

LIVING WELL

A newsletter of the Wellness Program of the Cancer Center of Santa Barbara

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What Yoga Has Done for Me

by Elaine Johnson

This article was written so that others may come to discover what yoga can do for them in the midst of dealing with cancer from the perspective of one who has.

I found out about the yoga classes at the Cancer Center from the *Program Calendar* hanging from the bulletin board in the radiation dressing room. I was getting ready for my first treatment. Of course, even at this juncture in my treatment, I wasn't feeling my best. Though I was extremely thankful that my breast cancer had been detected at an early stage, plus the fact that I had recuperated fairly well physically from the surgery, emotionally I was frightened, more than a bit distraught, and I even felt victimized, now just one more cancer statistic. How this could happen to me, as I had really tried to live a healthy lifestyle by daily exercising, eating fruits and veggies, narrowing my intake of fat and being aware of personal risk factors. Just being in the waiting room was unnerving as I didn't want to be associated with this illness. As I glanced at the *Program Calendar*, I noticed that one of the classes began shortly after my first scheduled treatment. It was a Friday yoga session.

I almost forced myself to attend that first class, located across the street from the Cancer Center. Upon entering the room being set up for the yoga class, I was surprised that there were men and women of all ages. People introduced

themselves, and certainly didn't look like people who were enduring the effects of cancer. Perhaps I thought there would be a gray cloud of sadness throughout the room.

Cheri, the instructor, was reassuringly positive, friendly and reminded participants to do what they could of the routine. She explained that going beyond endurance was neither necessary nor helpful. Towards the end of that first hour Cheri had us do a guided imagery exercise that brought forth my tears. It was then, at that moment, while involuntary tears connected my eyes to my chin, that I realized I had another and deeper need, deeper than my fear, stronger than my anxiety, to release pent-up fears and tension that I had avoided confronting. I really needed a physical and emotional release.

I walked out of my first session feeling it was the best thing that had happened to me since hearing that I had cancer. For it was at that moment that I realized that cancer did not have another victim and yoga would become a path to recovery. The recognition key was realizing that yoga is something I could do for myself. I can truly help myself feel better, gain strength and become more flexible by learning how to relax and release tension. My instructors, Scott, Anne and Cheri, have brought their unique skill and style to the classes. To me, at least, they are outstanding mentors and fine people. There's no doubt that they care about each of us.

I now attend *Yoga for Strength and Empowerment*, as well as *Gentle Yoga for Health and Well-Being*, on a regular basis. It is beyond question that yoga has definitely helped me recover physically and emotionally from my illness and has helped me help myself return to a state of Wellness.

Yoga classes are currently offered free of charge at the Cancer Center on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Please see inside schedule for class times.



INSIDE

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Christine's Column

by Christine Pickett, MS, RD



Summer has arrived and the Wellness Department is busy with many projects including our 10-week sun safety program entitled *RAYS - Raising Awareness Yields Sun Safety*. Over the past 3 summers, our prevention-oriented efforts have included increasing sun safety awareness and practices among children, their parents and summer day camp recreation staff. We are pleased to have received so much local support as well as national recognition regarding this program. The following sites will be implementing *RAYS* this summer: Fun in the Sun; Santa Barbara, Montecito and Santa Ynez YMCA; Santa Barbara City Parks and Recreation; and UC Santa Barbara. If you have children in these camps or notice groups of camp kids adorning safari-type hats and purple sunscreen hanging out underneath blue portable canopies, you'll know *RAYS* is in place!

In addition to *RAYS*, the Wellness Department remains committed to raising awareness about colorectal cancer early detection and prevention. In March, we held our 2nd annual public symposium. Featured speakers, including Dennis Franz, shared their stories and expertise on colon cancer to a standing-room-only crowd at the Schott Center. Other recent activities include our youth-oriented tobacco prevention programs. Doug Harvey, a former patient, Major League Umpire and chew-user, addressed several new audiences this spring including the fans, coaches, umpires and players at a UCSB Gauchos and San Diego State University baseball game. Since his first appearance three years ago, Doug has spoken to over 3,000 Santa Barbara youth regarding the hazards of spit tobacco.

Lastly, new directions for patient wellness include expanding services and classes to the Santa Ynez Valley. Bringing yoga, exercise and art programs to this area will open possibilities for many who have not be able to attend the wellness classes offered at the Cancer Center. Making new programs available to people throughout our county continues to give me a tremendous amount of satisfaction and joy.

Be well.

Patient Care Services Arrive in Solvang and Lompoc

by Mary Solis, LCSW



Patients and family members living in Northern Santa Barbara County now have easy access to Patient Care Services. Anna Ventura, L.I.C.S.W., joined the Cancer Center staff in April of this year. Anna has seven years of medical social work experience and is bilingual (Spanish-English). She has also worked as a therapist for children and families.

Anna currently works eight hours on Mondays in Santa Ynez and six hours on Thursdays in Lompoc. She is also available by phone via our toll free number on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Anna will be assisting patients and families with the stress created by a cancer diagnosis and treatment. She can provide counseling and practical resources. Some of the resources available include: booklets on *Coping with Chemotherapy*, *Managing Nausea and Vomiting*, *Eating Well Through Cancer Treatment* and the *Cancer Survivors Toolbox*. She can also provide information and referrals for homecare, insurance, disability, finances, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, parking placards, prescriptions, free wigs/hats and many other services.

When asked why she works in the oncology field, Anna replied, "I chose this field due to the sentiments and issues the diagnosis of cancer brings to patients and families. By its potential nature, it brings the opportunity to assist people with poignant issues that might not otherwise come to be addressed. Assisting others to negotiate difficult times is a blessing in itself."

For information or to set up an appointment with Anna, please call toll free (877)755-7300 or e-mail her at AnnaV@ccsb.org.

Servicios De Ayuda Para Pacientes en Santa Ynez Y Lompoc

Anna Ventura, nueva trabajadora social con el Centro De Cancer de Santa Barbara, tiene una oficina con La Doctora Walker. Anna va ayudar a pacientes y sus familias a manejar los aspectos practicos y emocianales de un diagnostico de cancer. Si queiren hacer una cita para consejos o si quieren informacion acerca del la enfermedad, tratamiento, pelucas, aseguanza, o otra cosas, favor de llamar a Anna al numero: 1-877-755-7300 (sin cobro).

Strengthen Today, Support Tomorrow

In 1949, Lillian Taylor Converse was treated for terminal cancer in Santa Barbara. Although she knew there was little chance for her recovery, she wished to help others with the disease. Her physician dreamed of having a one million volt x-ray machine to treat cancer patients in Santa Barbara. Elisha Converse made this dream a reality by donating funds in the memory of his wife, thus firmly establishing the tradition of community support for the Cancer Center, an independent, non-profit organization.

Today, in addition to providing medical care, the Center offers a variety of wellness services at no cost - an important part of caring for the varied needs of cancer patients, their families and our entire community. This includes: the *WellFit* Program; yoga, tai chi and art classes; and the *Colorectal Cancer Early Detection and Prevention Program*.

The Center relies on the generosity of the community to support its services and programs. Should you wish to support the Wellness Program, please contact the Development Department at 898-2116.

Cancer Center Collaborates with Mayo Clinic Rochester

by Jennifer Lamberts, RN, BSN, OCN

Last fall the Cancer Center became an affiliate member of the Mayo Rochester Research Base. North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG), the cooperative group associated with Mayo Clinic, facilitates the *Clinical Studies for Research with Cancer*. We are very excited about the different studies that we will have access to under this affiliation.

The research that the Cancer Center will be focusing on through NCCTG involves cancer prevention strategies as well as cancer control studies. Cancer prevention strategies focus on preventing the development of cancer in groups that are at high risk. Cancer control studies involve interventions that may be incorporated into the care of a patient with cancer in order to lessen side effects for standard treatment and improve their quality of life. Below are the cancer control/cancer prevention studies that are now available:

- **Treatment of Cachexia (weight loss) and Anorexia (loss of appetite):** A comparison of Megace vs. an N-3 Fatty Acid Enriched Nutritional Supplement vs. both.
- **Smoking Cessation Efficacy and Relapse Prevention:** Comparing Nicotine Inhaler vs. Bupropion vs. Nicotine Inhaler and Bupropion.
- **Peripheral Neuropathy from Chemotherapy Treatment:** Evaluating the Efficacy of Gabapentin in the Management of Peripheral Neuropathy.
- **Hot Flashes in Men with Prostate Cancer:** Trial of Gabapentin in the Management of hot flashes for men with prostate cancer who are receiving hormone therapy.

For more information about the Cancer Center's Clinical Research Program and on-going classes about clinical trials, please phone 898-2119.



Spirituality & Healing • Rev. Susan Copeland



In this emptying, this letting go, we make room for something else.

Philip Simmons, *Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life*

This time last year a good friend of mine began treatment for breast cancer. As the treatment progressed, she started to give away many of her favorite pieces of jewelry. I received a beautiful watch with bear-shaped pieces of lapis lazuli on the band. This gift was a treasure but the giving of the gift also made me very nervous. What did she know that she wasn't going to share with me? Was the treatment not progressing as well as we all had hoped?

Now a year later, my friend's hair has grown back and her body has healed. At breakfast recently I noticed a new gold necklace with a locket around her neck. The locket contained pictures of her two new grandchildren who arrived the same year as her cancer treatment. It seemed the right time to ask about her gift of the watch. She explained that she needed to let go of her treasures as gifts to others she loved. She wanted to experience their joy in receiving each item. It was the process of letting go of the old that enabled her to make room for the new. The new chain and locket were an outward and visible sign of the new things which had entered her life.

There are moments in life when we are presented with the powerful opportunity to pass a gift along. This requires an act of letting go, of opening hands. Letting go prepares us in the midst of a new diagnosis, in the midst of treatment and the healing process. Letting go prepares us to receive new blessings even in this imperfect life.

Get Your Fill of Fiber

Dietary fiber, also called roughage or bulk, can be defined as the part of plants resistant to digestion. Only foods from plants have fiber. Research suggests that diets high in fiber are optimal for both preventing disease and maintaining overall health.

There are two types of dietary fiber – those that are *soluble* in water and those that are *insoluble* in water. Soluble fiber forms a gel in water and includes gums, mucilages and pectins. Insoluble fiber does not dissolve in water. This fiber gives plants their structure. Its major components are celluloses, hemicelluloses and lignin.

Fruits, vegetables and grains are not composed exclusively of either soluble or insoluble fibers. Rather, they contain various amounts of both types. Vegetables, wheat and most whole grain fibers contain more insoluble fiber; fruits, oats, barley and legumes (beans) contain more soluble fiber.

The most important function of all types of fiber is to increase the bulk of stool to facilitate transit (movement/passage) through the digestive tract. To receive the maximum health benefits of a high fiber diet, it is important to consume both soluble and insoluble fiber on a daily basis. The different effects of soluble and insoluble on the body are outlined below:

Heart Disease: Soluble fiber, as found in fruits, dried beans and oat bran, has been shown to decrease blood cholesterol levels, and thus may reduce the risk of heart disease.

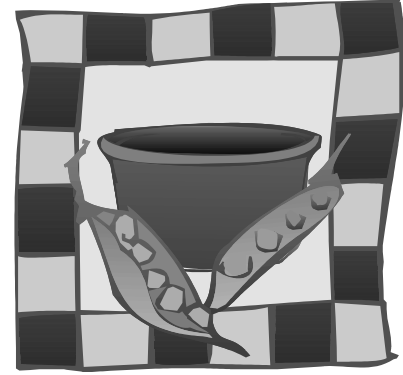
Cancer: Research suggests that a high-fiber, low-fat diet is thought to help prevent colon cancer and may reduce the risk of breast cancer. Additionally, many high fiber foods are also very rich in antioxidants (anti-cancer substances).

Diabetes: Water-soluble fiber like pectin (in apples and oatmeal) can stabilize or decrease blood sugar levels and decrease insulin requirements.

Weight Control: Bulky, high fiber foods are usually lower in calories, take longer to chew and make you feel “full” longer.

Constipation and Diverticulosis: Insoluble fiber is helpful in preventing and treating both of these conditions.

The goal of a high fiber diet is to increase dietary intake to 25 - 35 grams of fiber per day. Good sources of fiber include whole-grain foods such as 100% whole wheat bread or bran cereals, brown rice, beans and lentils, fresh fruits with the skins, berries, dried fruits, root vegetables such as carrots, turnips or potatoes and raw or fresh vegetables. Important considerations for those interested in increasing their fiber intake: do so gradually (over the course of a few weeks) and make sure to drink lots of water.



Red Bean and Rice Salad

Unpolished versions of rice, like basmati, are light and delicately flavored. Combined with canned kidney beans, this whole grain rice makes an appealing salad. Mango adds healthful carotenoids along with sunny tropical flavor.

2 cups cooked brown rice, such as basmati
1 can (15 oz.) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped green bell pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh mango, cut in $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped red onion
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup prepared salsa
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 Tbsp. chopped cilantro

1. In large bowl, use fork to combine rice, beans, pepper, mango and onion. Drain salsa well and mix into salad. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper.
2. Sprinkle with cilantro just before serving.

Options: Include a minced jalapeno or Serrano pepper, if you like heat. Use diced, seeded fresh tomato in place of the mango, with lime juice in place of the salsa.

Makes 4 – 6 servings.

Helen Curhan is a Registered Dietitian. For more information about fiber and/or to make an appointment with her for nutritional counseling, please call the Cancer Center at 682-7300.

Glider Rides



"It was great fun - simply delightful. I even got to drive the thing!"

Cancer Survivor

Discover the Magic...

For over fifty years soaring enthusiasts from all over the world have thrilled to the breathtaking views of the Santa Ynez Valley.

Now YOU too can discover that same magic in a two-seater sailplane (glider) with a fully-certified pilot. No skills are required on your part, just sit back and enjoy one of the most memorable experiences of your life.

Free glider rides for cancer patients are now available through *Windhaven Glider Rides* of Santa Ynez. For information, please call Christine Pickett at 898-2114.

This newsletter features information on materials, topics and resources for the use of its readers. These statements do not imply endorsements by the Cancer Center of Santa Barbara. Use of this newsletter is not to provide advice on personal matters or to substitute for consultation with a physician.

Wellness Program Class Schedule

Art Classes

These popular classes will start again the second week in September. All levels welcome.

Gentle Yoga

Yoga promotes relaxation, release of tension and a quieting of the mind.

Mondays*	1:30 – 2:30pm (as of 9/9)
Wednesdays	3:00 – 4:00pm
Fridays	11:30am – 12:30pm

Yoga for Strength and Empowerment

An ideal class for women recovering from breast cancer and/or others weakened by cancer treatment who are seeking to bring their mind and body into balance.

Mondays*	12:30 – 1:30pm (as of 9/9)
Wednesdays	2:00 – 3:00pm
Fridays	10:30 – 11:30am

** Classes open to caregivers of those currently in treatment.*

Introduction to Tibetan Meditation

Simple yet profound meditation techniques focused on calming the mind, developing compassion for self and others and cultivating wisdom will be explored.

Wednesdays	4:15 – 5:00pm
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Tai Chi Chih

Tai Chi has been shown to be effective in decreasing muscle tension, improving balance and enhancing sense of well-being.

Tuesdays	10:30am – Noon
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Terry Fox Training Program

An 8-week training program for both joggers and walkers of the Terry Fox 5K (3.2 miles) on October 13th. All levels of fitness welcome. Call 898-2204 to register. Begins the week of 8/19

WellFit Exercise Program at the Santa Barbara Athletic Club

A 10-week program for anyone currently dealing with cancer or who has been treated in the last six months and needs a boost getting back in shape. To register or for information, call Paula Lilly at 966-6147, ext. 62.

Group #12: July 30th - Oct. 3rd

T, TH 1³⁰-2³⁰pm

Group #13: Sept. 9th - Nov. 13th

M, W 1³⁰-2³⁰pm

Unless noted the above classes are held free-of-charge at the following Cancer Center location: 2320 Bath Street, Suite 107 (Pueblo Medical Commons Building). For more information, please call 898-2114.



Cancer Center Mission

To be a non-profit freestanding cancer treatment and diagnostic center which provides to our patients a quality of medical care that ranks with the best of the other major treatment centers on the west coast.

To be a treatment center which stays in the vanguard of modern cancer care through the timely acquisition of new medical equipment, the recruitment, development, and education of highly trained medical personnel, the active participation in clinical research, and the thoughtful introduction of promising new methods of treatment.

To be a regional resource to which both the public and the medical community can look for leadership regarding the diagnosis and management of cancer.

To be a source of continuing support to our cancer patients and their families.

Colorectal Cancer Early Detection & Prevention Program

New additions to the Cancer Center's *Colorectal Cancer Early Detection and Prevention Program* include a monthly lunchtime class entitled **Colon Cancer Prevention: Changes to Make, Actions to Take**. These sessions will be held the first Wednesday of each month starting in September. Come prepared to discuss and share information about soy products, flaxseed, portion control, reading food labels, the health benefits of exercise and many more timely topics that will assist you along your path to colorectal cancer prevention.

Also beginning in September, a **Hereditary Cancer Risk Information Night** will be available to all those seeking information about hereditary cancer risk counseling. Deborah MacDonald, our Genetic Counselor, will be available to answer questions about the key indicators of hereditary cancer, important considerations for counseling and genetic testing and the *Cancer Screening and Prevention Program* available at the Cancer Center.

For more information about either of these classes and/or the Colorectal Cancer Program, please call Joleen Law at 569-2243.

The Living Well newsletter is written and produced by the Wellness and Development Departments. Contributions from others help to make this a diverse and comprehensive publication.

If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please call (805) 898-2204.

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