

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER
2009

JOURNEYS: SLVRMC CANCER NEWSLETTER



REGIONAL
MEDICAL
CENTER

*Making Exceptional
Healthcare Personal*

Oncology Services:

- Infusion Center
- Physical Therapy
- Support Groups
- Nutrition
- Social Work
- Lymphedema Therapy
- Genetic Counseling
- Clinical Trials

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CLINICAL TRIALS NOW AVAILABLE

Oncology patients in the San Luis Valley can now take part in clinical trials *locally* that may make a difference in their own recoveries and also for future cancer patients *worldwide*. Clinical trials are research studies that test how well new medical approaches work in people. Each study answers scientific questions and tries to find better ways to prevent, screen for, diagnose, or treat a disease. People who take part in cancer clinical trials have an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge of, and progress against, cancer. They also receive up-to-date care from experts.

Deciding to take part in a clinical trial can be hard if you have cancer. But it is your choice to make if there is a clinical trial for which you qualify. A lot has changed over the past few decades and many people want to know as much as possible about all of their options before they make up their minds.



Dr. J. Fred Kolhouse

"We always have access to the latest [treatment] that is available for all patients and we want to bring that to communities around the state," said Dr. J. Fred Kolhouse, who specializes in hematologic malignancies. He is medical director of UCCC at University of Colorado Hospital in Aurora. He has been practicing hematology/oncology for more than 30 years is active in cancer clinical research trials, especially in those for targeted cancer therapies.

Dr. Madeline Kane also offers clinical trials. She is professor of Medicine in the Division of Medical Oncology at the University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Campus and also medical director of clinical investigations for UCCC. "We feel that part of the standard of care for cancer patients is to be able to offer clinical research studies that are pushing the frontier of cancer research with a goal of trying to improve outcomes and improve quality of life," Dr. Kane said. She noted current cancer treating agents—such as Avastin, which is FDA approved for colon, breast and lung cancer patients—were developed in clinical trials. Both Kane and Kolhouse are visiting physicians at SLVRMC.



Dr. Madeline Kane

For more information, ask your doctor if there is a clinical trial that is right for you, or go to <http://www.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials> to learn more.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS APPRECIATION MONTH...

*We thank you for
all that you do.*



NOV. 19 IS THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT – HELP DO YOUR PART

Helping a Smoker Quit: Do's and Don'ts

General Hints for Friends and Family

- Do respect that the quitter is in charge. This is his/her lifestyle change and his/her challenge, not yours.
- Do ask the person whether he wants you to call or visit regularly to see how he is doing. Let the person know that it's OK to call you whenever he needs to hear encouraging words.
- Do help the quitter get what he needs, such as hard candy to suck on, straws to chew on, and fresh veggies cut up and kept cold in the refrigerator.
- Do spend time doing things with the quitter to keep his mind off smoking – go to the movies, take a walk to get past a craving (what many call a “nicotine fit”), or take a bike ride together.
- Do help the quitter with a few chores, some child care, cooking – whatever will help lighten the stress of quitting.
- Do celebrate along the way. Quitting smoking is a BIG DEAL!
- Don't take the quitter's grumpiness personally during his nicotine withdrawal. The symptoms usually pass in about two weeks.
- Don't offer advice. Just ask how you can help with the plan or program he is using.

If Your Smoker “Slips”

- Don't assume that he will start back smoking like before. A “slip” (taking a puff or smoking a cigarette or two) is pretty common when a person is quitting.
- Do remind the quitter how long he went without a cigarette before the slip.
- Do help the quitter remember all the reasons he wanted to quit, and forget about the slip as soon as possible.
- Don't scold, nag, or make the quitter feel guilty. Be sure the quitter knows that you care about him whether or not he smokes.



If Your Smoker Relapses

- Do praise him for trying to quit, and for whatever length of time (days, weeks, or months) of not smoking.
- Do encourage him to try again. Don't say, “If you try again ...” Say, “When you try again...” Studies show that most people who don't succeed in quitting are ready to try again in the near future.
- Do encourage him to learn from the attempt. Things a person learns from a failed attempt to quit may help him be successful in a future attempt. It takes time and skills to learn to be a nonsmoker.
- Do say, “It's normal to not succeed the first time you try to quit. Most people understand this, and know that they have to try to quit again. You didn't smoke for two whole weeks this time. You got through the worst part. Now you know you can do that much. Now that you know you can get through the worst part, you can get even further next time.”



The Colorado Quitline can help...

To speak with a coach over the phone, just call: **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

If you're not sure you are ready, we have a lot of information you can read as well as some tools to help you decide when you might be ready.

BENEFITS OF ENROLLING : A free program tailored to you, Nicotine replacement therapy, Support network, Free telephone coaching

THE HOLIDAYS WILL BE HERE SOON

Keep things simple and ask for help. In previous years, you may have been the one to do most of the holiday decorating, shopping, cooking, baking, and entertaining. This year, you may need to scale back your activities and focus on one or two traditions that are special to you. Let your family and friends know what your expectations are so they can help and offer their support.

If holiday shopping is a source of stress, then make alternate plans to shop online, order from catalogues, give gift certificates, or ask a friend to do some shopping for you. Consider wrapping gifts in gift bags or using gift-wrapping services in stores and shopping malls.

If you are worried about the finances involved in holiday shopping, keep in mind that heartfelt, homemade gifts and “thinking of you” notes go a long way to let someone know you are thinking of them.

If the task of cooking a large family meal seems daunting, then ask for help with set up and clean up, have each person bring a dish to share, or order food to go from a store or restaurant. You may even suggest making restaurant reservations. Remember, getting together with the people you care about is more important than the food. Family and friends will gladly play a role in your celebration and may feel flattered that you asked for their input and contribution.



Learn your limitations and accept them. Carefully schedule your visits to and from friends and be aware of the physical stress that entertaining and traveling puts on your body so you do not overextend yourself. Use discretion when selecting which holiday party invitations to accept.

If you are visiting relatives or friends out of town, consider staying in a hotel instead of in a family member’s home. This may offer you more opportunities to relax and restore your energy, and give you more control over your space and time.

Avoid guilt and be true to yourself. Savor the good times, but feel free to take time to grieve if you need to. Let others support you, listen, and show that they care. If necessary, talk to a friend, loved one, or counselor about what you are feeling.

If your loved ones put pressure on you to act more cheerful throughout the holiday season, be patient with them. Remind them that the holidays do not offer a respite from the challenges cancer poses, but sometimes the season adds pressure to put on a happy face, when, in reality, you may be feeling more distress than joy.



Remember the true meaning of the holidays. Finally, don’t concentrate on what may be missing, what tradition wasn’t kept, or what may be different about this year’s holiday season from years past. Try to focus on what the holidays are truly about—a time for renewed friendships, being thankful, and sharing with others.

Source: *Cancer.net*



SLVRMC NAMES NEW ONCOLOGY/INFUSION DIRECTOR

Angela Bedard has accepted the position of Oncology/Infusion Director. Angela has been working with SLVRMC in a support position with Oncology/Infusion as well as a genetic counselor in our OB/GYN clinic.



Angela Bedard

experience in grant writing and worked on the “Improving Access to Oncology Care in the San Luis Valley” grant which has been submitted. She is currently working on the awarded grant from the Colorado Breast and Women’s Reproductive Cancers Fund for “Service Learning as a Tool to Increase Breast and Cervical Health in Latinos”. She has great experience with patients in clinic, research and project development.

Angela’s background includes working in an academic medical center, urban community medical centers, and as a clinical trials coordinator. She has

“I’m excited to take on this new role to serve individuals and families in the San Luis Valley affected by cancer.”

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SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS...

Cancer Support Group

Whether you have been newly diagnosed, are actively being treated, or have completed treatment, this group can help. The meetings are designed to promote discussion about relevant topics along with the sharing of personal thoughts and feelings.

WHEN: November 4, 18, December 2, 16, 30;
12:00 to 1:00 — Bring your lunch!!

WHERE: SLVRMC Education and Conference Center (next to the Grizzly Inn)
San Juan Room, 1919 Main Street, Alamosa, CO 81101

CALL: Roberta Tesar, MSW, LCSW, 719-589-8008 for more information



FREE Nutrition & Breast Health Class



WHEN: Thursday, November 12, 6:30-7:30 pm

WHERE: SLVRMC Education and Conference Center (next to the Grizzly Inn), Mt. Blanca Room, 1919 Main Street, Alamosa, CO 81101

REGISTRATION: Contact Jodi Birkofer at (719) 587-1482 or jodi.birkofer@slvrmc.org