



Ovarian Cancer Support Group

Dealing with **FATIGUE**

Fatigue is the most common side effect experienced by cancer patients during and after treatment, and also the one most commonly underdiagnosed. Once you recognize the fatigue for what it is – a true result of the treatment you are undergoing – you can go forward and start to alleviate the fatigue with help from your care team.



Most people don't realize that cancer-related fatigue isn't the same as fatigue experienced by healthy people. When healthy people are fatigued, they can get extra rest and typically bounce back. That's not the case with people who are undergoing treatment for cancer. Their fatigue can last for much longer periods and be more intense. A cancer patient can get more tired after exerting less energy than a healthy person.

There are a number of things that can contribute to a cancer patient's fatigue. In addition to traditional chemotherapy, often a person with cancer has undergone hormone therapy, radiation therapy, or surgery, all of which can impact energy level. Often anemia is a side effect of receiving chemotherapy. Nausea and vomiting can cause loss of appetite and result in a patient not getting enough nutrients, leading to fatigue. In addition, some medications cause fatigue, such as those prescribed for depression, pain, sleep and nausea. Believe it or not, a decline in physical activity can also cause feelings of lethargy.

(Cont. 'd on next page)

One to One is devoted to the on-going support of those newly diagnosed, those in remission and those in recurrence.

100% of contributions directly benefit our group by providing activities and paying for expenses.

Donations are gratefully accepted and can be made by check payable to **One to One Ovarian Cancer Support Group** c/o Marilyn Brozovic 4793 Alton Dr. Troy, MI 48085

A receipt will be provided for tax purposes.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



Group Meeting: **Thursday, February 13**

4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Beaumont, Royal Oak
Neuroscience Center,
Allison Conference Room,
2nd floor

Group Conversation

Join us for dinner following the meeting at

The Avenue – located on Woodward, just north of 13 Mile on the west side. The restaurant offers a nice menu with separate checks.

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As a person undergoing cancer treatment, fatigue often seems like one more obstacle that is too difficult to manage and it affects your quality of life, making it harder for your body to heal from treatment. The good news is that cancer-related fatigue can be managed. According to **Kim Kitchens**, a clinical nurse from MD Anderson, there are some important steps to take to alleviate fatigue:



- ✦ **Get rest**, but not too much. Opt for small rest breaks or naps between activities instead of one big nap. That's because too much rest may make you even drowsier or make it difficult to sleep at night.
- ✦ **Accept help from others**. When people offer to help, take them up on it. Let them do things like go to the grocery for you, mow your lawn or drive your kids to school and activities. This way, you can conserve your energy for when you need it.
- ✦ **Distract yourself**. Dance, watch TV, listen to music or read a good book to distract yourself from the fatigue. Doing something you enjoy may also boost your mood.
- ✦ **Exercise**. Though you're tired, exercise is the best way to reduce cancer-related fatigue. Kitchens recommends taking a brisk walk, or trying cycling, swimming, aerobics, strength training or resistance training – basically, whatever it takes to get you moving, even if it's only for a few minutes. Bonus: exercise will also help you sleep better and boost your mood.
- ✦ **Maintain a healthy diet**. This can be hard during cancer treatment, especially if you're dealing with nausea or vomiting, but it's important to eat enough protein and calories. Most hospitals have a dietitian on staff, so you may be able to make an appointment with her/him.
- ✦ **Keep a fatigue journal** so you can start to see patterns and prioritize your activities.

Lastly, don't try to deal with fatigue on your own. Talk to your care team and they will work with you to develop a personalized plan for managing your fatigue so that you can more quickly get back to living your life.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT!

Special Event

Tuesday, March 10

6:30 p.m.

Neuroscience Center, 2nd floor
Allison Conference Room

**Special joint meeting with
Sharing & Caring
breast cancer support group**

Speaker: **Dr. Dana Zakalik, MD**,
Corporate Medical Director of
Cancer Genetics.



NOTE: Space is limited to 15 people

Join us for an evening with Dr. Dana Zakalik. We will discuss how genetics play an important role in cancer screening, treatment, and prevention. Get a full update on what's new in the world of cancer genetics and learn the importance of getting appropriate genetic risk assessment in order to identify who is at increased risk.

Reservations are required and space limited – Please RSVP:
mgurche@gmail.com.

“My clinical trial gave me a chance to live.”

BeRemarkable.

ST. JOE'S

Cancer Network



Amanda Crowell-Itliong has been in treatment for ovarian cancer since August of 2008 when she was diagnosed at the age of twenty-eight. She has endured numerous surgeries and countless chemotherapy regimens, and the side effects that they bring with them. A little over four years ago she was told that there were no more traditional treatments for her. She was able to qualify for a clinical trial, however, and she feels that it was the best thing that ever happened to her cancer. Even though it brought her many more devastating and painful side effects, Amanda gladly endured them. She thrives on staying busy as an educator, advocate, and motivational speaker and she enjoys her life to the fullest. Recently she was honored to be the face on the billboard which has been put up by St. Joe's Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor. Look for Amanda's smiling face as you head west on I-94, near the intersection of Huron (M12) south of Ypsilanti.

Life After Treatment

This article is a reprint from our July, 2009 newsletter.

By Latania Gillespie, BSW

We know that Cancer is probably one of the most rapid life changing experiences that you will ever encounter and that it can affect every aspect of your being. This can take place at the time of your diagnosis, during your treatment, and beyond. Cancer can change the way you think, feel, and react to all situations for the rest of your life. However, you have to make a choice. You **must** choose whether to allow this change to be positive or negative.

After completing treatment, it is very common to want everything to immediately "get back to normal," but things will be somewhat different. It is rare that things quickly return to the way they used to be. You may not be able to do all of the things you used to do the way you used to do them. Please accept the fact that, "That's Okay." Just give yourself time, and while doing so, work on figuring out what your "new normal" may be for awhile. It is okay to ask for help and set boundaries not to over-exert yourself.

You have probably completed the biggest obstacle you have ever had or will ever have in your life. It is now time to continue living. But don't just live. Live every day to its fullest potential. When talking with cancer survivors, one of the things mentioned to me the most is that they have realized that they have to keep joy in their lives. Because even if you live forty or fifty years after your diagnosis, if you allow cancer to suck all of the joy out of your life you must ask yourself --Have I really lived?



YOU HAVE SURVIVED CANCER! AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE THERE IS NO OBSTACLE TOO LARGE AND NO VALLEY TOO DEEP FOR YOU TO RISE ABOVE!!!!





a friendly reminder

Please try to remember when attending support group meetings or other activities that many of our members suffer from sensitivities to smells due to their treatments. Try to avoid using any strong perfume or body sprays on the day of our meetings. Thank you.

Check out our new website:
www.OneToOneOvarianCancerSupportGroup.com

We welcome feedback for improvements!

Happy SURVIVORSary!

Sonia Culver 7 years
Janet Kline 7 years
Linda Fogel 4 years

PLEASE TAKE NOTE...

We will no longer publish your "SURVIVORSary" unless an information form is completed and returned. *Privacy is of utmost importance so we will only publish your name with permission.* Here is the link for the form:

https://www.onetooneovariancancersupportgroup.com/uploads/1/2/7/4/1/27494700/information_form.pdf

Reading all the survivor years is an inspiration to us all!

Adversity is another way to measure the greatness in people.

~ Lou Holtz

If your SURVIVORSary is missing, we did not receive an updated form from you. Please visit our One to One website for the form or contact Marilyn Brozovic via email: brozovicm87@gmail.com

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Objectives of support group:

- ✦ Provide a forum for ovarian cancer patients to address concerns;
- ✦ Support each other through initial treatment phase, during potential recurrence, and with issues related to long term survival;
- ✦ Establish core group of survivors willing to visit newly diagnosed patients;
- ✦ Increase awareness of ovarian cancer, including its symptoms and risk factors, in the hope of achieving earlier detection and treatment.

Meeting dates

- **February 13**
Group Conversation
- **March 12**
Group Conversation
with Deb Doherty, PT, Ph.D.
(rescheduled from January)
- **April 9**

Support group meetings are held at the Beaumont, Royal Oak **Neuroscience Center**, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., in the 2nd floor conference room.

Parking is available in either the Neuroscience Center parking lot or in the Cancer Center parking lot. (The buildings are not connected.)

Newsletter information is presented in summary form, is general in nature and provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended in any way to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.