



THE CONNECTION

August 2005

Peninsula Cancer Institute – Combining the best treatments with support and education to promote healing and wellness for each patient

***“Before cancer, I just lived.
Now I live strong.”***

Lance Armstrong, cancer survivor

You’ve seen the recent news stories. You may even, like me, be a fan. On Sunday, July 23rd, Lance Armstrong drank champagne with his team as he rode his Trek bike into Paris and accepted his 7th consecutive win of the 2000 mile, 21 day race through the French countryside (including the Alps and the Pyrenees) that is known as the Tour De France. As he stood on the winner’s platform, he spoke briefly. Some of the words he used towards skeptics have stuck with me. “I’m sorry for you...I’m sorry you can’t believe in miracles.”

At the age of 25, Lance Armstrong, a brash young athlete from Texas, had proven he was one of the world’s top cyclists. He had won the World Championships, the Tour Du Pont and a lot of stages (days) in the renowned Tour De France. His future was bright.

Then, on October 2nd, 1996, he was diagnosed with testicular cancer. Like many young, healthy men, he ignored the signs, thinking he had injured himself during his intense training rides. When the cancer was diagnosed, it had already spread into his abdomen, lungs and brain. The team he rode for dropped his contract. He faced chemotherapy. His chances seemed dim.

His story-going through chemotherapy, recovering his strength and will to train and compete, the three children he was able to father thanks to sperm banking done before chemo, and his history-making seven consecutive wins of the Tour De France, is well known.

During his treatment, before he even knew if he would recover, Lance created the Lance Armstrong Foundation. The LAF has raised millions for cancer research, grants for community programs, comprehensive survivorship education and outreach initiatives and

advocacy efforts. The Foundation has received Charity Navigator’s highest ranking of 4 stars, with more than 80% of money raised being used to further this mission.

The Foundation’s website states “Our mission is to inspire and empower people with cancer to live strong. We serve our mission through education, advocacy, public health and research programs.” *Susan Miller RN, OCN*

There are many ways the LAF supports people dealing with cancer. To learn more, you can visit their website at www.livestrong.org, or write to them at LAF, P.O. Box 161150, Austin TX 78716-1150 phone 512-236-8820.



“Survivorship is more than beating the odds. It’s about living life to the fullest”

Paula Ivey, colon cancer survivor, quoted on the LAF website

WHAT'S NEW AT PCI?

We are pleased to introduce our Clinical Trials Program.

Our goal in developing a Clinical Trials Program is to provide our patients with access to the latest clinical trials and to support them as we help facilitate their decision on treatment options. At this time we are evaluating different clinical trials to see which trials would best meet the needs of our patients. As our program grows and we start to open trials we will make this information available to all of our patients.

Guy Tillinghast, MD joined PCI in our Newport News office in June. He is the Principle Investigator and Research Leader for the entire practice.

Ora Jackson RN, OCN who is located in our Newport News office, and **Kay Camp RN, OCN** who is located in our Williamsburg office joined the staff in May. Ora is our Clinical Research Director for the practice and Kay is the Clinical Research Coordinator for the Williamsburg office.

Sub-investigators for the Program are:

Mark Ellis MD, Laura Kerbin MD and **Lynn B. Ellis, Certified Nurse Practitioner** in our Williamsburg office and **Mashour Yousef, MD** in our Newport News office.

In our next issue: Why clinical trials are important?

NUTRITION TIPS

GRAINS – Make Half of Yours WHOLE!

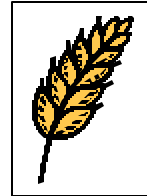
This is the recommendation from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans: of the 6-11 grain servings a day, make *at least* half of them **whole grain**. Whole grains improve our intake of fiber, vitamins and minerals that may help prevent constipation, heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

What is a whole grain? A whole grain contains all three parts of the grain kernel:

the **bran**: the outer layer of the seed, rich in B vitamins, magnesium, iron, and zinc and is the majority of the grain's fiber.

the **germ**: the part from which a new plant sprouts, rich in B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium, iron and zinc; contains a little protein and healthy fat.

the **endosperm**: makes up the biggest part of the seed. Contains carbohydrates and a little protein, small amounts of vitamins and minerals.



What is a serving? A grain serving is: 1 slice bread, ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta, about 1 cup cold cereal (check label for serving size), about 6 crackers (Saltine-size).

How do I find whole grains? The first ingredient must say whole grain.

Whole grains can be eaten plain or added to other dishes or as ingredients in baked goods. Easily available products are 100% whole wheat bread, quick cooking brown rice, pasta that is at least half whole wheat, and whole grain cereals like shredded wheat and oatmeal. There are many other grains that are great new additions to our everyday diet. You will find these at health food stores, gourmet food stores and some regular grocery stores. Here are a few ideas:

Barley - select hulled barley rather than pearled barley.

Buckwheat – roasted seeds cooked as kasha, ground as flour used in pancakes or noodles.

Bulgur – also called cracked wheat, used in tabouli, a Middle Eastern salad

Millet – looks like bird food but tastes great and is easy to digest.

Quinoa – ('keen-wa') a relatively high protein grain with more minerals than other grains. Most grains cook like rice and are extremely versatile. They are usually mildly flavored and work with your favorite seasonings. Store whole grains in airtight containers. I have found trying new grains a great experience, especially when you are bored with your usual food selections. Have fun!

Your dietitian, Lynne Groeger, MS,RD

[Source: mayoclinic.com]

Coping With Stress

Stress produces very real problems on all levels, physical, mental, and emotional. When we are going through the crisis of illness, it can be difficult to know whether problems are caused by the stress of the illness or its treatment.

This can result in what is known as a pain cycle. When we experience pain associated with illness we become tense and stressed. That physical tension and emotional stress can actually produce more discomfort and the pain cycle is put in motion.

The only way to break that cycle is to develop coping skills to lessen the stress and tension. Some of the most successful techniques are meditation, gentle exercise, and massage.

There are many ways to practice **meditation**, but the basic idea is to find a quiet place where you can spend some time focusing your attention inside yourself and connecting with the part of you that is whole and healthy, your true spirit. Learning to breathe in a deep rhythmic pattern can be very relaxing and results in a calming sense of peace.

Gentle stretching and exercise helps regulate your breath and release tension held in the body.

Massage not only relieves stress related discomfort, it can help with the side effects of medical treatment. The immune system can actually strengthen when the stress level is reduced. Some of the symptoms relieved by massage are:

- Pain
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Peripheral neuropathy

Massage is available to everyone who is in treatment at PCI. In the treatment rooms, gentle massaging of the feet and/or hands is offered and full body massage can be scheduled in the massage room. The positive response of our patients and their comments tell us that our therapeutic massage program is a big success.

Attached is a list of programs designed to help you cope with stress and feel better in your body (*see bottom of last page*). Please check the ones you would like to know more about and give this form to the receptionist.

Your massage therapists: Kathy Shore, CMT and Amy Hunt, CMT

SHARING THOUGHTS

My Journey With Colon Cancer

On January 24, 2005, following a routine colonoscopy, I was diagnosed with a malignant polyp in the sigmoid portion of my colon. This erupted in only 4 years, since I had a sigmoidoscopy in 2001, which was clear. I was informed that I needed immediate surgery, which was completed on February 1, 2005. Dr. Wood did an excellent job and was able to restore me to full functioning. I was home in 3 days.

My recovery at home went as expected and I was back to work in 4 weeks, feeling great. There was one problem, however. The malignant polyp had spread to one lymph node so chemotherapy was recommended.

Dr. Ellis met with me, initially, and gave me the prognosis that I needed to hear, that my cancer was very curable, but that I needed 6 months of chemotherapy as a precaution, just in case this cancer had decided to travel anywhere else. On this first visit, I was visited by Iris the Director of Integrated Services, Lynne the Registered Dietitian (since nutrient intake is very important to someone who is on chemotherapy), and even the Massage Therapist, Amy. I also met my chemotherapy nurse, Wendi, who in my mind, is one of the most wonderful people that I know. There was a holistic approach to my treatment and all of this was explained to my wife and I in a very positive and time intensive manner. It seemed as if the entire staff rallied around my wife and I, to give us the most information possible and reassure us about the outcome.

I am now halfway through treatment, and, while it is no picnic, with the help of Dr. Ellis and his wonderful staff, I am tolerating the treatment. The staff watches my blood work very closely each week and provided treatment whenever any component is of concern.

I have lost 21 pounds that really has been good for me, I have dropped to date from 203 pounds to my most recent checkup at 182 pounds. I was overweight when I started and would hope to be able to maintain this weight after the chemotherapy regimen is completed. My blood pressure also dropped and is consistently in the 120/75 range. Although I would not have chosen to lose weight in this fashion, I still see it as a good thing, if I can maintain it, and people say that I look great. Positive attitude goes a long way in dealing with this kind of treatment. I have been able to continue working, although I am not a bricklayer, and have an office job, which makes it a lot easier.

My chemotherapy is administered to me three days, every two weeks, or so, depending upon if I am allowed a break to recover a little more. I wear an infusion pump during these three days, coming off early on the 3rd day. Normally, the evening of the 3rd day and following day are my worst days, and I now stay home and rest. Listening to your body and resting has a great deal to do with how you feel. If you try and keep the same schedule as you had before chemotherapy, you will have a very hard time. Give in, and give your body the rest it is calling for.

I am looking forward to graduation in late August, 2005, with a degree in Cancer Survivorship. My wife and I have been involved in Relay for Life for many years, and it is much more meaningful to me now. This will be a lifelong commitment for both of us.

Lastly, words are insufficient to express how I feel about Dr. Ellis and all of his staff. They are the most caring group of people that I know, and they all, without exception, have a strong passion for the work that they do. In my humble opinion, there is none better anywhere. May God bless each and every one of them. *Marty Kline, Cancer Survivor*

Remember that this is a place where patients, family members and caregivers can share their thoughts with others. If you have something you have written, a good joke or a special tip you would like included in the newsletter, you can give it to anyone on your care team and they will get it to Integrated Services for the next issue. Also please let us know if you are interested in being a mentor to another patient or caregiver so we can add you to our resource list.

WHO IS A CAREGIVER?

"Caregivers provide support to someone who needs help. It doesn't matter how many hours a week are spent providing support. Caregivers may live with the person they are caring for providing assistance with daily needs, or may visit the person weekly or call regularly. Being a caregiver involves an investment in time, energy and support." Being a caregiver is very stressful and it is vital that you take time for yourself so you can continue to care for others.

The quote came from Caring Connections and for more information on caregivers please see www.caringinfo.org. Mary Inman – Family Services

Some Upcoming Events We Would Like To Highlight

Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE
In Virginia Beach on October 22, 2005
(visit www.hamptonroads.com/raceforthecure/
or call 757-490-7794)

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING CANCER FATIGUE

A Program for Cancer Patients, Caregivers and Families
Monday, September 26, 2005 (see attached flyer)

The Leukemia & Lymphoma society
2005 LIGHT THE NIGHT WALK
In Williamsburg on October 7
and
at Port Warwick on October 14
(visit www.lightthenight
or call 1-800-766-0797)

RELAY BAKE SALE

On July 25th the Williamsburg PCI Relay Team raised \$248.00 at a bake sale for the 2006 **Relay For Life**. A big thank you to all of the staff, patients and families who baked and bought! A very special thanks goes to Ursula, Georgi, and Phyllis for all of their wonderful help!

I am interested in: (Feel free to check as many as you like then tear off and give to anyone on your care team)

- ? Meditation ? Tai Chi ? Music therapy ? Therapeutic writing
And journaling
- ? Gentle stretching ? Yoga ? Art therapy

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____