

HOPE & HEALING

A guide to helping survivors navigate through their journey

Visit us at builttobeatcancer.com

Fall 2020 Issue

Northside Hospital Cancer Institute Call Center: 404.531.4444



How Cancer Survivors Can Thrive Emotionally During COVID-19

By: Christina Austin-Valere, PhD, LCSW

In the midst of these unprecedented times, cancer survivors are also facing the stressors related to cancer diagnoses and treatment demands. The additional strain of a global pandemic presents challenges for cancer patients that may lead to increased anxiety and feelings of depression, as well as fears of the unknown or isolation related to social distancing measures.

Moreover, undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy alone (since most facilities limit caregivers from entering the building as a precautionary measure), can elevate feelings of anxiety. Additionally, the unexpectedly long duration of COVID-19 has created a sense of pandemic fatigue, which can add even more stress to an already stressful situation.

So how does one thrive emotionally during these difficult times?

Below are some important strategies to employ:

Recognize your emotional needs and reach out to trusted and trained health care providers when you need help.

Improve ways of communicating with family, caregivers and your treatment team.

Utilize coping skills including the use of prescribed medication, mindfulness and guided imagery to help manage feelings of emotional distress.

– Other strategies include activities such as reading, listening to music and other mind-relaxation techniques.

Use online programs such as support groups and psychoeducational programs to reduce feelings of isolation.

Employ healthy living strategies through proper nutrition, hydration and exercise. Continue proper precautions to reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19.

Be open to speaking with your doctor about prescribing psychotropic medications to help manage anxiety and depression.

Utilize telemedicine and telemental health platforms offered by your health care providers. Communicate the need to involve family members and/or caregivers during those sessions to allow them to assist you when necessary, and to obtain information about your care.

IN THIS ISSUE

ASK AN EXPERT

p2 Managing Fatigue After Cancer Treatment

BOOST YOUR HEALTH & WELLNESS

p2 Yoga for Cancer Patients and Survivors

p4 How to Keep Fruits and Vegetables Fresh Longer

p5 Recipe: One Pot Veggie Dal

STORIES OF HOPE & HEALING

p5 Survivor Story: Meet Bill

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & RESOURCES

p6 Is My Cancer Hereditary?

p7 Research at Northside Hospital Cancer Institute

GET INVOLVED

p7 2020 Virtual Tennis Against Breast Cancer

EVENTS & CANCER CELEBRATIONS

p8 Cancer Screening & Prevention and Community Events

Do you have a question you would like answered by an expert or a story to share in a future issue of Hope & Healing? If so, please send your question or story to survivornewsletter@northside.com.



ASK AN EXPERT



Managing Fatigue After Cancer Treatment

By: Mary Ninan, MD

Why does fatigue occur in cancer patients and survivors?

Fatigue can occur in cancer patients and survivors for a variety of reasons such as treatment side effects, low blood counts (especially anemia), poor nutrition, sleep disturbances and emotional distress or depression. Additionally, cancer releases inflammatory substances that can cause chemical and hormonal changes in the body that lead to fatigue.

How long does fatigue last after cancer treatment?

The duration of fatigue after cancer treatment varies from patient to patient and can last anywhere from months to years. More often than not, it depends on how each individual patient functions on a daily basis. Persistent fatigue is mostly due to long-term side effects of therapy, organ dysfunction related to treatment, persistent regulation issues of the immune system or a decline in performance status.

What medical interventions may be used to manage fatigue?

A number of medical interventions may be used to manage fatigue; including physical, occupational or cognitive behavioral therapy. Patients and survivors should be also be screened and treated for factors that may contribute to fatigue, such as cardiac or pulmonary dysfunction, hormonal imbalances, anemia, malnutrition, sleep disorders and depression.

What tips do you have for self-care of fatigue?

Below are some tips on how to manage fatigue:

Initiate and maintain physical activity based on functional status and ability.

- Start by walking for 15-20 minutes a day and build it up slowly after consulting with your physician.
- Yoga has been shown to benefit women who have completed treatment for breast cancer.



Improve nutrition and seek the help of a registered dietitian, if needed.



Practice mind-body interventions such as, mindfulness, meditation, music therapy and massage therapy.



Maintain a sleep schedule and try to sleep for seven to eight hours every night.

- Limit caffeine intake since it can interfere with sleep.
- Take short naps during the day rather than one long one.
- Avoid exercising too late in the evening.



BOOST YOUR HEALTH & WELLNESS

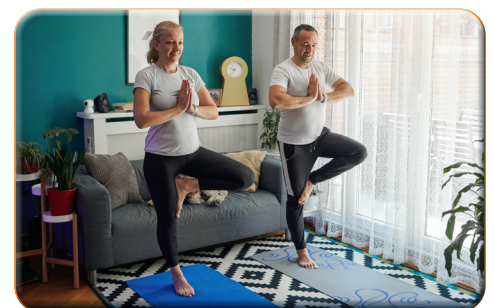


Yoga for Cancer Patients and Survivors

By: Julia Huerbin OTR/L, RYT-200

Yoga is a complementary mind-body therapy that may help people manage the side effects of cancer and cancer treatment. Not only is yoga physically beneficial, but it also offers psychological benefits and promotes mental well-being. Yoga is a truly adaptable practice that can be modified to meet the needs of any individual, regardless of their specific requirements or limitations. All that you need to practice yoga is presence and awareness.

(continued on page 3)



Yoga for Cancer Patients and Survivors *(continued from page 2)*

There are several types of slower paced classes available which are good for beginners:

Yoga Type	Description
Restorative	A practice that focuses on deeper stretching where poses/postures are held for longer periods of time.
Gentle	A practice that combines a variation of yoga types at a slower pace and seeks to provide therapeutic modifications as needed.
Chair	A practice where you are often sitting on a chair or using the chair for support.

Benefits of Consistent Yoga Practice



Yoga can also help cancer patients and survivors achieve a balanced weight, which has been linked to short- and long-term health outcomes in several cancers. If underweight, yoga can help build muscle, resulting in healthy weight gain. If overweight, yoga can help burn calories, resulting in healthy weight loss.

Rehabilitation professionals with expertise in oncology, can incorporate yoga as an exercise modality. For many cancer patients and survivors, yoga is a wonderful practice that offers a complete set of skills to help patients navigate their individual journey with greater ease.

Additionally, classes and guided meditation are offered online through videos and various apps. Below are some recommended apps to guide you through your practice:

- Mindshift
- Yoga for Beginners
- Pocket Yoga
- Yoga Glo
- Calm
- Ten Percent
- Headspace

Let yoga help improve your overall health and quality of life!

[Click here](#) to learn more about Oncology Rehabilitation Services (including virtual visits) offered at Northside Hospital. A physician referral is required for therapy services. If you have a question or want to schedule an in-person or virtual appointment, please contact our scheduling team at **404.236.8030**.

How to Keep Fruits and Vegetables Fresh Longer


Eating more fresh produce is a great way to reduce the risk of cancer or recurrence. However, if fruits and vegetables are not stored properly, they may spoil before you can enjoy them. According to the Farmer's Almanac, the average American wastes 20 pounds of food each month! Much of the wasted food is fruits and vegetables. Keeping food fresh longer can reduce


food waste and reduce trips to the grocery store, saving you money!


Moisture, air and ethylene gas (which is emitted as fruits and vegetables ripen) are the common culprits often causing food to spoil too quickly.

Tips to Keep Food Fresh Longer


 **Apples**
Store in fridge for up to 3 weeks, away from root vegetables.

 **Avocado**
Keep out of fridge until ripe; once cut, keep the pit in and store in fridge.


 **Bananas**
Keep the bunch together and wrap the stems with plastic wrap to slow browning.


 **Berries**
Check package for any spoiled or moldy fruit and remove, store in the fridge in a produce container.


- Use raspberries and strawberries within 1-3 days, blackberries within 3-6 days and blueberries within 10-14 days.
- ✓ If washing berries before storing them, be sure to allow them to completely dry before putting them back in fridge.
- ✓ If saving berries for later, spread them on a cookie sheet and freeze, then place frozen berries in a freezer bag so they will not clump together while frozen.


 **Broccoli**
Wrap in aluminum foil and store in fridge.

 **Carrots**
Cut off green tops and store in fridge for up to two weeks.


 **Green Onions/Scallions**
Chop and place in clean and dry plastic water bottle, store in freezer.

 **Lettuce and Salad Greens**
Store in a container in produce drawer, loosely layered with a paper towel between each layer, and on top to absorb moisture, cover with lid; or use a kitchen towel to absorb the moisture, change it out every couple of days.


 **Mushrooms**
Store in a paper bag or cardboard box, not in plastic; store in a cool dry place or the fridge.

 **Onions and Garlic**
Store in a cool, dark, dry place.


- Keep onions fresh for up to eight months, place onions in pantyhose, tie a knot between each onion.
- Red, white and yellow onions can be stored for months; but sweet onions (like Vidalia) do not keep fresh as long, use them within 2-3 weeks.


 **Oranges**
Store in fridge for up to two weeks or at room temperature for two days.

 **Peaches**
If unripe - store at room temperature in a paper bag; then use within 1-2 days or slice and refrigerate.

 **Peppers**
Store whole bell peppers in crisper fridge drawer for up to two weeks.

- Be sure peppers are dry before refrigerating.
- Use chopped peppers within three days.

 **Potatoes**
Store in a cool, dark, dry place; or in an open container or basket to allow air circulation; do not store in fridge and store away from fruit.

 **Root Vegetables**
Try [sand storing](#) for onions, carrots, potatoes, eggplant and even ginger, this method keeps moisture at bay and allows for air circulation.

 **Tomatoes**
Store at room temperature, away from sunlight, stem side down.

Additional Tips!

- Freeze any fruits or vegetables that are about to spoil for later use in smoothies, sauces or to make pesto.
- Consider investing in products to extend the life of produce:
 - Activated carbon pods that absorb ethylene gas.
 - Silicone food wraps or vacuum sealer to reduce air exposure.
- For more tips and information on keeping fruits and vegetables fresh longer, visit:
 - fruitsandveggies.org
 - foodsafety.gov (Food keeper app)
 - eatright.org



Recipe: One Pot Veggie Dal *(a dish made with lentils or other split pulses.)*

3 tablespoons olive oil
 1 yellow onion, diced
 2 tablespoons fresh ginger, minced
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon curry powder
 1 can (15 oz.) crushed tomatoes
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 3 1/2 cups water
 1 cup lentils, soaked in water for two hours and drained
 10 ounces fresh spinach, chopped
 1 teaspoon salt
 2 diced jalapeño (optional)
 Cilantro for garnish (optional)

Preparation:

- 1) In a large pot, heat oil and sauté onion, jalapeño (if using), ginger, garlic and curry powder. Combine well and cook until aromatic.
- 2) Add tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes on medium-high heat.
- 3) Stir in water and drained lentils and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low and cook for approximately 30 minutes or until lentils are soft enough to mash (adding more water if necessary, to extend the cooking time).
- 4) Add salt and spinach and cook until wilted, 1-2 minutes.
- 5) Serve over warm brown rice and garnish with cilantro (optional).



Recipe and photo by Zachari Breeding, MS, RDN, CSO, LDN, FAND found at aicr.org/cancer-prevention/recipes/one-pot-veggie-dal/



STORIES OF HOPE & HEALING

Survivor Story: Meet Bill



What are the events that led up to your cancer diagnosis?

At the time of my diagnosis, I was 51. My wife, Renee, and I were jogging in the summer, and I recall the heat index was close to 100 degrees that day. I remember feeling more

fatigued than normal. It had been a concern of mine for several weeks, but I figured it was simply "the heat." I decided to book an appointment with my Northside Hospital-affiliated primary care physician (PCP), Dr. Lonnie Herzog with Primary Care Physicians of Atlanta.

Everything checked out during my physical, including my bloodwork, but while waiting for my annual chest X-ray results, Dr. Herzog popped his head into my room and said "come here, I want to show you something." We walked to the monitor and he pointed to a tiny black dot in my upper left lung. A faint halo appeared around the black dot, and Dr. Herzog said, "it may be nothing, but are you available for more tests this afternoon?" As he sent me to the imaging center, he handed me his personal cell phone number, letting me know he would call me with the results, and we would likely need to talk over the weekend. It was then that I knew something was different, something was not right, and that I had taken my "great health" for granted.

Today, I look back and realize that if my PCP had not performed an X-ray, I would have ended up with metastatic cancer that surely would have put me in the hospital. I would have had a much heavier tumor burden and a much more challenging journey. I immediately thought, "How lucky am I to have seen this doctor?"

What treatment did you receive?

Initially I was offered chemotherapy while waiting for my tumor biopsy results at Northside Hospital, but I decided to wait it out as I wanted the most targeted medication available. Unfortunately, the tissue biopsy was inconclusive, but thankfully, a Guardant360® liquid biopsy was suggested. The test results were back in a matter of days and revealed that my lung cancer had a gene rearrangement called ALK-positive. I was immediately prescribed alectinib, which is a targeted therapy that inhibited my specific cancer cells from growing.

Today, I realize how fortunate I am that a liquid biopsy was given to me. The test was a simple blood draw, and within seven days, I had a treatment plan. Without a biomarker test, my targeted mutation would have never been found and my life would have surely been shortened.

(continued on page 6)

Survivor Story: Meet Bill (continued from page 5)



How and where did you receive support during your treatment and recovery?

Although my initial treatment with alectinib was managed by MD Anderson, I pursued finding a local oncologist at Northside. I was fortunate

to have found Dr. Ioana Bonta at Georgia Cancer Specialists. Dr. Bonta partnered with my wife and me on this journey and has guided and educated us while also listening to my needs, symptoms, worries and concerns. She also gave me the confidence to advocate for my health and has proven to me that there is always a path to achieve the best care.

Did you utilize Northside Hospital Cancer Institute patient support resources? If so, which would you recommend?

Renee and I met Michelle Ottersbach, a Northside oncology nurse navigator at a patient/survivor conference in Atlanta in 2019. Michelle introduced us to several Northside resources including the Cancer Support Community Atlanta.

What advice do you have for someone navigating their treatment and recovery journey?

Being told that I had a terminal disease was like having an out of body experience. The shock was huge. Denial or anger can be your default emotion. But acceptance of the news is vital to your care. In fact, how you treat the news with your family and loved ones sets the tone (and their attitude toward your cancer care) for your journey. I decided early on that the most effective way to get through this was to find a source of gratitude. Being grateful opens you up, improves relationships, allows you to specify your needs and it gets you closer to living with cancer as opposed to dying of cancer.

What is your current treatment?

I was diagnosed July 21, 2017 and started targeted therapy on September 8, 2017. I have reached my third year of treatment. I am extremely fortunate to not have any identifiable tumors or progression at this time. I currently take eight pills a day. Every time I take my medication, I reflect on how science and research is making progress -- and how that must not stop.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT & RESOURCES



Is My Cancer Hereditary?

By: Lisa Bush, MS, CGC

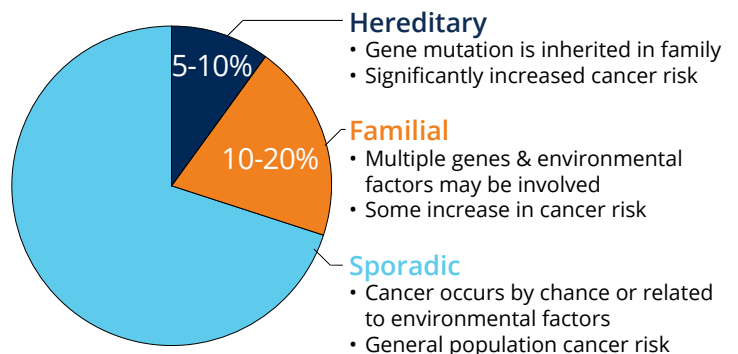
Everyone has cancer genes. Cancer genes help protect our bodies from developing cancer. A mutation in a cancer gene causes it to be broken.

Therefore, a cancer gene mutation increases an individual's risk for developing cancer.

Cancers can be divided into three groups: sporadic, familial and hereditary (see Figure). The majority of cancers are sporadic, and approximately 10% of cancers are hereditary.

The two most well-known cancer genes are BRCA1 and BRCA2, which cause hereditary breast and ovarian cancer (HBOC) syndrome. BRCA1/2 gene mutations increase an individual's risk for developing breast, ovarian, prostate and pancreatic cancers.

Distribution of Cancer



Source: Greenwood Genetics

Typically, there are clues that suggest a cancer gene mutation is the cause of the cancer in the family. These clues include young age of diagnosis (e.g., breast cancer or colon cancer under age 50), rare cancers (e.g., male breast cancer) or three or more family members with the same type of cancer. There are certain cancers that suggest a hereditary cause

(continued on page 7)

Is My Cancer Hereditary? *(continued from page 6)*

even without a family history of cancer. These include ovarian, pancreatic and metastatic prostate cancers. The best way to determine if the cancer in the family is hereditary is to have a genetic counseling appointment and assessment.

A genetic counselor is a health care provider who performs a genetics risk assessment by first collecting an individual's personal/family history and then evaluating to determine if the cancer history suggests genetic testing. If it is suggestive, the genetic counselor will recommend the best testing options. The genetic counselor can also help explain the results and

determine if the risk for cancer is higher than average. Additionally, they discuss what the test results mean for the individual as well as family members, including children, siblings and parents.

Northside Hospital Cancer Institute has seven licensed and board-certified genetic counselors. If you would like to schedule an appointment with our Cancer Genetics Program, please call **404.851.6284** or email genetics@northside.com. If you are closer to our Gwinnett campus, please call **678.312.3100** or email GWgenetics@northside.com for an appointment with a cancer genetics specialist.

Research at Northside Hospital Cancer Institute

At Northside Hospital, our researchers and physicians work alongside respected industry partners and other nationally recognized clinical trial networks to provide our patients with access to the latest treatments and prevention methods being tested through clinical trials. The Northside Research Program provides access to these clinical trials for our patients and allows them the opportunity to participate in a trial that best matches their individual needs and lifestyle. In partnership with the National Cancer Institute, Northside is also able to offer quality of life, supportive care, observational and other important studies.

By combining best practices from community hospitals, private physician practices and research institutions, we offer patients unique quality of care and clinical expertise that is both in-touch and advanced. What this means is that our patients can benefit from the latest treatments from academic and research institutions in an environment that is close to home.

If you would like to learn more about our Research Program, you can visit northside.com/research or reach out to our program directly at research@northside.com.




GET INVOLVED

**2020 Virtual Tennis Against Breast Cancer
October 30, 2020**

Tennis Against Breast Cancer will be virtual this year with a live event hosted by Heather Catlin at Noon on Friday, October 30, 2020.

To register please visit: p2p.onecause.com/tabc before October 29, 2020.

2020 VIRTUAL TABC



GAME OVER

NOT!!

ALL MONTH OF OCTOBER
LIVE EVENT NOON ON OCTOBER 30TH

REGISTER NOW

GET YOUR TEAMS TOGETHER AND REGISTER!

<input type="checkbox"/> I'm in it!	Free
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm in it to win it!	\$35

Includes:

- TABC Pullover
- Breast Cancer Awareness Mask
- Tito's Hand Sanitizer
- Eligible for Awards

Enjoy our usual awesome raffest! Teams, please submit raffle donations to NSH Foundation or call: 770.667.4483 for pickup.
Unfortunately, no drills or lunch will be provided this year.

UPCOMING CANCER AWARENESS MONTHS

October – National Breast Cancer and National Liver Cancer

November – Lung Cancer, Pancreatic Cancer, Stomach Cancer and Carcinoid Cancer



EVENTS & CANCER CELEBRATIONS

Due to the changing circumstances related to COVID-19, events are subject to change.

CANCER SCREENING & PREVENTION

[Prostate Cancer Screening @ NHCI Radiation Oncology – Atlanta](#)

October 15, 2020 from 5:30-8 p.m. To register call **404.531.4444**.

American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking® Clinic

Next Six-Week Session Start Date: November 10, 2020

To register call **404.780.7653** or [click here](#).

[Skin Cancer Screening @ NHCI Radiation Oncology – Midtown](#)

November 12, 2020 from 6-8 p.m. To register call **404.531.4444**.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

CANCER WALKS/EVENTS SPONSORED BY NORTHSIDE HOSPITAL CANCER INSTITUTE

[LUNGevity's eRACE Lung Cancer – Virtual](#)

October 1-18, 2020

[Paint Gwinnett Pink Walk/Run for Breast Cancer – Virtual](#)

October 24, 2020

[2020 Atlanta Walk to End Colon Cancer](#)

[@ Lee + White in Atlanta & Virtual](#)

October 24, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m. - Noon

[LUNGevity's Breathe Deep Together Walk/Run – Virtual](#)

October 24, 2020 @ 10 a.m.

[Melanoma Research Foundation's Miles for Melanoma 5K – Virtual](#)

October 24, 2020

[Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's PurpleStride Atlanta – Virtual](#)

November 14, 2020

[American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE 5K Run/Walk – Virtual](#)

November 14, 2020

The Great American Smokeout – Smoking Cessation Education @ NH campuses

November 19, 2020



Please visit our [website](#) for a full list of ongoing support and survivorship programs.



Please visit Cancer Support Community's [website](#) for support groups, seminars, nutrition and exercise classes during this fall season!