

BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE NEWSLETTER

www.bccancerservice.org

In honor of the committed service of Olove Colcord, R.N.

THE MISSION OF THE BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE:

To provide free skilled home nursing services, equipment, information and supplies at cost for cancer patients and their families in Berrien County.



June 2014

(269) 429-3281

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The **BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** is a group for patients, family members and care givers. Come share successes, feelings, fears and practical methods of coping with the physical and emotional aspects of living with the diagnosis of cancer.

Life's Little Gifts

Sometimes life brings a lamp of gold,
And puts it in our hands to hold,
Sometimes she brings a step toward fame
And leaves it somewhere near our name.

Sometimes she brings true love to share
With someone who was waiting there,
Sometimes she brings strength anew
To finish tasks that we must do.

But the greatest of the gifts she brings
Is a heart within that always sings,
No matter what its fate may be
A heart that's glad, a heart that's free.

A heart that knows if raindrops fall
The marigold will then grow tall,
A heart that takes what comes each day
And makes the most of it some way.

Content to feel a higher power
Rules over every single hour,
A heart that knows as time goes by
It must not ask just how or why.

When life walks swiftly by its doors,
And gives a fellow traveler more,
A heart that knows some good shall come
Not as it seems to come to some,
But slowly surely from above
In God's own time by his own love!

Mrs. David Covington



BCCS Bulletin Board

Bike Ride – Sponsor a Rider



Come join us on Sunday, June 22 for our 19th annual Bike Ride through beautiful Southwestern Michigan. If you are unable to ride you may still participate by sponsoring a bike rider, just give us a call at 269-429-3281 to find out how you can sponsor a rider for this fun event! . Our Executive Director, Nancy Church will hit the road (hopefully not literally) with her bicycle that morning. **We are looking for volunteers to take our posters and brochures to the local businesses and get the word out.** Call us at 269-429-3281 to join the fun as a volunteer or sponsor.

Bike Riders – new online fillable registration forms!

This year we are very pleased to have registration forms that can be filled out on line. There are 2 different forms that can be used. One is designed to use a credit card or PayPal while the other one is for those who would like to mail in a check or money order. So sign up ahead of time and beat the crowd at the registration line!

RELAY FOR LIFE

This year's Relay for Life event, which benefits the *American Cancer Society* will take place on the Berrien County Youth Fairgrounds in Berrien Springs on June 21 and 22, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Saturday and ending at 9:00 a.m. Sunday.

The **Berrien County Cancer Service** will have a table under the Lakeland Regional Medical Center and Hospice for Home-Lakeland tent. If you would like to walk, please call our office at 269-429-3281 or send an e-mail to: staff@bccancerservice.org so that we can schedule a time for you. Participants will also receive a t-shirt.



HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

We love to have testimonies of how we have help people in our community on our website. If you have a story to tell about how BCCS has helped you and would like to share it, please email staff@bccancerservice.org or mail us your story along with a statement giving us permission to post it on our website, www.bccancerservice.org

Newsletters available by email or online

If you would like to receive the email version of our newsletter, please send us an email at staff@bccancerservice.org. You may also view our newsletters on our website: www.bccancerservice.org. We are also happy to send it to you through the mail.

Pennies for Patients Day™



We are sorry that we cannot report the total for Pennies for Patients Day™ in this newsletter since our final total is calculated after May 31 and this newsletter was compiled the middle of May. Our July newsletter will reveal the total amount that you and our community generously donated. If you brought pennies (nickel, dimes, quarters, etc.) in and would like to know the total amount, please give us a call at 429-3281.

Kevin's Story

Kevin was 19 years old and enjoying the first semester of his sophomore year of college. With an attitude typical of a college sophomore, he was ignoring the pain that was becoming increasingly frequent. He simply dismissed it and went on. Things changed during Christmas break. After midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, the pain was so bad he could not sleep.

Kevin went to see his doctor. His testicle was visibly swollen, and the doctor diagnosed an infection for which he prescribed antibiotics. Ten days later, the swelling had not gone down; an ultrasound was ordered. As Kevin prepared to return to school for the spring term, he received a call from his doctor. The doctor told him that he had a tumor and to "check into the hospital tomorrow. You're having surgery." During surgery, Kevin's testicle was removed; the tumor was malignant. After surgery, Kevin had to undergo radiation treatments which left him extremely weak and still in intense pain.

The stabbing pain in his abdomen was so bad that he went to the emergency room. He was admitted to the hospital on a Friday afternoon. It was discovered that there was a mass in his abdomen that was pressing on his urethra. He began chemotherapy on Sunday.

When Kevin thinks of this weekend, he remembers everything moving with great speed. Events were moving so quickly that he did not have time to think. Given time, he might have considered the long-term consequences of the chemotherapy. He might have thought of some day becoming a father and banked some of his sperm "just in case." Instead he started the first of four demanding and aggressive rounds of chemotherapy.

The side effects of the treatment were devastating. Kevin and his family were mentally and emotionally drained. He was down to 110 pounds, had lost his hair and eyebrows, his blood counts were down; he was hospitalized. He and his family were demoralized. "If you look sick, you feel sick, and people react to the way you look."

At this point, Kevin's oncologist suggested that the family contact Cancer Hope Network. A Cancer Hope Network Support Volunteer came to the hospital and spent time with Kevin and his family. When Kevin was at his lowest point, he had tangible proof of survivorship sitting at his bedside.

Kevin finished his chemotherapy treatments and subsequent surgery determined that the mass in his abdomen had been reduced to scar tissue.

Kevin finished school and started to date Melissa. Kevin and Melissa had known each other slightly since high school, but a cousin of Kevin's saw a future for them. As they got to know each other, Kevin talked about his cancer. They both wanted to have children, but did not know if this would be possible. In the end their devotion to each other diminished their fears, and they decided to take a "leap of faith." They married and in January Melissa gave birth to a baby boy.

In the years since Kevin was trained as a Cancer Hope Network Support Volunteer, he continues to "give back" to many cancer patients the same kind of hope he received during the darkest time of his life.

Via: cancerhopenetwork.org

Definition of stomach cancer: Cancer that forms in tissues lining the stomach. Also called gastric cancer.

Estimated new cases and deaths from stomach cancer in the United States in 2014:

- New cases: 22,220
- Deaths: 10,990
- Confirming findings from an earlier study, chemotherapy given before surgery for cancer of the lower esophagus and stomach increased the number of patients surviving for five years compared to surgery alone. Those receiving chemotherapy also had better disease-free survival, and the side effects from the treatment were considered manageable.
- Stomach cancer usually begins in cells in the inner layer of the stomach. Over time, the cancer may invade more deeply into the stomach wall. A stomach tumor can grow through the stomach's outer layer into nearby organs, such as the liver, pancreas, esophagus, or intestine.
- Stomach cancer cells can spread by breaking away from the original tumor. They enter blood vessels or lymph vessels, which branch into all the tissues of the body. The cancer cells may be found in lymph nodes near the stomach. The cancer cells may attach to other tissues and grow to form new tumors that may damage those tissues.
- The spread of cancer is called metastasis. See the Staging section for information about stomach cancer that has spread.

Risk Factors

When you're told that you have stomach cancer, it's natural to wonder what may have caused the disease. But no one knows the exact causes of stomach cancer. Doctors seldom know why one person develops stomach cancer and another doesn't.

Doctors do know that people with certain risk factors are more likely than others to develop stomach cancer. A risk factor is something that may increase the chance of getting a disease.

Studies have found the following risk factors for stomach cancer:

- ***Helicobacter pylori* infection:** *H. pylori* is a bacterium that commonly infects the inner lining (the mucosa) of the stomach. Infection with *H. pylori* can cause stomach inflammation and peptic ulcers. It also increases the risk of stomach cancer, but only a small number of infected people develop stomach cancer. You may want to read the NCI fact sheet *Helicobacter pylori and Cancer*.
- **Long-term inflammation of the stomach:** People who have conditions associated with long-term stomach inflammation (such as the blood disease pernicious anemia) are at increased risk of stomach cancer. Also, people who have had part of their stomach removed may have long-term stomach inflammation and increased risk of stomach cancer many years after their surgery.
- **Smoking:** Smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to develop stomach cancer. Heavy smokers are most at risk.
- **Family history:** Close relatives (parents, brothers, sisters, or children) of a person with a history of stomach cancer are somewhat more likely to develop the disease themselves. If many close relatives have a history of stomach cancer, the risk is even greater.
- **Poor diet, lack of physical activity, or obesity:**
 - Studies suggest that people who eat a diet high in foods that are smoked, salted, or pickled have an increased risk for stomach cancer. On the other hand, people who eat a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables may have a lower risk of this disease.
 - A lack of physical activity may increase the risk of stomach cancer.
 - Also, people who are obese may have an increased risk of cancer developing in the upper part of the stomach.

Most people who have known risk factors do not develop stomach cancer. For example, many people have an *H. pylori* infection but never develop cancer.

On the other hand, people who do develop the disease sometimes have no known risk factors.

Symptoms

Early stomach cancer often does not cause symptoms. As the cancer grows, the most common symptoms are:

- Discomfort or pain in the stomach area
- Difficulty swallowing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weight loss
- Feeling full or bloated after a small meal
- Vomiting blood or having blood in the stool

Most often, these symptoms are not due to cancer. Other health problems, such as an ulcer or infection, can cause the same symptoms. Anyone who has these symptoms should tell their doctor so that problems can be diagnosed and treated as early as possible.

Diagnosis

If you have symptoms that suggest stomach cancer, your doctor will check to see whether they are due to cancer or to some other cause. Your doctor may refer you to a [gastroenterologist](#), a doctor whose specialty is diagnosing and treating digestive problems.

Your doctor will ask about your personal and family health history. You may have blood or other lab tests. You also may have:

- **Physical exam:** Your doctor feels your abdomen for fluid, swelling, or other changes. Your doctor also will check for swollen lymph nodes.
- **Endoscopy:** Your doctor uses a thin, lighted tube ([endoscope](#)) to look into your stomach. Your doctor first numbs your throat with an [anesthetic](#) spray. You also may receive medicine to help you relax. The tube is passed through your mouth and esophagus to the stomach.
- **Biopsy:** An endoscope has a tool for removing tissue. Your doctor uses the endoscope to remove tissue from the stomach. A [pathologist](#) checks the tissue under a microscope for cancer cells. A biopsy is the only sure way to know if cancer cells are present.

You may want to ask your doctor these questions before having a biopsy:

- How will the biopsy be done?
- Will it hurt?
- Are there any risks? What are the chances of infection or bleeding after the biopsy?
- When can I resume my normal diet?
- How soon will I know the results?
- If I do have cancer, who will talk with me about the next steps? When?

Staging

If the biopsy shows that you have stomach cancer, your doctor needs to learn the stage (extent) of the disease to help you choose the best treatment.

Staging is a careful attempt to find out the following:

- How deeply the tumor invades the wall of the stomach
- Whether the stomach tumor has invaded nearby tissues
- Whether the cancer has spread and, if so, to what parts of the body.

When stomach cancer spreads, cancer cells may be found in nearby lymph nodes, the liver, the pancreas, esophagus, intestine, or other organs. Your doctor may order blood tests and other tests to check these areas:

- **Chest x-ray:** An x-ray of your chest can show whether cancer has spread to the lungs.
- **CT scan:** An x-ray machine linked to a computer takes a series of detailed pictures of your organs. You may receive an injection of dye. The dye makes abnormal areas easier to see. Tumors in your liver, pancreas, or elsewhere in the body can show up on a CT scan.
- **Endoscopic ultrasound:** Your doctor passes a thin, lighted tube (endoscope) down your throat. A probe at the end of the tube sends out sound waves that you cannot hear. The waves bounce off tissues in your stomach and other organs. A computer creates a picture from the echoes. The picture can show how deeply the cancer has invaded the wall of the stomach. Your doctor may use a needle to take tissue samples of lymph nodes.
- **Laparoscopy:** A surgeon makes small incisions (cuts) in your abdomen. The surgeon inserts a thin, lighted tube (laparoscope) into the abdomen. The surgeon may remove lymph nodes or take tissue samples for biopsy.

Sometimes staging is not complete until after surgery to remove the tumor and nearby lymph nodes.

When stomach cancer spreads from its original place to another part of the body, the new tumor has the same kind of abnormal cells and the same name as the primary (original) tumor. For example, if stomach cancer spreads to the liver, the cancer cells in the liver are actually stomach cancer cells. The disease is metastatic stomach cancer, not liver cancer. For that reason, it is treated as stomach cancer, not liver cancer. Doctors call the new tumor "distant" or metastatic disease.

These are the stages of stomach cancer:

- **Stage 0:** The tumor is found only in the inner layer of the stomach. Stage 0 is also called carcinoma in situ.
- **Stage I** is one of the following:
 - The tumor has invaded only the submucosa. Cancer cells may be found in up to 6 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has invaded the muscle layer or subserosa. Cancer cells have not spread to lymph nodes or other organs.
- **Stage II** is one of the following:
 - The tumor has invaded only the submucosa. Cancer cells have spread to 7 to 15 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has invaded the muscle layer or subserosa. Cancer cells have spread to 1 to 6 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has penetrated the outer layer of the stomach. Cancer cells have not spread to lymph nodes or other organs.
- **Stage III** is one of the following:
 - The tumor has invaded the muscle layer or subserosa. Cancer cells have spread to 7 to 15 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has penetrated the outer layer. Cancer cells have spread to 1 to 15 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has invaded nearby organs, such as the liver, colon, or spleen. Cancer cells have not spread to lymph nodes or to distant organs.
- **Stage IV** is one of the following:
 - Cancer cells have spread to more than 15 lymph nodes.
 - Or, the tumor has invaded nearby organs and at least 1 lymph node.
 - Or, cancer cells have spread to distant organs.

In Loving Memory

During April 2014, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people

In Memory of Ted Cundiff

Mrs. Marjorie Kesterke, Berrien Springs
Pat & Don Geiger, Berrien Springs
Amy & Mike Semenak, St. Joseph

In Memory of Lisa Marie Daniel

Roberta Crowder, Yuma, AZ

In Memory of Connie Gerencser

Joyce Stockman, St. Joseph

In Memory of Mary Lee Helms

Judi & Ed Kuc, Long Beach, IN

In Memory of Dee Hickmott

Harry Lenardson, St. Joseph

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Tammy Ashley, St. Joseph
Anna & Gabriel Krajecki, Benton Harbor
Juanita Doyle, St. Joseph
Jerry & Sherry Hunt, Stevensville
Berrien County Riders

In Memory of Roberta Otte

Carolyn Norton, Coloma

In Memory of Gail Payne

Billie Nitz, New Troy

In Memory of Lafayette Rockette Sr.

Delores & Jeanette Fester, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Marjean Sauser

Ed & Bonnie Aber, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Aimee Sims

Nancy Gothberg, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Jean Stauffer

Thelma Gehres, St. Joseph

In Memory of Shirley Taylor,

Lela Hoge, Baroda
Delois Hoge, Baroda
Jim & Peg Stephens, Lapeer
Bill & Diane Groth, Baroda

Berrien County Cancer Service sends our sincere sympathy to all those who have recently lost loved ones. We thank all of our generous donors. Your donations are very much appreciated and will help cancer patients in Berrien County.
Thank you.

Thought For the Day

Those we hold dear never truly leave us.
They live on in the kindnesses they showed,
The comfort they shared and
The love they brought into our lives.

Isabel Norton



Please Consider...

Looking Ahead

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

June 3 & 17 – 1:30 p.m.

July 1 & 15 – 1:30 p.m.

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

June 10 & 24 – 1:30 p.m.

July 8 & 22 – 1:30 p.m.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

June 17 – 1:30 p.m.

July 15 – 1:30 p.m.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE– St. Joseph

Marie Yeager Cancer Center

June 12 – 5:30 p.m.

July 10 – 5:30 p.m.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

Lakeland Regional Medical Center

June 12 – 6:00 p.m.

July 10 – 6:00 p.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN JUNE

June 1 – National Cancer Survivors Day

June 2 – National Leave Office Early Day

June 4 – Old Maid’s Day

June 6 – Doughnut Day

June 8 – Multicultural American Children’s Day

June 12 – Career Nurses Assistant’s Day

June 13 – Blame Someone Else Day

June 15 - Father’s Day

June 19 – Recess At Work Day

June 20 – American Eagle Day

June 23 – Let It Go Day

June 24 – Celebration of Senses Day

June 27 – Industrial Workers of the World Day

June 29 – America’s Kids Day

Newsletters available online

Our newsletters are available on our website:
www.bccancerservice.org. If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please call our office at 269-429-3281 or send us an e-mail: staff@bccancerservice.org.

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc., is a non-profit organization funded primarily by the United Way, private donations and fund-raisers. We receive no Medicare, Medicaid or other insurance payments. To continue our free services to Berrien County cancer patients, we need your help. Any donation is greatly appreciated.

Donations to our General Fund will help balance our current budget. Donations to our Endowment Fund will help guarantee that the Cancer Service will be available for as long as needed. Your contribution to our non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation is tax deductible – an acknowledgment and receipt for tax purposes will be sent.

Donations can be made in honor of someone or in memory of a loved one. In these instances, we would also like to send acknowledgment to the honoree or next-of-kin so please provide that information when making your donation.

_____ General Fund _____ Endowment Fund

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Donation Amount \$ _____

OR

In Memory of _____

Please send notification of my gift to:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Thank you for your generosity!

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.
7301 Red Arrow Highway
Stevensville, MI 49127

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our readers & hope you enjoy it.

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CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville Office
1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month - 1:30 p.m.
Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.
7301 Red Arrow Highway
Stevensville, MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-3281 or (269) 465-5257

RAINBOWS OF HOPE GROUP- St. Joseph
2nd Thursday of each month – 5:30 p.m.
Marie Yeager Cancer Center
Ward and Kinney Room
3900 Hollywood Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 556-7114

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Niles
2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month – 1:30 p.m.
Niles Senior Center
1109 Bell Road
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 429-3281

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP
2nd Thursday of each month – 6:00 p.m.
Lakeland Regional Medical Center
Community Room
1234 Napier Ave.
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-8804