



THE CONNECTION

*Created by the Integrative Medicine Team of Peninsula Cancer Institute—
Combining the best treatments with support and education to promote healing and wellness for each patient*

Spring Issue

Peninsula Cancer Institute

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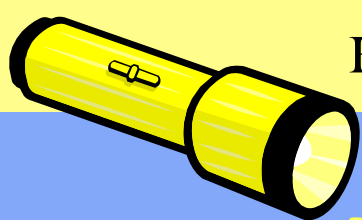


Spring Haiku

The tiny bird blue
Flies in on golden sunbeam
Song ends the silence

In this issue...

- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Integrative Oncology???
- Spring Humor
- Spring Recipes
- Good Vibrations
- Fundraising Updates at PCI
- Breaking Nutritional News
- PCI Integrative Medicine Team



Peripheral Neuropathy—(neur-op-a-the)

What is peripheral neuropathy?? It is damage to the peripheral nerves that supply the extremities. Certain chemotherapy drugs may cause peripheral neuropathy. Sometimes these symptoms are temporary and gradually decrease after cancer treatment is completed. At other times they may persist, requiring medical attention.

A list of some of the Chemotherapy & Biotherapy Agents that may lead to Peripheral Neuropathy:

Common:

- ◆ Oxaliplatin
- ◆ Cisplatin
- ◆ Taxol
- ◆ Taxotere
- ◆ Thalomid
- ◆ Velcade
- ◆ Vincristine
- ◆ Navelbine

Less Common:

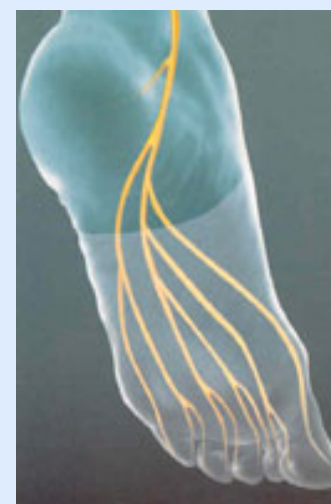
- ◆ Nexavar
- ◆ Vinblastine
- ◆ Carboplatin

Patients at increased risk for developing peripheral neuropathy:

- ◆ People with pre-existing peripheral neuropathy
- ◆ People who have been previously treated with drugs causing peripheral neuropathy
- ◆ People receiving multi-agent treatment, where more than one drug may contribute to the development of PN (Taxol/Carboplatin)
- ◆ Other factors are age, co-morbidities (such as diabetes), dose and schedule of treatment

It's important to report symptoms to your doctor or nurse:

- ◆ A feeling of “pins and needles” in your hands and/or your feet
- ◆ Numbness in your hands and/or your feet
- ◆ Trouble picking up a small object or buttoning your shirt or blouse
- ◆ Constipation or other changes in your bowel or bladder function
- ◆ Pain in your hands or feet
- ◆ Changes in your vision
- ◆ Ringing in your ears
- ◆ Trouble hearing
- ◆ Decrease in sexual sensation



Peripheral Neuropathy



Tips

Preventing injury & coping with neuropathy:

- ◆ Avoid exposing your fingers and toes to extreme temperatures
- ◆ Use protective gloves while washing dishes
- ◆ Use pot holders
- ◆ Do not take hot baths
- ◆ Use soap dispensers instead of bar soap
- ◆ Avoid wearing shoes that are too big—shoes should have sturdy soles and have closed toes
- ◆ Keep rooms well lit
- ◆ Remove things from the floor in your home that you may trip on
- ◆ Use handrails when going up or down stairs
- ◆ Use nonskid bath mats in the tub or shower
- ◆ Use a walker or cane if you are unsteady on your feet
- ◆ Avoid alcohol
- ◆ If receiving the drug oxaliplatin, avoid cold temperatures or objects for the first few days after treatment. Avoid cold drinks during that time as well. It may help to wear gloves when reaching inside the refrigerator.



More Ideas for neuropathy

Nutritional Options:

There are a variety of supplements and a focus on healthy foods high in these nutrients that may help: Glutamine, B complex, carnitine, lipoic acid, glutathione, melatonin, N-acetylcysteine, Vitamin E, gamma linoleic acid.

Ask Lynne Groeger, your dietician, for help determining what is best for you.

Massage Therapy Options:

At PCI, we believe that massage can sometimes help with symptoms of peripheral neuropathy due to the increase in circulation and stimulation of the nerve endings caused by this gentle technique. The massage will need to be quite gentle because your sense of touch may be affected by Peripheral Neuropathy (possibly leaving you unable to give accurate feedback on the level of pressure). Please ask someone on your PCI team if massage can help you.

Acupuncture:

Several patients have told us that they have had great success with acupuncture for the relief of their peripheral neuropathy symptoms. Ask a member of the PCI Integrative Medicine Team for more information or a referral.

Integrative Oncology???



–What does it all mean???

–How do I decide???

Many times when people are told they have a diagnosis of cancer they struggle with all of the decisions that must be made. Often there are friends and family members who have their own ideas of what treatments are best. While exploring all of their options, people often consider both conventional Western medical treatments like chemotherapy and radiation therapy along with complementary and alternative medicine. The list of what is considered complementary and alternative therapies changes frequently as we learn which options prove to be safe and effective. Many times something that was once considered complementary or alternative becomes part of more traditional Western medicine. For example fish oil capsules were once considered unconventional treatment and now they may be prescribed to treat patients with high triglycerides.

HOW IS COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE DIFFERENT FROM ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE?

- ◆ Complementary medicine is used together with conventional medicine
- ◆ Alternative medicine is used in place of conventional medicine

WHAT IS CAM?

CAM is a short way of saying complementary and alternative medicine.

CAN A THERAPY BE BOTH COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE?

Yes, take for example acupuncture. If you were on chemotherapy and also used acupuncture to help with some of the side effects like nausea, fatigue or some types of peripheral neuropathy than you would be using acupuncture as a complementary treatment. If you were using acupuncture in place of chemotherapy to treat cancer then it would be considered alternative treatment.

WHAT IS INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY?

Integrative Oncology is a term used to talk about using complementary methods of healing along with traditional medicine for cancer patients. Integrative oncology combines the discipline of modern science with the wisdom of traditional healing.

WHAT TYPE OF PRACTICE IS PENINSULA CANCER INSTITUTE?

PCI was founded based on the concepts of Integrative Oncology using complementary therapies along with state of the art medical treatment to treat the whole patient. We believe that by combining these therapies we can help our patients find ways to deal with both the physical and the emotional aspects of their diagnosis and help each of them have an improved quality of life.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY?

Two very good resources are listed below:

- ◆ The Society for Integrative Oncology has a good website at <http://www.integrativeonc.org/>
- ◆ The New Medicine based on a PBS special about Integrative Medicine has a great interactive website at <http://thenewmedicine.org/>

HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (C.A.M.)?

As a good start, here are a few resources that are listed on the [National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine](#) website:

- ◆ **NCCAM Clearinghouse**

The NCCAM Clearinghouse provides information on CAM and NCCAM
Web site: nccam.nih.gov

- ◆ **Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS), NIH**

ODS seeks to strengthen knowledge and understanding of dietary supplements
Web site: ods.od.nih.gov

- ◆ **PubMed®**

A service of the National Library of Medicine (NLM), PubMed contains publication information and (in most cases) brief summaries of articles from scientific and medical journals.
Web site: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez

- ◆ **CAM on PubMed**

A subset of the PubMed system and focuses on the topic of CAM.
Website: <http://nccam.nih.gov/research/camonpubmed/>

- ◆ **ClinicalTrials.gov**

ClinicalTrials.gov is a database of information on federally and privately supported clinical trials (research studies in people) for a wide range of diseases and conditions.
Web site: www.clinicaltrials.gov

- ◆ **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

The FDA oversees the safety of many products, such as foods (including dietary supplements), medicines, medical devices, and cosmetics.
Web site: www.fda.gov

- ◆ **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)**

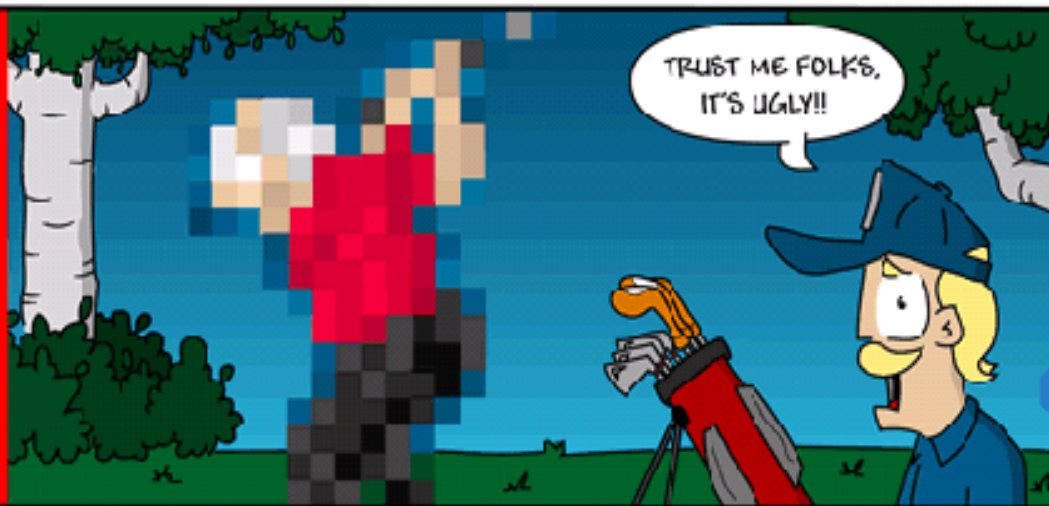
The FTC is a Federal agency charged with protecting the public against unfair and deceptive business practices. A key area of its work is the regulation of advertising (except for prescription and medical devices).
Web site: www.ftc.gov

- ◆ **National Library of Medicine (NLM)**

NLM is the world's largest medical library.
Web site: www.nlm.nih.gov

Please **contact** anyone on the Integrative Oncology team for additional resources and information.

WARNING: DUE TO THE GRAPHIC NATURE OF THIS GOLF SWING IT HAS BEEN EDITED TO MAKE IT SUITABLE FOR VIEWING. SOME IMAGES YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE MAY BE DISTURBING. YOUNG GOLFERS, PREGNANT WOMEN, AND THE FAINT OF HEART SHOULD LOOK AWAY. 'LIFE IN THE TRAP' IS NOT LIABLE FOR ANY RAMIFICATIONS IT MAY HAVE ON YOUR GOLF SWING.



Springtime Humor



"This composition was produced during the artist's 'Hay Fever' period, and is simply entitled 'The Sneeze'."



"I stopped to smell the flowers. Where's my inhaler?"



Yummy Springtime Recipes

Roasted Green Beans with Sweet Red Peppers

INGREDIENTS

- ★ 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed, washed and dried (the smaller the beans, the better)
- ★ 1 sweet red pepper, washed and seeded, cut into thin strips
- ★ Zest of 1 large lemon and juice of ½ the lemon
- ★ ¼ teaspoon salt
- ★ ½ teaspoon garlic powder (fresh garlic tends to burn in this recipe-too bitter)
- ★ ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ★ ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees
2. Place green beans and peppers in large bowl and add lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, garlic, basil and pepper.
3. Toss until evenly coated and spread on a cookie sheet sprayed with cooking spray
4. Lightly coat beans and peppers with more cooking spray
5. Bake 10 minutes
6. Stir beans and peppers and bake for another 8-10 minutes; watch closely so they do not burn..
7. Stir before serving. The beans will have a slight crunch to them. Yum!!

NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS PER SERVING (1 Serving = 1 cup)

40 calories, 0 grams fat, 3 grams protein, 11 grams carbohydrate, 4 grams fiber, 150mg sodium
Counts as 2 vegetable servings on the 1995 ADA Diabetic Exchange Lists for Meal Planning

Spring Pea Medley with Edible Bowl

INGREDIENTS

- ★ 2 tblsp butter
- ★ 1 small sweet onion, diced
- ★ 1 cup fresh shelled green peas
- ★ ½ cup low sodium, low fat vegetable broth
- ★ ½ pound sugar snap peas, trimmed
- ★ ½ pound snow peas, trimmed
- ★ 1 tblsp chopped fresh parsley
- ★ Salt and pepper to taste
- ★ 1 medium head radicchio



DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium skillet, melt the butter over medium low heat. Add the onion and sauté until transparent, about 5 minutes. Stir in the green peas and the broth, and cook for about 3 minutes. Add the snap peas, snow peas and parsley, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Cook, covered, for about 3 more minutes.
2. Remove the inner leaves from the radicchio and spread the outer leaves out to make a bowl. Fill the hollow with the pea mixture and garnish with additional Italian parsley.

Good Vibrations

For the past three years, Peninsula Cancer Institute has been providing music for patients while they receive chemotherapy. From the beginning, the effects of music on patients in the clinic have been obvious. People seem to relax almost as soon as the music hits their ears. The music seems to break up negative thought patterns and create a more positive atmosphere or mood.

The idea behind music and cancer is simple; the more relaxed, calm, and comfortable a person is, the better they respond to receiving chemotherapy. One major reason for this is music's ability to reduce mental and emotional stress during the infusion process. It is believed that *distraction* plays a major role in this reduction of stress.

Over the last eight months, PCI has piloted a program in the Williamsburg office using movies to create a similar distraction for the patients. The movies, played on portable DVD players, are available for patients in both private and group rooms. The response to this new form of distraction has been overwhelming. Patients who watched movies during the infusion process reported:

- ◆ Having a less stressful experience
- ◆ Having a smaller perceived amount of time at the clinic
- ◆ Having reduced chemo-related anxiety
- ◆ Having a more positive outlook than they did when they arrived at the clinic.

Much like the music at our clinic, movies can be tailored to the needs of the patient. Certain movies inspire motivation. Others leave the viewer feeling happy or warm. Other movies allow people an outlet for overwhelming emotions. Sometimes the movie simply offers a welcome two hour break from reality by closely following a plot or storyline.

The success of the program has been an inspiration to offer this service to each of our three clinics. The program has already begun in Gloucester and plans are being made to start it in Newport News. One challenge with the program is the cost of DVD's. With the program being new, patients have a limited selection of movies to choose from. However, patients are encouraged to bring DVD's from home to watch. Donations to the PCI DVD library are also always welcome.

Anyone interested in donating DVD's or DVD players can contact:

**Greg Gernon at 757-345-5724 extension 53946
or email greg.gernon@rivhs.com**

~Greg

Fundraising Updates from each PCI clinic

Gloucester's Awesome Work

- ◆ The Friends and Family PCI Cookbook is ready to buy!
- ◆ Ruffling a homemade quilt. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00—all proceeds benefit Relay for Life. Drawing to be done at the Gloucester Relay for Life event on June 5th/6th.
- ◆ Raffle Tickets and Books available at PCI Gloucester 804-693-9037



Williamsburg's Great Efforts

- ◆ A February Chili Luncheon raised \$630 plus \$200 in donations for Relay for Life.
- ◆ The team has raised roughly \$2500.00 from bear, jewelry, donations, and handmade flower sales as well as the \$2.00 dress down Fridays for all employees.
- ◆ Upcoming events include: A hot dog luncheon in April and a photo shoot in May. The photo shoot will offer the services of a professional photographer at reduced price. Contact Williamsburg PCI for more details 757-345-5724.

Newport News's Incredible Hard Work

- ◆ Had a very successful Chili Cook-off/Hot Dog Extravaganza
- ◆ The bears they are selling are flying off the shelves
- ◆ Will be having a raffle for a beautiful spring pink and green Vera Bradley bag at the end of the March

***FYI: If you are a survivor and would like to attend the Relay For Life Survivor Dinner, you may pick up a registration form at any PCI clinic.





Green Tea Supplements May Interfere With Velcade

A study published in the February 6, 2009 issue of Blood Journal shows that when the active component in green tea is given to mice with multiple myeloma (a blood cancer) being treated with Velcade, the drug is inactivated. The same effect was seen in lab dishes of multiple myeloma cells, green tea extract and the drug. Green tea as a drink is clearly different than a supplement but it raises a red flag about excessive consumption. So, the concept of moderation in intake is again shown to be the prudent way to go. As for supplements, let us know what you are interested in so we can do some research and help find the best answer for your particular situation.

Comfort Care Foods

Recently I came across a company called Comfort Care Foods that produces foods geared for cancer patients. Their products can be ordered by phone or online. They make four types of soups, whole wheat bread and three varieties of cookies. Care packages that also include several beverages, rolled oats, honey, and apple butter are available. I requested samples so we could check them out for you. Their stuff is good! We (the Integrative medicine team) liked 3 of the soups better than the fourth but everyone has different tastes. We liked the bread and cookies very much. The company's website has nice information about supporting cancer treatment and recovery with nutrition.

Take a look at their website: www.comfort-care-products.com If a friend or family member is journeying through the cancer experience, this might be a useful gift idea.

Check it out!!





Angelfood Ministries

Angelfood Ministries is a non-profit, non-denominational organization dedicated to providing food relief to communities throughout the United States. Essentially they buy food in quantity to get good prices and package it for people to purchase at those good prices. It is distributed through local churches. In Williamsburg it is at Faith Fellowship, Kings Way Church and Crosswalk Community Church; in Newport News it is at Mercy and Truth on Jefferson; and in Gloucester it is Newington Church. Each month they have a Convenience Box that includes 10 fully cooked meals - just heat and serve - for \$28.00. There is a Regular Box of food for \$30 that provides the basics (with a focus on protein foods like meat) to feed a family of four for a week. Additional specials are things like a fruit and veggie box for \$21; in February that box had about 20 pounds of produce. Each month the specials are different so check the website for more details: www.angelfoodministries.com

Orders usually need to be in (by phone, in person, online or by mail) by the second Monday of the month with delivery that Saturday. It's a great way to help get good food on the table economically and efficiently. Most of these foods are basic, unprocessed foods which is especially good for the nutritional value!



**This “*Breaking News*” brought to you by Lynne,
your PCI Oncology Nutrition Specialist**

The [PCI Integrative Oncology Team](#) has enjoyed preparing this newsletter for you. If you have any comments, please feel free to let any one of us know your thoughts. We would love any suggestions or ideas you may have to make this newsletter better.

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Iris Grant RN, OCN - Director/Patient Care Coordinator
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Carol Hearn RN - Palliative Care Coordinator
Brenda Stout RN, OCN - Patient Care Coordinator
Lynne Groeger MS, RD, CSO - Oncology Nutrition
Mary Inman - Palliative Care Coordinator
Martha Petit - Palliative Care Coordinator
Amy Hunt CMT, CLT, RYT - Massage Therapy
Kathy Shore CMT, RYT - Massage Therapy
Greg Gernon—Music Therapy Coordinator

Peninsula Cancer Institute is always eternally grateful to receive any heartfelt stories from our patients or their families and loved ones. Please contact any of our staff if you would like to contribute an article to our newsletter.

