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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*

Winter Issue

Peninsula
Cancer
Institute

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Winter's Hibernation Haiku

Blanket of silence
Pulled up to my ears, tucked in
A much needed rest



Proud Flight

I donated "Proud Flight" as a small token of the deep and sincere appreciation that Katie and I feel toward Dr. Mark Ellis and the entire staff of the Peninsula Cancer Institute. They went far beyond very professionally treating Sue's dreaded disease. From warm sincere smiles at every visit, to taking the time to personally getting to know our family meant so much to each of us. Everyone treated us with dignity and respect every step of the way.

The kind people at the Institute made the most traumatic experience of our lives bearable. Mark, Kay, and Tamara with their constant positive attitudes gave us exactly what we needed "hope".

The courage and utter bravery that every cancer patient demonstrates each day truly is a "Proud Flight".

~Bill Casto



Come see me in the Williamsburg
PCI front lobby!

PCI would like to thank Bill for this generous offering. Bill has the extraordinary talent of taking a simple piece of driftwood, seeing something beautiful within it and then bringing it to life. We are eternally grateful that he shared this sculpture with us. The Eagle will always be a symbol of Hope, Strength and Courage for us and our patients. PCI feels very privileged to have the honor of caring for people like the Castos. You will be in our hearts forever.



Winter Magic



Winter, the time for cozy fires burning,
Popping and crackling as we watch the embers dance.
Sweet, gooey Marshmallows roasting for one and all.
A time for cuddling and snuggling, as we bask in the firelight.
So much to reflect on as we enter our own state of hibernation.
This season of the year brings with it a sense of sleepiness;
The nights grow longer and we retreat to our homes;
We feel a sense of comfort in just "being there."
Out come the sweat suits and soft flannel pajamas;
They become our winter "uniforms" of choice.
A sense of gathering our loved ones and friends,
Becomes a mission of hospitality as we long to share;
Share what we have and who we are with those dearest to us.
The smells of fresh bread baking and hot soup on the stove,
Bring back memories of childhood days,
When time seemed more abundant and life had a slower pace.
Even now the magic of snow glistening in the night air,
Brings a sense of exhilaration and excitement.
The sounds of children playing in the falling snow;
Screaming with glee as the snowballs fly
Makes us all children once more.
As the white of the snow blankets the earth
In a billowy softness, we are refreshed and alive.
As "Old Man Winter" comes knocking at our doors;
May we all remember to be kinder than necessary;
More patient than expected;
Smile more than frown;
Acknowledge each other for the
individuals we are;
Respecting our right to our own beliefs;
And live, love and laugh
each and every day of our lives!



~Carol





Healthy Holiday Nutrition



Healthy holiday nutrition for patients and survivors encompasses many different situations: you may need to lose weight, gain weight, maintain, boost your immunity, build new blood cells, etc. Here are ideas for some of those scenarios:

Some quick tips for weight loss/maintenance:

- **Wear a belt to every party where they'll be lots of holiday type food** - and don't loosen it - so you feel the fullness and stop eating when appropriate.
- Use **smaller plates and utensils** so you do eat less - enjoy the quality but do consider slowing the pace of eating, making the mouthfuls smaller.
- Pay back with **small spurts of vigorous exercise** - even 10 or 15 minutes of intense walking can burn off significant calories
- Use "**substitute ingredients**" - fruit puree for fat, evaporated skim milk to add creaminess with less calories, blend up cooked veggies to thicken soups with less calories.
- Google **lighter recipes** - the internet has a plethora of recipes with less fat, salt, and robust holiday taste
- **Treat *treats* with respect** - if you decide you have entitlement at every meal and everyday for the next 4-5 weeks - that IS disordered eating - you need to find a way to calm that desperate inner food voice.

The holidays are a great time to enjoy with mindful eating and food selections and a commitment to simply maintain your weight. (this section from www.healthcentral.com)



It's all about choices...



If you need to gain weight:

Remember to keep up with **small, frequent meals and snacks**. Sometimes more activities going on might cause you to skip the 'frequent feedings'! You can't afford to miss opportunities for nutrition so keep healthy, **high Calorie snacks** handy: nuts, trail mix, fruitcake and eggnog!

Try not to stress about things – it can use up valuable nutrition. Try to keep things simple, ask for help, and delegate shopping and housework. This is a great opportunity to rediscover the real importance of the holidays....

If you need to boost your immunity and build new blood cells:



Focus on protein: include lean meats, poultry, milk, yogurt, eggs, cheese and seafood whenever possible. Nuts and legumes (the starchy kinds of beans) help too.

Limit added sugar: "empty Calories" from sugar stress the immune system so stick to healthy sweets like fruit dishes and other immune boosting foods like vegetables, whole grains and legumes. *Some* sweet treats won't hurt but be mindful!

And always remember safe kitchen sanitation, food prep and handling. Everyone needs to wash hands frequently. Avoid crowds and people with colds or flu whenever you can.

For all of these, gentle and enjoyable physical activity will also help your progress. Take walks with family and friends when you can. Hugging must be good physical activity too, don't you think?!?

Happy, healthy holiday wishes to you all,
Lynne



Two Options for Healthy Holiday Cookies



Ginger Crinkle Cookies

PREP TIME—10 minutes and easy

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour

INGREDIENTS:

2/3 cup canola oil
 1 1/2 cups turbinado sugar, divided (see Tip)
 1 large egg
 4 tablespoons molasses
 2 cups sifted whole-wheat pastry flour
 2 teaspoons baking soda
 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 1 1/4 teaspoons ground ginger
 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Mix oil and 1 cup sugar in a large bowl until combined. Beat in egg until combined. Stir in molasses until evenly incorporated. Sift flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and salt over the wet ingredients and stir until just combined.
3. Put the remaining 1/2 cup sugar in a small bowl. Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and roll each ball in the sugar before placing 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Do not flatten.
4. Bake the cookies until set, but still soft when gently touched, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: Per cookie: 103 calories; 5 g. fat (0 g. sat, 3 g mono); 6 mg. cholesterol; 15 g. carbohydrate; 1 g. protein; 1 g. fiber; 94 mg. sodium; 38 mg. potassium.

1 Carbohydrate Serving

Exchanges: 1 other carbohydrate, 1 fat

TIP: Tip: Turbinado sugar is steam-cleaned raw cane sugar. It's coarse-grained and light brown in color, with a slight molasses flavor. The coarse texture adds great crunch when used in baking. Find it in the natural-foods section of large supermarkets or at natural-foods stores.

MAKE AHEAD TIP: Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

Winter Wonderbars

INGREDIENTS:

Canola Oil Spray
 3/4 cup whole wheat flour
 1/4 tsp baking powder
 1/4 tsp baking soda
 1/8 tsp salt
 1 large egg
 1/4 cup honey
 1/4-1/2 tsp grated orange peel
 3 tbsp applesauce
 2 tbsp canola oil
 2/3 cup pitted and chopped dates
 1/3 cup chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Lightly spray an 8 inch baking pan with canola oil spray and set it aside.
2. In a small bowl, mix the egg, honey, canola oil, orange peel and applesauce.
3. Stir the egg mixture into the dry ingredients until it is blended.
4. Stir in the dates and the walnuts.
5. Spread the mixture into the prepared pan.
6. Bake it until you can stick a toothpick into the center and it comes out clean, about 25 minutes.
7. Cool it in the pan on a wire rack.
8. Cut into 16 squares and you're ready to serve this wonderful treat.

Makes 16 servings.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

91 calories, 4 g total fat (<1g saturated fat), 14 g carbohydrates, 2 g protein, 1 g fiber, 58 mg sodium.

From Oncology Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group of the American Dietetic Association.

Transformations...

It was her very first massage at PCI. She explained to me that she was a type A+++ personality and sitting still was difficult for her. As I worked on her, she did appear restless. She even expressed her dislike for the cd playing during the massage. During the session, she really needed to talk about her fears of her upcoming chemotherapy treatment, fears for her children's responses to her disease and hair loss, fears for radiation therapy, concerns about juggling being a wife, a mother of 3, running a business, handling treatment, being a den mother, and the list went on. It was a time of change, of stepping into the unknown, and of losing control and it seemed almost too much for her in that moment. She was hardly able to lie still—it was more therapeutic for her at the time to express herself than to relax and receive massage.

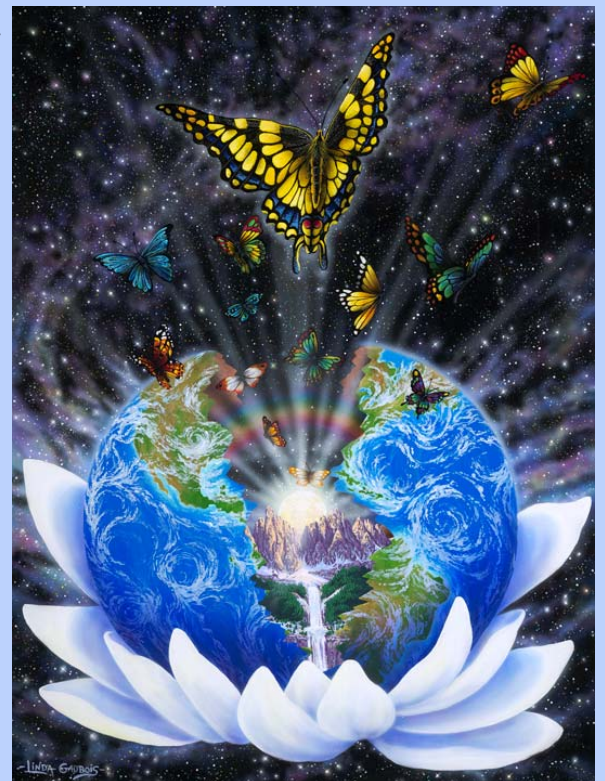
By putting one foot in front of the other, each one of her treatment sessions came and went and she did great. She faithfully continued enjoying massage therapy all the way through her journey at PCI. Each session, she seemed a little more peaceful and a little more able to melt into the table than the time before.

Once she had completed her chemotherapy and her radiation therapy, she came in for her last massage. As I worked on her, I couldn't help notice the dramatic difference in this final massage as compared to the first. She had become a picture of peace—the only thing she said during the whole massage was how much she liked the cd that was playing (I might add that it was the same cd that I played during her first massage).

When the session was over and we were saying our good-byes, she commented on the massage being "extra special". I asked what she thought the reason was. She said she thought it was that I was giving her a really good one as a sending off gift. She seemed surprised when I then told her that I had not done anything different than any other time. The only real change was in her. By allowing herself to really be "present" during the massage, she could fully experience it. She was truly "right here, right now" during the session and so she was able to feel every stroke, every touch completely. It was beautiful! I hugged her and thought, "You may have come to us as a self proclaimed type A+++ , but you are graduating with full A honors."

Transformations are the essence of the journey.

I love this work!
~amy



Listen...

Breathe...

Observe...what is going on inside you and around you

Pay Attention On Purpose....

So, what does it mean to be “mindful”? It means paying attention on purpose; being totally awake in the present moment and aware of our feelings without judging whether they are good or bad or right or wrong.

Is this a religious program? No. Mindful Awareness is not related to any religion. The ability to be mindful, calm, and spacious in our attention can actually provide us a deeper connection to all that sustains us.

Is there scientific evidence for this program? This program is being studied in hospitals with people who are experiencing chronic pain, depression, and the stress of a health crisis. Our patients who are currently using the Mindful Awareness program are finding it very beneficial.

How is this going to help me? The stress and tension involved with a health crisis can intensify the physical, emotional, and psychological pain involved in the experience. This can create a “pain cycle” so that you don’t know where one stops and the other starts. Being able to calm your body and mind and relax in the moment can break that cycle.

A New Year. . .A New Focus A New Program For You

There is much to be mindful of in this winter season of holidays, an ending of a year and a beginning of another. This year, we can add our awareness of challenges that are affecting each of us personally.

The practice of mindful awareness calls us to be present to ourselves and all that we are experiencing in this moment. Distractions are readily available and provide an opportunity to avoid introspection, but what if you chose not to do that. . .this time.

What if you chose to sit with yourself and reflect on what is truly important to you in your life, right this minute, what would you say? If you did that, are there changes you would make in the way you relate to yourself and, in turn, to your family. . .your friends. . .your community?

Beginning in January, you will have the opportunity to gather with others to take a closer look at how and why we make the choices and/or the decisions that we do. These monthly gatherings are part of the Mindful Awareness Meditation Program sponsored by the Integrative Medicine Dept. of PCI., and are open to patients of all three PCI offices. The facilitators will be Kathy Shore and Martha Petit.

If you are already using the Mindful Awareness Self Study Program, this is your chance to share your experience with others and have a time of group meditation, discussion, and experiential activities. If you are not using the program at home, but would like to know more about it, please join us.

Beginning Thursday, January 22, 2009

**PCI Newport News
12100 Warwick Blvd., Suite 201
Newport News, Virginia**

**6:00pm – 7:30pm
In our waiting area**

To register or for more information contact:

Kathy Shore

757 534-5555 ext. 228

Email: kathleen.shore@rivhs.com

Martha Petit

757 534-5555 ext. 240

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Winter Humor

Q. What sits on the bottom of the cold Arctic Ocean and shakes?

A. A nervous wreck

Q. What's the difference between an orange and a walrus?

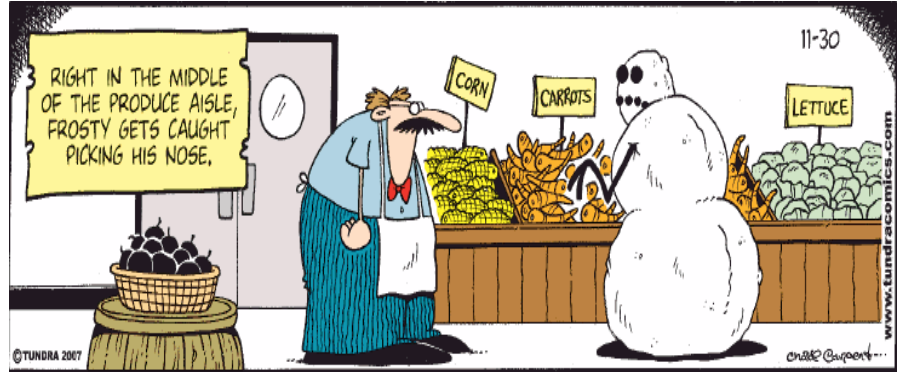
A. Put your arms around it and squeeze, if you don't get orange juice, then it was a walrus.

Q. What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

A. Frostbite!

Q. What's the difference between a banana and a walrus?

A. You better figure it out, because if you ever try and peel a walrus...



Q. What do chefs call "Baked Alaska" in Alaska?

A. Baked Here

Q. What vegetable was forbidden on the ships of Arctic explorers?

A. Leeks

Q. What do you call a reindeer with no eyes?

A. I have no eye deer.

Q. If you live in an igloo, what's the worst part about global warming?

A. No privacy.





FYI...



What do I do with my old drugs? NEVER dispose of any medications down the sink or toilet. This can lead to water pollution. You may bring all of your PCI prescribed and unused chemotherapy drugs to PCI for disposal—we will incinerate them for you. Other medications can be crushed or dissolved and mixed with kitty litter or coffee grounds, place in sealable container, and put in trash. Make sure to remove or destroy identifying information from the drug bottle before discarding. This is the recommendation from the Virginia Dept of Environmental Quality (www.deq.state.va.us/). Please check with you states medical waste disposal guidelines if you live outside of Virginia.

Using a Sledgehammer to Kill a Mosquito? The Story of the Raw Almond:

I don't normally like to be an alarmist but the 2007 regulations that require almond growers to pasteurize raw almonds using a toxic chemical is quite concerning to say the least. There have been two salmonella outbreaks in 2001 and 2004 traced back to raw almonds. This is what led to this regulation. Why the use of propylene oxide (PPO) was the method of choice to pasteurize is unclear. The National Institutes of Health Toxicology Program lists PPO as a "reasonably anticipated human carcinogen". Raw organic almonds have not been implicated in any illness outbreaks and organic almonds are not pasteurized with PPO. They are likely a bit harder to find and certainly more expensive. If you like almonds, you may want to select good old dry roasted and avoid this whole mess! ~Lynne

Odors cause nausea. When patients undergo chemotherapy, their sense of smell can be dramatically altered. Things that once smelled good, can now trigger nausea. Friends, family members, visitors and medical staff are encouraged to avoid wearing perfume, aftershave and scented body lotions. It's also a good idea to avoid strong smelling cleaning agents and room fresheners as well. This usually resolves once the chemo drugs clear the body.

PCI's Relay for Life Team Updates:

Gloucester: Raising money through luncheons, selling Charity Bears and beaded bracelets. They are currently accepting recipes for a cook book they are creating to be sold in spring as well.

Contact Gloucester staff if you are interested in participating.

Williamsburg: Fundraising by selling Charity Bears and jewelry.

Newport News: Fundraising by selling Charity Bears and jewelry.

Monthly Nutrition Meetings continue in 2009! Open to all PCI patients who are interested in learning about healthy eating.

Where: PCI Newport News Waiting Room

When: third Tuesday of each month, 5:30-6:30 pm

Feb 17, 2009

Mar 17, 2009

Apr 21, 2009

Please call 534-5555 x 239 to reserve your seat. Looking forward to seeing you, Lynne

The PCI Integrative Medicine 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.

Iris Grant RN, OCN - Director/Patient Care Coordinator

Sandy O'Marah RN, OCN - Patient Care Coordinator

Carol Hearn RN - Patient Care Coordinator

Brenda Stout RN, OCN - Patient Care Coordinator

Lynne Groeger MS, RD, CSO - Oncology Nutrition

Mary Inman - Family Services/Palliative Care

Martha Petit - Family Services/Palliative Care

Amy Hunt CMT, CLT - Massage Therapy

Kathy Shore CMT - 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.

