterbury.

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe." — Anatole France



Saving Lives *by Raising Awareness*

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and the Leever Cancer Center did its part to raise awareness in the community by hosting two no-cost educational programs around the topic. Dr. Lyare Esemuede of The Stanley J. Dudrick Department of Surgery at Saint Mary's Hospital presented information about the diagnosis and management of colorectal cancer. Dr. John Zhang, Alliance Medical Group and Waterbury Hospital, discussed new and innovative treatments for colorectal cancer and diseases.

Excluding skin cancers, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in the United States. Still, the news is encouraging: colorectal cancer survival rates have been increasing in both men and women for several decades. When found early, often through routine screening, colorectal cancer is highly treatable. A healthy diet and regular exercise may also help prevent colorectal cancer.

Lyare Esemuede, MD (far left) and John Zhang, MD speak with program attendees.

Healthy Traditions

No-Cost Cancer Screenings at Leever

For the sixth consecutive year, The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center offered the community no-cost oral, head, and neck cancer screenings. Thank you to all those who volunteered their time for this important initiative: Mahesh Bhaya, MD; Elie Ferneini, MD, DMD; Neil Schiff, MD; Douglas Housman, MD; Joseph Ravalese MD; Jeffery Bitterman, MD; Roger Badwal, MD; Raymond Winicki, MD; Jaclyn Sylvia, PA; Kim Casagni, FNP; James Williams, MD; Marissa Stankus, PA; Ratnakar Mandava, DDS and Irene Clarke, Joanne Giedra, Melissa Seres, Cindy Pengelly, Jim Paccione, Amy Baldwin-Stephens, Diana Spahiu, and Sandra Micalizzi.

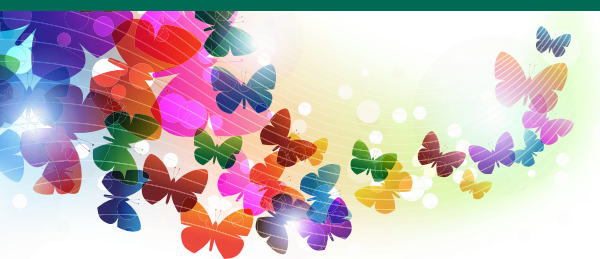
In 2015 individuals identified as being at a high-risk of developing lung cancer using a formal set of criteria were also offered no-cost lung cancer screenings. The results were significant: the screenings led not only to cancer diagnoses in some



Left to right: Mahesh Bhaya, MD; Joseph Ravalese MD; Jeffery Bitterman, MD; Raymond Winicki, MD and Roger Badwal, MD.

patients, but also to the discovery of aneurysms, pulmonary embolisms, and other important findings. Our thanks to our area pulmonologists and radiologists who donated their time to benefit over 100 local patients who qualified for the screenings.

Event statistics 2015 – 2017	NUMBER OF PEOPLE SCREENED	NUMBER OF REFERRALS			
		For routine follow-up	For further head and neck evaluation	Suspected malignancies	Other referrals
APRIL 2017	84	49	21	3	3
APRIL 2016	103	90	11	1	1
APRIL 2015	81	56	19	0	6



On the Wings of Hope

Survivors Day Butterfly Release

Throughout time and across the globe, the butterfly has been a symbol of renewal, transformation, transcendence, and hope. In Asian cultures, the butterfly is a symbol of long life. It is fitting, then, that we should celebrate Survivor's Day 2017 with butterflies.

On Saturday, June 10, The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center will release butterflies to honor those whose lives have been touched by cancer. We invite you to join us at 10 AM, where, for a \$10 donation, you may set a butterfly free, on a journey of hope to honor or memorialize a loved one.

For more information, please contact Deborah Parkinson at 203-575-5564 or dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org. See the leevercancercenter.org for an order form.

IN MEMORIUM

Dr. Bernard Percarpio

The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center community is deeply saddened by the loss of Dr. Bernard Percarpio, who passed away peacefully in April after a long, valiant battle with mesothelioma. Dr. Percarpio was a radiation oncologist with Waterbury Radiation Oncology Associates for more than 30 years, who was loved and respected by his patients, staff and fellow physicians; the practice has been a part of The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center since we opened our doors.

After his retirement in 2011, Dr. Percarpio pursued his many passions, skiing, travel (with Italy a favorite destination), and history among them. He was surrounded by his loving family at the time of his passing, which includes Brenda Percarpio, his wife of 47 years; his son, Robert Percarpio, MD; his daughter and her husband, Katie and Colin Carpenter; and his beloved grandchildren, Tate, James, and Emma Carpenter.



Why We Relay

No one is alone in the fight against cancer. It takes a village — the unwavering support of a caring community. Each year, 5,200 communities in 27 countries gather to support cancer patients, caregivers, and survivors through Relay for Life events.

“A cancer diagnosis is a tremendous challenge that no one needs to face alone,” says Deborah Parkinson, Operations Manager at the Leever Cancer Center. “Team Leever works to support patients, caregivers, and families every day, not just in our facility, but in the community, at events

like Relay for Life. We are proud to field a team at the Greater

Waterbury Relay each year and proud to walk shoulder-to-shoulder with the patients and survivors who inspire us.”

Relay for Life events last for 24 hours; participating teams are asked to have a member on the track at all times to signify that cancer never sleeps. Relay builds indelible bonds among participants, while raising awareness about the disease

that touches so many lives and raising funds to support the kind of research that has led to breakthroughs in treatment and increased survival rates for many types of cancer.

This year's Greater Waterbury event kicks off at 8 AM on Saturday, June 3, and concludes at 8 AM on Sunday, June 4. If you are interested in joining Team Leever for the event at Frisbie Elementary School, 24 Todd Road, in Wolcott, please contact Deborah Parkinson at 203-575-5564, dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org or Melissa Seres at 203-575-5511.

Now in its 32nd year, Relay for Life has raised nearly \$5 billion to fight cancer. For more information, visit relayforlife.org.

Self Care, Right Here



Building Your Self-Care Toolbox is an innovative new program introduced at the Leever Cancer Center in the fall of 2016. Designed to give patients, caregivers, families, and healthcare staff the tools they need to effectively manage stress, the program features a series of ongoing workshops that incorporate integrative, supportive therapies.

“We are very pleased to be able to offer this new program to the community at no cost to participants,” notes Deborah Parkinson, Director of Operations at the

Leever Cancer Center. “The series features workshops that encourage relaxation, while offering stress-reduction strategies that can be used anywhere. The inaugural series in November included classes in breath-work, aromatherapy, journaling, and energy therapy.”

The program returned in the spring, with a line-up that introduced chair yoga and “tapping” to the community (see photo above). Also known as Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and based on the same Chinese healing principles as acupuncture, tapping is a form of emotional acupressure. Working from the understanding that our bodies are made up of meridians, or energy pathways, EFT consists of physically touching, or tapping, meridian endpoints while focusing on issues or problems. This sends calming signals through the energy pathways, rewiring the brain and body and creating a sense of safety and well-being.

To learn more about Building Your Self-Care Toolbox and to reserve your spot, visit www.leevercancercenter.org/events.



UPCOMING SUPPORTIVE THERAPY SESSIONS (Toolbox Tuesdays!)

Tuesday, May 30
Mandalas

Learn about the traditions of mandalas and how they can be used for meditation and relaxation from Diane Lafferty, LCSW, OSW-C.

Tuesday, June 13
Aromatherapy 2

Linda Dayton, RMT will review and build upon Aromatherapy 1 to see how essential oils can enhance and support your body's own ability to help reduce stress in your life.

Tuesday, June 20
Nutrition

Join Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO to learn how to maximize your health by the food you eat.



Cindy Pengelly Honored with Nightingale Award

On May 11, Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center Radiation Oncology Nurse Cindy Pengelly was honored with a Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing. Originally developed by the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut, the Nightingale Awards represent the state's largest nursing recognition program.

Cindy has worked for The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center (HLRCC) since 1999, making her one of its founding employees. Notes Leever Cancer Center Operations Manager Deborah Parkinson, “Cindy demonstrates exceptional professional care and compassion — guiding, educating, and assisting our patients through sometimes long courses of radiation therapy. Her patience and supportive care have enabled many patients to get through difficult treatment courses successfully. More than once, Cindy has given up valuable personal time to come in and assist with wound care or a dressing change for a patient in need. Cindy has helped shape HLRCC policy, coordinated infection control, created new programs, and is always looking for new and better processes.” Congratulations and thank you, Cindy!

“Cindy demonstrates exceptional professional care and compassion — guiding, educating, and assisting our patients...” — Deborah Parkinson

A Community of Caring

The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center wishes to express its appreciation and a sincere thank you to its neighbors and friends by recognizing the spirit and hard work of the members of our community in fulfilling the Mission of the Leever Cancer Center.

The official Girl Scout slogan, “Do a good turn daily,” has been honored by scouts everywhere since 1912. Local troops take that mandate to heart, often doing good turns that benefit the patients at the Leever Cancer Center. Sincere thanks to the young women of **Troops 64171, 64100, 64115, and 62404** (see photo), all of whom graciously and generously donated comfort bags to our patients.

Seven-year-old **Emily Raefski** (pictured below), 10-year-old **Elizabeth Raefski**, and mom **Amy Raefski** delivered dozens of hand-decorated and lovingly crafted comfort bags for Leever patients. The bags were created by the **Brownies from Middlebury Troop 62404**.



Special thanks to **Waterbury Emblem Club #552** for their generous donation, made in appreciation of “all the good work” the Leever Cancer Center does. The Emblem Club, whose motto is “Truth, Justice, and Charity,” raised this charitable donation through their Pink Tea fundraiser.

Attorney Brian J. Mongelluzzo let his hair grow. And grow. And grow. Until it was time to hand the shears to the highest bidder. A portion of the bid donations came to the Leever Cancer Center, while Brian’s long, luscious locks were donated to Pantene’s Beautiful Lengths program, which makes wigs for those battling cancer. Thank you, Brian!

“Thirty-One Gifts” Independent Senior Consultant **Bernadette Schwartz** collected a gift of 42 Christmas Comfort Totes for “women who could use a little comfort when they need it most.” Thank you to all those who contributed to the Christmas Comfort Tote initiative.

Christine Damato kept busy during her treatment for breast cancer while also doing good for the community: She organized “Chris’s Chemo Comedy,” a comedy show to benefit the Leever Cancer Center. Using the proceeds from ticket sales, Chris was able to purchase \$2,000 worth of gift cards for Leever patients. In photo, from left: Deborah Parkinson, Leever Cancer Center Operations Manager; Chris; and Leever Cancer Center Social Worker Melissa Seres.



Representatives of the **Student Activity-Student Government Group at Memorial School in Middlebury** (pictured below) traveled to the Leever Cancer Center recently to personally deliver a \$500 donation from the school.



Sharing the Love *with Us*

Subaru's ninth annual Share the Love campaign raised more than \$24 million for charities nationwide, The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center among them. Held at the end of each year, Subaru donates \$250 to one of its charitable partners for every new vehicle sold or leased between mid-November and early January. National partners include the ASPCA®, Make-A-Wish®, Meals on Wheels America, and the National Park Foundation. Each Subaru retailer also selects a hometown charity to support during the campaign. This year **Premier Subaru of Watertown** not only selected the Leever Cancer Center as its hometown charity, but raised the stakes by making an additional donation for every lease or sale made during the Share the Love campaign.

"Cancer hits a lot of us close to home, so we understand the care that's needed," said Robert J. Alvine, president and general manager of Premier Subaru. "The care and stability that the Leever Center provides is just what people need, so we are very happy to be involved. You do great work, and have done so for 15 years."

Since its inception in 2007, the Share the Love campaign has raised more than \$94 million for Subaru's national and hometown charity partners. This was the first year that there was no cap on the total donation from Subaru of America to its Share the Love charitable partners.

"The care and stability that the Leever Center provides is just what people need, so we are very happy to be involved. You do great work, and have done so for 15 years." — Robert J. Alvine



Pictured from left to right: Kerri Pacheco, Vice President; Robert Alvine, President; Vicki Rimsky, Office Manager; Carmine Valentino, General Sales Manager; Maria Monteleone, Service Advisor; AJ Daluz, Salesperson; Deborah Parkinson, Leever Center; Linda Way, Office Assistant; Kevin Knieri, Leever Center; Brandon Rizzo, Office Assistant; Bob Bennett, Subaru New England.



Photo: Jim Shannon, Waterbury Republican-American

Krista Palomba, above left, of Watertown and **Sue Semeraro** of Waterbury stack some of the 95 gift bags donated to patients at The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center. Each bag includes a blanket, lotions, soaps, and other items to make cancer patients more comfortable. The drive was organized by Palomba to honor friends and family who have faced cancer.

Aware!

is published by
The Harold Leever Regional
Cancer Center

Editor-in-Chief:
Deborah Parkinson
Editorial Executives:
Kevin Knieri and Tom Belzek
Design:
Aro Strategic Marketing

We encourage your feedback.
If there is a cancer topic you
would like covered, to respond to
an article you've read, or to be put
on our mailing list, please call
203-575-5555 or email:
dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org

HL THE HAROLD LEEVER
REGIONAL CANCER CENTER

1075 Chase Parkway
Waterbury, CT 06708
203-575-5555 phone
203-575-5592 fax
leevercancercenter.org web



THE HAROLD LEEVER REGIONAL CANCER CENTER

1075 Chase Parkway Waterbury, CT 06708

A joint partnership of



@LeeverCancerCenter

Community Events and Monthly Support Groups

SPRING/SUMMER

UPCOMING EVENT:



**AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S
GREATER WATERBURY RELAY FOR LIFE:
Saturday, June 3, 8 AM – Sunday, June 4, 8 AM
Frisbie Elementary School, Wolcott**

To join Team Leever, please contact Deborah Parkinson at 203-575-5564, dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org or Melissa Seres at 203-575-5511.

SAVE THE DATE:



**ON THE WINGS OF HOPE
SURVIVORS DAY BUTTERFLY RELEASE:
Saturday, June 10, 10 AM at HLRCC**

Join us for a butterfly release to honor those whose lives have been touched by cancer. For a \$10 donation, set a butterfly free on a journey of hope to honor or memorialize a loved one. See page 8 for more information.

ACTIVATE THE CURE: Interdenominational prayer gathering, weekly, Thursday, 9 AM – 10 AM, contact Joellen Putnam at 203-213-6495

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY: LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER!: monthly, 1st Tuesday, 2 PM – 4 PM, contact the ACS at 203-756-8888

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY: REACH TO RECOVERY: by appointment, contact the ACS at 203-756-8888

AMPUTEE SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Friday, 5 PM, contact Dila Hassiem: 203-597-8818

ART THERAPY: monthly, 2nd and 4th Friday, 2 PM, contact Deborah Parkinson: 203-575-5564

BETTER BREATHING CLUB: monthly, 3rd Friday, 1 PM, contact Rachel Kirchner: 203-757-4991

BRAVE AT HEART BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 1st Wednesday, 7 PM – 9 PM, contact Anne Pringle: 203-910-7582

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS: monthly, 2nd Wednesday, 6:45 PM – 10 PM, contact Sharon: 860-384-1398

CT MULTIPLE MYELOMA FIGHTERS SUPPORT GROUP: At Prospect Library, monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 6 PM – 8 PM, contact Robin Tuohy: 203-206-3536

ENERGY THERAPY: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

FAMILY AND FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Monday, 12 PM – 1 PM, contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

FREEDOM FROM SMOKING: An 8-week smoking cessation series. Contact Sandra Micalizzi, APRN, CDE, Heart Center of Greater Waterbury Outreach Nurse, at 203-575-5573 for information on the start of the next series.

HOPE MUTUAL AID GROUP FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES: monthly, 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 12 PM – 1 PM, contact Melissa Seres: 203-575-5511

JOURNALING: A WAY TO HEAL FROM YOUR CANCER EXPERIENCE: Friday, 10 AM – 11:30 AM, contact Bob Devito: 203-910-3107

QUILTS THAT CARE: monthly, 1st and 3rd Monday, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Deb V: 860-945-0184

THYROID CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, last Tuesday, 6 PM – 7 PM, contact Dot Torretta: 203-756-3481

WATERBURY AREA OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 1st Monday, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Bob Baker: 860-248-1116

WOMAN TO WOMAN BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 7 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Theresa Lombardo: 860-274-2200

Call contact person to confirm that group is as scheduled. Meeting times may be rescheduled to accommodate holidays or special meetings. See leevercancercenter.org for ongoing events.