



A newsletter for cancer patients,
their families and friends.

Celebrate Life!

Feb/Mar/April 2021

ONCOLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM of HEALTHALLIANCE HOSPITAL

is dedicated to supporting people living with cancer. OSP offers innovative programming, education and comprehensive psychosocial support. We honor the spectrum of human diversity and provide a nurturing environment that promotes dignity, wellness and celebrates the fullness of life.

Since 1994

**Individual and Group Support—Healing Arts Classes—Wellness & Integrative Programs—
Educational Lectures and Discussion Groups—Library of Cancer-Related Books/Resources**



**SUPPORT GROUPS/PROGRAMS ARE OPERATING VIRTUALLY
DUE TO COVID-19**

**OSP Social Workers continue to be available for your ongoing support.
Please call (845) 339-2071 to speak with a member of our staff.**

Oncology Support Program

Mailing Address: 105 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY 12401

Location: Herbert H. & Sofia P. Reuner Cancer Support House, 80 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY

Phone: (845) 339-2071 Fax: (845) 339-2082

Email: oncology.support@hahv.org

Website: <https://www.hahv.org/oncology-support-program>



HealthAlliance

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

hahv.org

ADVANCING CARE. HERE.

I am writing this note to our community as we dive into the winter months after almost a year of quarantining due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have missed seeing your faces and hearing your voices at the Support House but we're thankful that technology has allowed us to continue to share and learn together through our virtual groups. We are grateful for our amazing volunteers who have continued to facilitate our healing arts groups and educational programs. February is the month in which we usually honor our wonderful volunteers. In the absence of our usual Valentine for Volunteers Event, we send our heartfelt gratitude to all.

The poem, *The Way It Is* by William Stafford, read by the OSP Founder Barbara Sarah at our holiday event, encapsulates the heart of OSP. "There's a thread you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn't change. People wonder about what you are pursuing. You have to explain about the thread. But it is hard for others to see. While you hold it you can't get lost. Tragedies happen; people get hurt or die; and you suffer and get old. Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding. You don't ever let go of the thread."

The thread we at OSP hold onto is the love and concern our community shares with one another, even during the most challenging times. Know that the OSP community is here to help support and sustain you. May you be nurtured and find comfort and peace during the months to come.

Warmly, OSP Director Ellen Marshall

ONCOLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM STAFF

OSP Director & Certified Oncology Social Worker: Ellen Marshall, MS, LCSW-R, OSW-C, ext. 103, ellen.marshall@hahv.org

Certified Oncology Social Worker: Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C, ext. 102, elise.lark@hahv.org

Certified Palliative Social Worker: Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C, ext. 101, jennifer.halpern@hahv.org

Administrative Assistant: Doris Blaha, ext. 100, doris.blaha@hahv.org

Founder: Barbara Sarah, LCSW

MHC Intern: Sara Loughlin, ext. 100, sara.loughlin@hahv.org

Social Work Intern: James Askin, ext. 100, james.askin@hahv.org



THE ONCOLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM IS GRATEFUL TO OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE OUR PROGRAM WHAT IT IS!



We are so fortunate that our volunteers have continued to offer virtual groups during this pandemic. You have helped us stay connected and supported during a time when we would have felt more isolated and alone.

Special thanks to Ann Hutton and Abigail Thomas for creating and sustaining the community of our memoir writers; and thank you Craig Mawhirt for being the helper behind the scenes. Thank you Kathy Sheldon for your tireless dedication to our health and for arranging the wonderful cooking classes with Bettina Zumdick. Thank you Marilyn Fino and Bev Nielsen for sharing your talent with us every week at our Creative Arts Classes; and thank you Nancy Bindig and Fred Marshall for your special art classes.

We so appreciate Tara Ryan for continuing to coordinate the Integrative Cancer Support Group and for your passionate support of people facing cancer. Thank you Mare Berman for creating a loving and sacred space for people facing loss. Thank you Annie LaBarge for teaching Tai Chi and infusing your classes with your loving presence. Thank you Betty Gilpatric and Marianne Niefeld for ongoing support of our community as facilitators of our other Wellness Programs.

Thank you to Dr. Corinne Menn for presenting the Special Program for Younger Women. Thank you Deborah Fisher and Paul Kean for your uplifting music at our holiday celebration. Gratitude as always to Gloria Vega...we are still enjoying the fruits of your dedicated work at OSP. Thank you to all our Nurturing Neighbors for continuing to offer your help and encouragement to those in need. And a heartfelt shout out to our wonderful interns, James Askin and Sara Loughlin, for your hard work and commitment. Thank you Barbara Sarah for the continued inspiration you bring to our OSP community!



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO YOU ALL!



SUPPORT SERVICES AT OSP

The following groups are continuing to be offered virtually.

You can connect to a support group online through your computer or by phone.

If you would like join a group, please call OSP at (845) 339-2071

Women's Cancer Support Group, facilitated by Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C
3rd Fridays, Feb. 19, Mar. 19 & Apr. 16,
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Share common concerns and learn about living with cancer during and after treatment. Please contact OSP at ext. 101.

Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Group, facilitated by Ellen Marshall, LCSW-R, OSW-C.
Wednesdays, Feb. 24, Mar. 31 & Apr. 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m. An informative and supportive setting for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer at any stage. Please contact OSP at ext. 103.

Men's Cancer Support Group, facilitated by James Askin, Social Work Intern
1st Wednesdays, Feb. 3, Mar. 3 & Apr. 7,
6:00-7:30 p.m. A supportive, confidential setting for men who have been diagnosed with any type of cancer. Please contact OSP at ext. 100.

Caregivers' Support Group, facilitated by Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C.
3rd Wednesdays, Feb. 17, Mar. 17 & Apr. 21,
5:00-6:30 p.m. Bringing caregivers together for mutual support for the unique challenges they face. Individual support also available. Please contact OSP at ext.101.

Younger Women's Support Group, facilitated by Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C
3rd Thursdays, Feb. 18, Mar. 18 & Apr. 15,
5:30-7:00 p.m. This group focuses on issues common to young women with cancer including: body image, managing work, sexuality and intimacy, relationships, fertility, talking to children about cancer and self-



advocacy. For women age 55 and younger, with any type of cancer. Contact OSP at ext.102.

The Younger Women's Support Group has partnered with **Young Survival Coalition**
<https://www.youngsurvival.org/>

YSC is an organization dedicated to addressing the critical issues unique to young women who are diagnosed with breast cancer when they are under the age of 35. To join our local YSC's Younger Women's Support Group social networking page, go to: www.meetup.com/Kingston-NY-Young-Survival-Coalition-Face-2-Face-Network/



Coping Skills for Cancer: *Finding Ease & Inner Balance*

Whether we are newly diagnosed with cancer, a long-term cancer survivor or a caregiver, a cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming. In this group, we will explore practical skills to help us regulate our nervous system and find inner balance as we face cancer-related stressors, from anxiety related to medical procedures to fear of recurrence. This group integrates techniques of somatic experiencing, yoga breathing practices and mindfulness.

Facilitated by Ellen Marshall, MS, LCSW-R, OSW-C & Sarah Loughlin, MHC Intern

3rd Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Feb. 16, Mar. 16 & Apr. 20

To register, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: oncology.support@hahv.org

CANCER & FINANCE

Workshops

Tips on Applying for Disability Insurance
with Debbie Denise of

The Resource Center for Accessible Living
Tuesday Feb. 9, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Estate Planning and Medicaid Planning
with Attorney Erica Halwick-Williams, Esq

Tuesday Mar. 9, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

**Returning to Work when on Disability—
What You Need to Know**

with Debbie Denise of
The Resource Center for Accessible Living
Tuesday Apr. 13, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

To register, please call
(845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or email:

oncology.support@hahv.org

Living Well with Advanced Cancer

1st Thursdays, Feb. 4, Mar. 4 & Apr. 1, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Facilitated by Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C (Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

A group for individuals with advanced stage or recurrent cancer who wish to explore pathways to a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

Testimonials below written by members of the "What Really Matters" support group, which has changed its name. By renaming the group, we hope to better describe who we are and encourage new members to join us.

As a 2-year survivor of stage IV lung cancer, I was (initially) terrified, confused, and in need of emotional support. I needed help spiritually, to learn as best I could to face mortality on my own terms and to live well despite my diagnosis. This group is an oasis of compassion and helped me to find acceptance. ~Josh C.

I am encouraged to continue to work toward my purpose of being...no matter what my state of health is. ~ Kristy B.

It is inspiring to realize I'm not alone on this dark journey but can continue to live and prosper and especially, think positively. ~Susan N.

In a safe loving setting, we are able to share our experiences facing serious illness and the fear and insecurity that often accompany that journey. ~Janine M.

For further info or to pre-register, please contact Elise Lark at (845) 339-2071 ext. 102 or email: elise.lark@hahv.org.



Choices & Wishes: Advance Care Planning Workshop

Thursday, April 8, 5:00-7:00 p.m. (Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

with **Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C**

This Advance Care Planning workshop will provide an overview of the **Health Care Proxy, Living Will** and **MOLST** documents and will help you to define your end-of-life wishes regarding medical treatment. Participants engage in discussions based on reflective questions, review guidelines and considerations for choosing a health care agent and explore and troubleshoot concerns that may be a barrier to completing documents.

For further information and registration, please contact **Elise Lark** at (845) 339-2071 ext. 102 or email elise.lark@hahv.org

If you are unable to attend the workshop or need additional assistance, you are welcome to make an appointment to meet with an OSP Social Worker to get the support you need to complete any of these documents.



Palliative Care Social Work Inpatient Support

If you are in the hospital and suffering with distress or pain, ask your nurse for a palliative care social work referral. OSP Palliative Care Social Workers can help you learn ways to control your symptoms through complementary techniques, help you communicate your needs and wishes to the medical staff and/or assist you in connecting with a palliative care physician in the community upon discharge.

Loss and Bereavement Support Group

with **Marjorie Berman, LCSW-R**

Weds., Feb. 10, Mar. 10 & Apr. 14, 10:00-11:30 a.m. Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

Grief is often many-layered. You may have experienced the death of a parent, a partner, a child, or friend from illness, including COVID-19. Other losses may be stirred up as we grieve. Through guided meditation, mindfulness, sensory awareness exercises and discussion, we will explore, share and process our unique loss stories in a non-judgmental environment that supports our healing.

Marjorie E. Berman, LCSW-R practices individual, family and group therapy in Woodstock, NY.

Her practice includes working with people living with illness and their loved ones.

To register, please call (845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or email: oncology.support@hahv.org



KID/TEEN/FAMILY Connection

Children or teens may be confused, angry or sad when someone they love is diagnosed with cancer. How do we speak to our children or teens about a cancer diagnosis in age appropriate ways? If you know a child or teen in need of support or would like to meet with an OSP Social Worker to discuss communicating about cancer, please call OSP at 845 339-2071

OSP Memoir Writing Workshops



Members of our community who are affected by cancer have an opportunity to support one another by writing and sharing memoirs.

Thursday Memoir Group
facilitated by **Abigail Thomas**,
3:00-5:00 p.m.

(Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

Friday Memoir Group
facilitated by **Ann Hutton**,
2:00-4:00 p.m.

(Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

For information or to join a workshop,
please call (845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or
email: oncology.support@hahv.org



To purchase a copy of *holding on, letting go*, written by current and past members of our Thursday Memoir Group, call OSP at (845) 339-2071

The Healing Time

Finally on my way to yes
I bump into
all the places
where I said no
to my life
all the untended wounds
the red and purple scars
those hieroglyphs of pain
carved into my skin, my bones,
those coded messages
that send me down
the wrong street
again and again
where I find them
the old wounds
the old misdirections
and I lift them
one by one
close to my heart
and I say holy
holy.

~ Pasha Joyce Gertler

CREATIVE ARTS GROUP



Our weekly virtual group provides a vehicle

for you to connect and share in the creative process.

What a wonderful way to counter the isolation we are feeling and be inspired!

Try collage, painting, drawing, jewelry making, fiber arts, knitting, and more.

Bring your own ideas to share. No art experience is necessary.

Our group is facilitated by volunteer artists & art educators, **Marilyn Fino & Bev Nielsen**, along with guest artists.

Fridays, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (Virtual via computer/phone only)

For information or to join a workshop, please call (845) 339-2071 at ext.100

or email: oncology.support@hahv.org

SPECIAL: Watercolor Workshop with Mira Fink

Mira Fink is best known for her richly-colored watercolor landscapes which capture the beauty of the Hudson Valley. Her art is about the vividness of color, the energy of living things and what happens when you slow down long enough to truly see and appreciate it.

Please join us for Watercolor Workshops on:

Friday, March 5 and 19, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

(Virtual via computer/phone only)

To register, please call (845) 339-2071 at ext.100

or email: oncology.support@hahv.org

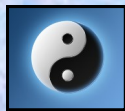


WELLNESS/EXERCISE PROGRAMS (Virtual classes)

We look forward to the time when OSP-sponsored exercise classes will resume in person, but for now we are continuing to offer the following classes virtually via computer. If you are interested in attending, please call OSP at 845 339-2071 or email: oncology.support@hahv.org and we will send you the Virtual link.

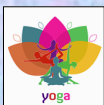


Tai Chi Zoom class with Annie LaBarge: Mondays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. Learn Long Form Yang Style Tai Chi, a moving meditation and slow-motion martial art. The practice increases cognition, strength, balance and flexibility.



Medical Qi Gong with Betty Gilpatric: Fridays, 8:30-9:45 a.m. Learn simple yet powerful techniques based on traditional Chinese healing practices to improve your health and sense of well-being. EBQT or Evidence-based Qigong was developed by Dr. Yan Yang PhD, who is a researcher and instructor at Memorial Sloan Kettering. There are also a few YouTube videos you can watch on your own. The links are:

Warm Ups : <https://youtu.be/FhmcPM0U9e0> **8 Brocades of Silk:** <https://youtu.be/8q1PVbh2ysM>



Yoga with Marianne Niefeld: Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. A Kripalu-style gentle yoga class that stretches, strengthens, focuses the mind and awakens your energy through movement and breathing.

Miso Happy Cooking Club with Kathy Sheldon, RN (Virtual classes)



Miso Happy formed in 2005 to support prevention, healing and recovery through healthy eating practices incorporating a plant-based diet. Due to COVID safety concerns, we will continue to offer classes virtually. Although we won't be sharing a meal, we'll be able to connect and learn together. Advance registration is requested via email to: kathy.sheldon@gmail.com or doris.blaha@hahv.org. Classes will be recorded and made available to those registered. Suggested class donation is \$10. Make checks payable to: The HealthAlliance Foundation (OSP in memo). Mail check to: Oncology Support Program, 105 Mary's Ave. Kingston, NY 12401 or go to: <https://www.foundationupdate.org/donate/oncologysupportprogram/>

Menu Planning and More: A lecture with Bettina Zumdick

Tuesday, February 9, 10:30 a.m.

We plan to review components of the meal, how to vary the menu, considering different colors, textures, and how weather change can influence our choice of a cooking method. Understanding the basic Yin and Yang of food as well as concerns, such as if we drink during a meal, remembering to chew and eating in moderation will be discussed.

A question and answer opportunity will follow the talk.

Three Classes, Three Dishes, Three Seasons

Cooking Soups, Bean Dishes and Vegetables for Winter, Spring and Summer with Bettina Zumdick.

Tuesday, March 9, 10:30 a.m.

Let's make a warming winter soup, a hearty bean dish and a long-cooked winter root vegetable stew. We'll include tips on how to make your beans delicious.

Tuesday, April 13, 10:30 a.m.

Cooking light soups, preparing bean dishes to lighten up the season, and creating beautiful cooked fresh spring vegetables, plus more tips for fresh eating.

Tuesday, May 4, 10:30 a.m.

An early glance at summer eating. Let's cool off with light soups, summer salads with beans, and pressed vegetables, with a bonus refreshing summer kanten recipe.

Bettina Zumdick is a chef, teacher, counselor and author who has integrated modern knowledge of the West with the wisdom of the East. With a strong background in Food Science and Nutrition from Wilhelms University in Munster, Germany, she has shared her knowledge of food as medicine for over 30 years. She is a co-director of Planetary Health, an educational not-for-profit which offers weekend retreats and an annual conference.

For more information, go to: www.culinarymedicineschool.com

The Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Program of OSP



offers a monthly support group for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer and is committed to educating the community about ovarian cancer symptoms and early detection.

For information about the Linda Young Program or the Ovarian Cancer Support Group, please contact Ellen Marshall, (845) 339-2071 ext. 103

Know the symptoms:

- Bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
 - Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
 - Urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)

Other symptoms may include: fatigue, indigestion, back pain, constipation, pain with intercourse, menstrual irregularities.



Linda's Healing Garden

Know what to do:

If you have these symptoms almost daily for more than two weeks or have symptoms that are unusual for your body, see your gynecologist. Experts recommend a pelvic/rectal exam, a CA-125 blood test and a transvaginal ultrasound. If ovarian cancer is suspected, seek out a gynecologic oncologist.

Go to:

foundationforwomenscancer.org



Integrative Cancer Support and Educational Group

(Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

Participants share resources and experiences with integrative modalities and learn from guest speakers. (TBD)

Facilitated by **Tara Ryan** and **OSP Director, Ellen Marshall**

Tara Ryan is a *Cancer Hope Coach* who has considerable experience with conventional and integrative treatments along with immunotherapy for the treatment of metastatic melanoma.

2nd Weds., Feb. 10, March 10 & April 14
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

To register, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: oncology.support@hahv.org

Acupuncture for Cancer Care with Abbey Semel, MS, RD, L.Ac.

(Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

Complementary therapies, including acupuncture, are not substitutes for mainstream medicine; they are used in concert with medical treatment to alleviate the toxic side effects of chemotherapy and radiation and help improve immune function.

Acupuncture helps improve quality of life by alleviating stress, reducing pain and anxiety, managing symptoms and promoting a feeling of well-being. In addition to our discussion on the benefits of acupuncture, we will be addressing tools that can be used at home that are safe, effective ways for patients and survivors to mitigate physical and emotional symptoms and help manage their own care.

Abbey Semel graduated from Tri-State College of Acupuncture in 1991. She studied in China at the Fujian College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the specialty area of women's health. Abbey has completed a certificate in Complementary Cancer Care from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. She earned her Master's Degree from Cornell University and is a licensed nutritionist, combining nutritional counseling with Chinese medicine.

Wed., April 14, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

To register, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: oncology.support@hahv.org



Immunotherapy for Cancer

New Hope/New Horizons

written by Riolin Andrade MD, Medical Oncologist; APS Hem/ Onc / WMC HEALTH

Immunotherapy is changing the way we think about cancer treatment. It works by using the body's own immune system to fight cancer. The immune system is a network of cells, tissues, and organs that work together to protect the body from infection. Certain types of immunotherapy attack cancer or slow its spread to other parts of the body. Other types make it easier for the immune system to destroy cancer cells.

HOW DOES IMMUNOTHERAPY WORK?

The immune system detects and destroys abnormal cells and usually stops any growth of cancer as part of its normal functioning. **Immune checkpoints** are part of the immune system. Their role is to prevent any immune response from being so strong that it destroys healthy cells. **They are the “brakes” of the immune system.** Some immunotherapy drugs are called **immune checkpoint inhibitors**. They work by blocking the immune checkpoints or brakes, thus allowing the immune cells to respond more strongly to cancer.

Cancer cells have ways to avoid destruction by the immune system: Cancer cells make proteins called PD-L1 (Programmed Cell Death Ligand 1) and PD-1 (Programmed Cell Death 1) proteins on their surface that turn off immune cells. A PD-L1 test measures the amount of PD-L1 on cancer cells. **If your cancer cells have a high amount of PD-L1, you are more likely to benefit from immunotherapy.**

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF IMMUNOTHERAPY?

There are several types of immunotherapy treatments. **1.** Immune checkpoint inhibitors: drugs that block immune checkpoints (“the brakes”). The most commonly used immunotherapy drugs at our Infusion center are: Keytruda which is a PD-1 inhibitor; Opdivo which is a PD-1 blocker; and Tecentriq and Imfinzi, which are PD-L1 blockers **2.** T-Cell transfer therapy **3.** Monoclonal therapy **4.** Cancer vaccines (These are in an early stage of development at this time.) **5.** Immune system modulators.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF IMMUNOTHERAPY?

Many of the side effects of immunotherapy occur when the immune system, having been revved-up to act against the cancer, also acts against healthy cells in your body. The most common immune-mediated adverse events are: fatigue, skin rash, diarrhea/colitis, cough, chest pain and shortness of breath (caused by pneumonitis), endocrinopathies (overactive or underactive thyroid caused by inflammation of thyroid gland, pituitary, or adrenal gland), nephritis, hepatotoxicity, and neurologic problems such as muscle weakness, numbness, or myocarditis. Patients need to be monitored closely during immunotherapy. If someone experiences side effects, immunotherapy should be paused and the patient is usually treated with high-dose steroids. For grade 1 and 2 side effects, immunotherapy can be restarted after a break if all the symptoms resolve. For grade 3 and 4 side effects, immunotherapy should be discontinued permanently.

WHICH CANCERS ARE TREATED WITH IMMUNOTHERAPY?

Melanoma, renal cell cancer, small cell and non-small cell lung cancer, head and neck cancer, bladder cancer, Hodgkins lymphoma, Merkel cell carcinoma, dMMR or MSI tumors. Immunotherapy is also approved for breast cancer, liver cancer, skin cancer cervical, endometrial, esophageal and gastric cancers. We have seen an excellent response rate among patients treated with immunotherapy at our Infusion Center.

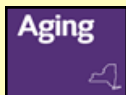
WHAT IS THE CURRENT RESEARCH IN IMMUNOTHERAPY?

Researchers are focusing on several areas to improve immunotherapy treatments: finding solutions to treatment resistance, predicting which people will respond to immunotherapy, learning more about how cancer cells evade or suppress immune responses directed against them, determining how to reduce the adverse effects of immunotherapy. Gaining a better understanding of how cancer cells evade the immune system could lead to the development of new drugs that block these processes. There is still much to learn but there is promise that immunotherapy will help more and more people survive cancer.



Office for the Aging/ NY Connects:

Assists with supports for elderly (60+) and disabled: Legal Counsel, Medicare counseling, home care services, Med Alerts and transportation. Home-delivered meals for residents 60+ on a limited income, not on Medicaid and have no one to shop for them; frozen meals available for pick up or delivery at sites in Saugerties, Rosendale, and Ellenville. Go to: <https://ulstercountyny.gov/aging> or call (845) 340-3456

**Resource Center for Accessible Living (RCAL):**

Assists with benefits applications and advisement, Medicaid coordination, pooled trusts, nursing home transition & diversion. (845) 331-0541

**Legal Services of the Hudson Valley:**

Free legal services for financially eligible individuals. (845) 331-9373



EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage Program): additional drug coverage and premium assistance for seniors (over 65) with Medicare Part D who qualify financially. (800) 332-3742

**Jewish Family Services of Ulster:**

In-home, non-sectarian supportive mental health counseling. Caregiver support. Shopping for seniors in coordination with the Jewish Federation. (845) 338-2980



Edible Independence: Dietician- and health department-approved meals delivered to your home. (845) 331-MEAL (6325)
Call: (845) 331-MEAL

**Local Financial Assistance for the Cancer Community****The Rosemary Gruner Fund:**

\$500 Hannaford's and/or Stewart's gas cards annually

to financially eligible people in active cancer treatment. Contact the Benedictine Health Foundation. Call: (845) 481-1303. Fax: (845) 663-2221

**Miles of Hope Fund for Breast Cancer Patients:**

Financial assistance to eligible women in treatment.

Ulster & Greene Counties—call Family at (845) 331-7080, ask for Carol Sisco.

Dutchess County—call Community Action at (845) 452-5104, ext.142 or ext.124.

Food-Related Resources:

For a comprehensive list of local resources to help with food security, go to <https://rupco.org/covid-19-help-emergency-food-in-ulster-county/>

**Transportation Assistance to Medical Appointments**

(advance notice required and availability may be limited due to COVID-19)

- Seniors **60** or older: Free bus twice weekly to medical appointments and once a week for shopping. Complete an application with **Office for the Aging (NY Connects)** by calling (845) 340-3456
- Seniors can call UCAT at (845) 340-3333 for a **Para Transit Application** or download the application at: <http://ulstercountyny.gov/ucat/senior-services>
- If you have active **Medicaid**, call (866) 287-0983

Hudson Valley Medical Health Choices, P.C.

is a **community-based palliative care practice** appropriate for patients with serious or life-limiting illnesses, no matter their prognosis. This type of care focusses on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness, with the goal of improving quality of life for the patient and the family.

Palliative care can be provided at the same time as curative and aggressive treatment at any stage of illness. It is an excellent choice for people with pain, nausea, constipation, fatigue, breathing issues, or emotional distress; multiple recent hospitalizations; or a need for **Advance Care Planning**.

Hudson Valley Medical Health Choices, P.C is affiliated with Hudson Valley Hospice, providing services in the home, in an assisted living facility, in a nursing home, or wherever a person calls home.

For information, please call 845-240-7557

Hudson Valley Region

Cancer Services Program

Your partner for cancer screening, support and information

FREE Cancer Screening for Uninsured or Underinsured**Breast Cancer Screening:**

Mammogram, Clinical Breast Exam (age 40-64)

Cervical Cancer Screening:

Pap Test, Pelvic Exam (age 40-64)

Colorectal Cancer Screening:

FIT Test (age 50-64)

Call CSP to find out if you are eligible: (855) 277-4482



MARCH IS COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

COLON CANCER ON THE RISE IN YOUNGER PEOPLE

The untimely death of actor Chadwick Boseman, the Black American star of many movies including *Black Panther*, left his fans stunned. Boseman, who was diagnosed with stage 3 colon cancer in 2016 and struggled with the disease for 4 years, chose to keep his illness private. His death at age 43 highlights two key issues: the risk of developing the disease earlier in life is increasing and there are racial disparities in colorectal cancer incidence and deaths, with Black Americans being the most vulnerable. Black Americans have a 43 percent higher colorectal cancer death rate than Whites. Since there is no known biologic or genetic reason why Black Americans have higher rates of colorectal cancer, the likely explanation relates to access to care, stigmatization and distrust of the medical system.

In decades past, it was rare to see the disease in people younger than age 50. Now, 12 percent of colorectal cancer deaths occur in people under age 50. Younger colorectal cancer patients are also more likely to be diagnosed at a more advanced stage which contributes to higher death rates in that age group.

Major risk factors for colorectal cancer include obesity, sedentary lifestyle, certain types of diet (such as those high in red meat), smoking, heavy alcohol use, a history of colorectal polyps, and certain genetic mutations like Lynch syndrome which also increases the risk of a host of other cancers including uterine, stomach, breast, ovarian and pancreatic. However, genetic or lifestyle factors are not always found among people diagnosed with colorectal cancer, which is why screening is so important.

The increase in colorectal cancer incidence in younger adults has triggered a debate in recent years over the age to begin screening adults considered at average risk for the disease and who have no symptoms. The American Cancer Society recommends colorectal cancer screening for people at average risk beginning at age 45 and continuing until age 75. Their guidelines recommend screening with either a stool-based test or an exam-based test. People with a first-degree relative with colorectal cancer should start screening at age 40, or ten years prior to the age at diagnosis of the youngest relative with the disease.

Screening rates for all cancers have taken a dive during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to know that in addition to a colonoscopy, the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) and fecal occult blood test (FOBT) are viable options. These noninvasive screenings analyze a patient's stool for hidden blood and signs of colorectal polyps, which can be precancerous. Positive findings should be followed by a visit to a health care provider for further assessment. The N.Y. State Cancer Services Program (CSP) offers free colon cancer screening to eligible people. For more information, call (855) 277-4482.

Below is the experience of Matt Corsaro, a member of our program, who was diagnosed with colon cancer at age 49. Thank you, Matt, for sharing your experience and wisdom with our community.

Greetings OSP Community,

In early 2019, I was diagnosed with stage 3 rectal cancer. My wish is that my story helps promote awareness and prevention.

In late 2018, I began experiencing some blood in my stool. I ignored this for several weeks before seeing my doctor. As it happens, the source was actually hemorrhoids. However, I had just passed my 49th birthday and my doctor wanted me to have my first colonoscopy. I had tried to keep a reasonably healthy lifestyle throughout most of my adult life, and to some extent took for granted that I was doing so. Although my paternal grandfather died of colon cancer, I was of the understanding that one gets a first colonoscopy at 50 or shortly after.

In any case, I went for the exam and a polyp was found, biopsied and yielded a diagnosis. Treatment followed, including chemotherapy and surgery. I am fortunate that a year and 1/2 later, I am now without evidence of disease. But again, the point of this piece is to promote awareness and prevention. While I don't blame myself or anyone else for my cancer, at the same time, if I had been better educated about the disease, I may have detected it much earlier. May it go better for others.

There is increasing incidence of colorectal cancer in people younger than 50. The wonderful actor Chadwick Boseman's recent, tragic death has illuminated this on a large scale. My experience illuminated this on a personal level. Age 45 is increasingly suggested as a good time to have a first colonoscopy, or to at least begin the discussion with your doctor.

I encourage the reader to spread the word. May we talk more with our doctors, friends and families. May we encourage young adults to do the same. May we take less for granted and continually examine our own habits, whether physical, mental or verbal. Advances continue with diagnosis and treatment. In this writer's opinion, awareness, overall wellness and prevention lag far behind. May we learn to develop healthy ways to respond to our experiences, rather than simply waiting for disease to show and then reacting. May we practice wisdom. Wisdom is sometimes purchased by suffering, but perhaps it need not always be.

May you be safe, may you be healthy and may you know joy. — Matt Corsaro



Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Online Chats. Free, live sessions moderated by oncology social workers who help guide discussions and provide resources, information and support. Topics include: *Living with NHL, Living with Myeloma, Living with CML, Living with Acute Leukemia and Young Adults Living with Leukemia, Lymphoma & Myeloma.* **Go to:** www.LLS.org/chat

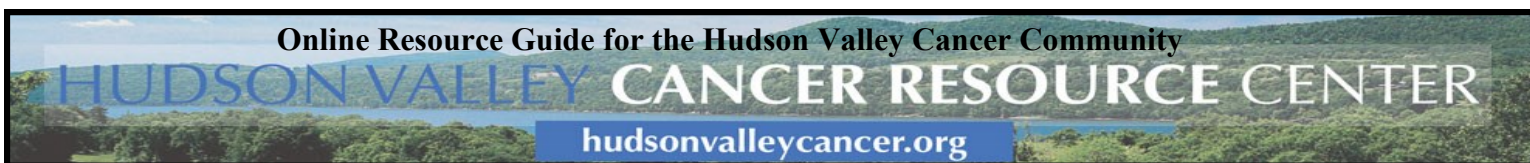


CANCERcare® provides free online or telephone support groups led by oncology social workers to help people affected by cancer along with information about cancer and resources. **Call 800-813-HOPE (4673), ext 3** https://www.cancercare.org/support_groups



www.BreastCancerOptions.org (845) 339-4673

Peer-led support groups in Dutchess, Ulster, Columbia, Greene, Orange and Sullivan Counties.
Camp Lightheart for children of breast cancer survivors
Annual Metastatic Breast Cancer Retreat



Gilda's Club of Westchester
Free Bilingual Cancer Support Hotline. Call: 914-997-6006
<https://gildasclubwestchester.org/gildas-launches-breast-cancer-bilingual-support-hotline/>



Adelphi NY University Breast Cancer Hotline Program. Call: (800) 877- 8077
www.adelphi.edu/nysbreastcancer



ONLINE SUPPORT PLATFORMS

LotsaHelpingHands.com and CaringBridge.org

These websites provide an all-in-one intimate, safe place where those living with chronic illness, their caregivers, family and friends can share information and request meaningful help 24/7.



SHARE

Help for women facing breast or ovarian cancer.
(English & Spanish)

Call: 844.ASK.SHARE or (844) 275-7427

<https://www.sharecancersupport.org/support/about-us-helpline/>

SUPPORT CONNECTION



Offers an ovarian cancer national toll-free phone support group.

www.supportconnection.org
Call: (800) 532-4290



Sparrow's Nest helps families of caregivers diagnosed with cancer or families of children diagnosed with cancer. The fund provides two meals, once a week, to eligible families in which the caregiver or children diagnosed with cancer is in treatment. The fund may also assist families for a period of time after the loss of a loved one. For more information, call (845) 204-9421 or go to: sparrowsnestcharity.org



The **LUNGEVITY Foundation** is the nation's largest lung cancer-focused nonprofit, committed to changing outcomes for people with lung cancer through research, education, and support. For information, go to: Lungevity.org
For the Lung Cancer HELPLINE, call 844-360-5864


February 2020

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	2 Groundhog Day 	3 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	4  Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2:30pm Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	5 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3 pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	6
7	8 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	9 Miso Happy Cooking "Menu Planning and More, A lecture with Bettina Zumdick " 10:30am Cancer & Finances "Applying for Disabil- ity Insurance" 2-4pm	10 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am Integrative Support Group 5:30-7pm	11 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	12 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	13
14 	15 President's Day Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	16 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm	17 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	18 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm Younger Women's Support Group 5:30-7pm	19 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	20
21	22 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	23	24 Ash Wednesday Gentle Yoga 10-11am Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm	25 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	26 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	27
28						




March 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	4 Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2:30pm Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	5 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts "SPECIAL: Watercolor Workshop with Mira Fink" 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	6
7	8 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	9 Miso Happy Cooking "Three Classes, Three Dishes, Three Seasons, Part 1" 10:30am Cancer & Finances "Estate & Medicaid Planning w/ Erica Halwick-Williams, Esq" 2-4pm	10 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am Integrative Support Group 5:30-7pm	11 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	12 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	13
14 Daylight Saving Time begins 	15 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	16 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm	17  Gentle Yoga 10-11am Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	18 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm Younger Women's Support Grp. 5:30-7pm	19 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm Creative Arts "SPECIAL: Watercolor Workshop with Mira Fink" 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	20 Spring Equinox 
21 World Poetry Day 	22 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	23	24 Gentle Yoga 10-11am	25 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	26 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	27
28 Palm Sunday  First Day of Passover 	29 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	30	31 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm			

April 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2:30pm Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	2 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	3
4 Easter Sunday  Last Day of Passover	5 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	6	7 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	8 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm Advance Care Planning Workshop 5-7pm	9 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	10
11	12 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	13 Miso Happy Cooking "Three Classes, Three Dishes, Three Seasons, Part 2" 10:30am Cancer & Finances "Returning to Work when on Disability" 2-4pm	14 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am Integrative Support Group "Acupuncture for Cancer Care w/ Abbey Semel, MS, RD, L.Ac." 5:30-7pm	15 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm Younger Women's Support Grp. 5:30-7pm	16 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	17
18	19 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	20 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm	21 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	22 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	23 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	24
25	26 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	27	28 Gentle Yoga 10-11am Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm	29  Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	30 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am Creative Arts 1-3pm Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	



NURTURING NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

**Are you facing a cancer diagnosis?
Would you benefit from one-on-one support from
someone who's been through it?**

You might like to be matched with a Nurturing Neighbor, a local volunteer and cancer survivor trained through OSP to offer peer support.

For further information on linking with a Nurturing Neighbor or becoming one yourself, please contact OSP at
(845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or
email: oncology.support@hahv.org

We Lovingly Remember:



Linda Beatty

Paul Cutrone

Jim Gohlke

Delores Golgoski

Linda Hayman

Diane Newell

John Nichols

Barbara Watson



**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT.**

Donations

Anna Bentsi-Barnes

In Memory of Sarah Boris
Wenda A. Rodriguez

In Honor of Kathy Sheldon
Lee Ann DeBerry
Lauren Piperno

In Honor of Denise McCue
Kathy Sheldon

Special thanks to The Fair Street Reformed Church Community and George Campbell for the gifts you gave our families during the holidays.

Thank you Darlene Bover for raising money for us at the Italian American Festival this year...again!

Gratitude to the Jewish Federation of Ulster County for your generous donation from the Fall for Art Event.

Thank you Kathy Sheldon for raising funds for OSP through your Birthday Celebration.

Thank you Salvation Army for donating pillows to our community even during a pandemic.



**READER SUBMISSIONS ARE
WELCOME!**

We invite you to submit writings which may be included in our newsletter.

Please send to

ellen.marshall@hahv.org

The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and is not intended to be used as medical advice. Please consult your physician about questions regarding your treatment.

You can also find this newsletter at:

<https://www.hahv.org/celebrate-life-newsletter>

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 Please call OSP at (845) 339-2071 or mail this form to:
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At the Oncology Support program, our services are free or available at a very low fee. This is possible thanks to the support of WMC/HealthAlliance as well as donations from the community. Your donations also enable us to provide emergency financial assistance to those in need. Please help us continue to support people affected by cancer by making a tax-deductible donation to OSP or the Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Program.

Your donation will be acknowledged in the next edition of *Celebrate Life!* You can donate electronically by visiting:
<https://www.foundationupdate.org/donate/oncologysupportprogram/>

or... Make checks payable to: **The HealthAlliance Foundation** (Indicate OSP or LY in memo)
 Mail check to: **Oncology Support Program, 105 Mary's Ave. Kingston, NY 12401**

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Address: _____

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