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Thank You!

Seeking
Cancer
Support
Now
Board
Members

CSN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anjie Cureton, President
Lindy Ruggiero, Treasurer
Carmelita Agodon
Scott Fowler
Alice Hiat
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OUR MISSION

We are a volunteer community of individuals affected by cancer dedicated to assisting people diagnosed with cancer and their caregivers so that no one goes through cancer alone.

Our services include our helpline, a variety of support groups, one-on-one support, referrals, education, information and training.

We are a working board and members are expected to assist with activities and events

Time commitment-monthly meetings in the afternoon of the second Sunday/month.

Board members must have experience of cancer as a survivor, family caregiver, or in oncology health care.

The CSN Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Cancer Support Now, Inc. PO Box 377338
Albuquerque NM, 87176

www.cancersupportnow.org

info@cancersupportnow.org

www.facebook.com/cancersupportnow

Editor: Marcia Reifman, mreifman@myctl.net

For Support and information

Call our Helpline at

**505 255 0405 or toll free 855 955 3500 ALL
CSN Support Services are free**

CANCER SUPPORT NOW IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

Available opportunities include:

- Representing Cancer Support Now at a community health fair
- Providing peer support for a person newly diagnosed with cancer and/or for a caregiver of a loved one with cancer
- Assisting with marketing tasks (distributing flyers and newsletters to health clinics, senior centers, and other sites)
- Assisting with taking calls, finding resources, and offering peer support on the Helpline
- Train to become a support group facilitator

some HUMOR





Powerful Tools for Caregivers

A free six-week program designed to help family caregivers take better care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend.



Sponsored by



This course is for
family caregivers
like YOU!



Fall 2026 Schedule

Virtual - Evening - Zoom

Dates: September 22nd, September 29th, October 6th, October 13th, October 20th, October 27th

Days and Time: Tuesdays, 6:30pm-8:00pm

Virtual - Daytime - Zoom

Dates: October 7th, October 14th, October 21st, October 28th, November 4th, November 11th

Days and Time: Wednesdays, 1:00pm-2:30pm

Highland Senior Center

Dates: October 1st, October 8th, October 15th, October 22nd, October 29th, November 5th

Days and Time: Thursdays, 1:45pm-3:15pm

Location: 131 Monroe St NE, 87108

Registration is required

Call us: (505) 584-7862

Visit us: www.familycaregivernm.org



Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA)

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) is a federal law that provides partial restitution to individuals who can show evidence they developed certain serious illnesses following exposure to radiation from the U.S. nuclear weapons program or their survivors. RECA was reauthorized on July 4, 2025.

Impacted individuals may be eligible for a one-time payment of \$100,000

A Qualifying Diagnosis may include:

Leukemia, Multiple Myeloma, Lymphomas

Cancers may include:

Thyroid, Breast, Esophagus, Stomach, Pharynx, Small Intestine, Pancreas, Bile Ducts, Gall Bladder, Salivary Gland, Urinary Bladder, Brain, Colon, Ovary, Liver, or Lung

Deadline to apply: December 31, 2027



Downwinders: you may get compensation if you lived in an affected area between September 24, 1944, and November 6, 1962, and later developed one of the covered diseases or cancers.



Onsite Participants: may be eligible for compensations if they were present at a government installation during a test of a nuclear device and contracted a compensable disease before January 1, 1963.



Uranium Workers may qualify if they were employed for at least one year at certain locations as a uranium miner, miller, core driller, transporter, or were involved in remediation efforts and were diagnosed with a specified compensable disease.



Manhattan Project Waste Contamination: Individuals may qualify if they developed a covered illness after being physically present for at least two years after January 1, 1949, in Missouri, Tennessee, Alaska, or Kentucky.

For additional information please visit the following webpage:
reca.doh.nm.gov or contact NMDOH Helpline at 1-833-SWNURSE (1-833-796-8773) or text NMDOH (66364)

File a claim online:
<https://reca.justice.gov/ClaimsPortal>

To file a claim by mail, or learn more, download the appropriate application:
<https://www.justice.gov/civil/reca>



Nutrition During Your Cancer Treatment



When you are being treated for cancer, nutrition is an important part of your care. Even if you are eating less than usual, regular meals can help you feel stronger and give you more energy. Use the tips in this handout and talk to your registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) about other ways that you can feel better.

Eating Tips During Cancer Treatment

- Try to eat 6 to 8 small meals and snacks throughout the day. This may be more appealing and better tolerated than 3 large meals.
- Choose foods that are ready to eat or that do not involve much cooking or preparation.
- If you find that meats are hard to eat or if you don't like how they taste, try chopped or ground meats mixed with a sauce or in a soup or casserole. You can also try using other protein sources (like eggs, dairy products, and nut butters) in place of meats
- Fruits and juices are usually easy to consume and may perk up your taste for other foods. Include them with your meals as a side
- Allow friends and family to prepare meals or shop for you. Don't hesitate to accept their offers of help. Be sure to tell them if there are certain foods that you can't eat very well or don't like. Make sure the proper food safety guidelines are used in preparation, delivery, and storage.
- Breakfast is the best meal of the day for many people. Try eating a bigger breakfast to keep your energy up during the day.
- If you are physically able, try to get regular exercise to help maintain your muscles and strength.
- Keep high-calorie, high-protein nutritional drinks on hand for those days when you just don't feel like eating. Ask your RDN which one is best for you.

General Tips to Help Manage Side Effects

Nausea	• Eat bland foods. • Try dry, starchy foods (like crackers or toast). • Avoid foods with strong smells. • Eat foods cold or at room temperature. • Keep something in your stomach at all times if nausea happens between meals.
Diarrhea	• Eat bland, low-fiber foods. • Avoid fried, greasy, and spicy foods. • Consider drinks with electrolytes to help replenish lost nutrients • Eat high-potassium foods, such as bananas and potatoes.
Fatigue	• Keep easy-to-prepare foods on hand and stock your fridge and pantry with snacks you enjoy • Make and freeze extra food on days you feel up to it • Choose foods that are easy to eat and don't require a lot of chewing.
Weight loss	• Stick to an eating schedule so you eat even when you are not hungry • Eat protein-rich foods with all meals and snack: • Pack snacks to keep with you at all times • Consider supplementing your regular diet with high-calorie, high-protein nutritional drinks

Concerns to Share With Your Doctor

- Tell your treatment team if your pain, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting are not being managed by the medications you have
- If you have constipation, ask your doctor whether you should start a daily bowel care program, which may include the use of
- An appetite stimulant can be helpful for some people. Talk to your doctor to determine if a medication could help you.



IAN RABINOWITZ ,
November 19, 1958 - August 6, 2026



Ian Rabinowitz, of Albuquerque, NM, died on August 6, 2026, after a long battle with cancer. Born on November 19, 1958 to Joe and Mary Rabinowitz in Johannesburg, South Africa, Ian spent his early years dreaming of a career in science. After serving his mandatory time in the South African army, where he was able to immerse himself in classic literature, he studied medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand. He did his residency in Internal Medicine at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, where met his wife, Marina. In 1989 they moved to St. Louis to Barnes Hospital for Ian to do a Fellowship in oncology/hematology.

Ian and Marina settled in Albuquerque, NM, where they raised their two children. Ian remained dedicated to serving his patients in New Mexico, teaching, including as director of the Fellowship program, and progressing cancer research throughout his thirty-year career at the University of New Mexico. After his diagnosis with cancer in 2011, Ian frequently reflected that his illness had given him a new perspective and ability to empathize not only with his patients, but also with the burdens on their families.



In the words of his fellow patients and co-workers

Back in 2002, I was assigned an oncologist who stood and talked at me, did not listen. I asked 3 members of the staff who was the most relational oncologist I could change to, who would consider me a partner in my care. They each said Dr. Rabinowitz. In our first meeting, Dr. R. sat across from me, looked me in the eyes, and thoughtfully answered my questions. He always did. After 5 years, I continued to follow up with him annually, many more than the standard 5, and only grew to love him more.

My interactions with Dr. Rabinowitz were limited, but in each interaction, he showed great passion for his work and compassion for others.

Dr. Rabinowitz's legacy will continue through his deep dedication in educating and mentoring the next generation of physicians.





SYLVIA AVALOS
August 16, 1981-August 26, 2026



Sylvia Avalos, an amazing woman, shared her inspirational story regarding her cancer journey.

Sylvia was born in Houston, Texas and grew up in Hatch, New Mexico, but lived most of her life in Las Cruces. She was a teacher for seven years. Sylvia was diagnosed with Stage 3 HER2+ inflammatory breast cancer. Sylvia's treatment consisted of numerous rounds of chemo, radiation, immunotherapy, and a mastectomy of her right breast.

The waves unfortunately continued as she fought through those storms, and in August 2023, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor (the breast cancer had metastasized.) Asked her how she felt faced with this now in front of her, she said "I was surprisingly calm. I knew I had anxiety, but I felt strong and only by the grace of God was I able to go to doctor appointments, do the scans, and treatments." She went through two surgeries within three days and then radiation on her brain.

Sylvia said she found a new mindset and surrendered, cheerfully accepting the treatment and healing. The support of her husband, Tony, who she describes as her rock, took on the brunt of the worry and household



In the words of her loving friends

Losing Sylvia is especially difficult. We all loved her, and her beautiful writing gave so much to this group. Her words, her presence, and the way she shared her journey will stay with us.

She was always such a "sweet light." I love the way she expressed herself in writing, I think she had started to write a book. I, too, was deeply affected by her passing at such a young age. She left us way too soon.

She was an amazing, determined young lady. I felt she was strong and courageous and always added a little humor to her trials.

With all my heart I wish that Sylvia's passing means an end to her suffering. If there is an afterlife I see her in a beautiful place.

I think this quote, that I hang on to a lot, really conveys what she meant to me in our meetings: "At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us" (Albert Schweitzer). I will hold her in my heart for a long time.



SUMMER 2026



CANCER SUPPORT NOW ...IN MEMORIAM...

Jim Ramos **November 2, 1964 - August 3, 2026**



JIM RAMOS passed away peacefully at home on August 3, 2026, after a courageous battle with pleural mesothelioma. Born November 2, 1964, defined by hard work, loyalty, humor, perseverance, and an unwavering devotion to the people and things he loved. He graduated from Artesia High School in 1982, where he formed friendships that remained an important part of his life for decades. At the center of Jim's life was Lily—his wife, partner, best friend, and the love of his life.

Jim built a distinguished career as a highly skilled electrical and electronic technician, spending nearly two decades supporting NASA missions at the White Sands Test Facility. For Jim, aerospace was never simply a job. It was a passion. He took tremendous pride in knowing that the work of his hands and the skills he had spent a lifetime developing contributed to something much greater than himself. His work on the Space Shuttle, Orion, Artemis, and America's space program will remain an enduring part of his legacy.

Away from work, Jim treasured the simple joys of life. He especially loved camping with Lily and their dogs, creating memories together as a family. Jim also cherished being a godfather and held his beloved godchildren, Edward Manuel Tafoya, Josiah Alden Velarde, and Sarah Lily Marie Madrid, very close to his heart.

Jim faced mesothelioma with tremendous courage, determination, and strength and remained a fighter until the very end. Cancer will never define Jim's life. He will be remembered for the work he took tremendous pride in, the missions he helped support, the friendships that lasted a lifetime, the family he cherished, the laughter and memories he created, and above all, the extraordinary love story he shared with Lily.

Throughout Jim's mesothelioma journey, the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation became an invaluable source of guidance, compassion, advocacy, and support, helping Jim and Lily connect with leading medical specialists and resources. Their gratitude for the Foundation and its commitment to mesothelioma research, patient advocacy, education, and awareness is immeasurable.

Those wishing to honor Jim's courageous fight may make a dedicated donation in Jim Ramos' memory to the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation. May Jim's fight continue to make a difference for others. Above all else, Jim loved deeply, and he was deeply loved. His hands helped support missions that reached beyond this Earth, and his love will continue far beyond his lifetime.

Fly high, Rocket Man. Forever Ramos Strong.





Thank you!

- Are you a cancer survivor or do you love and care for someone who is a cancer survivor?
- Have you called our Helpline to get support and resources?
- Are you a support group member or facilitator?

We offer our Helpline, support groups, and conference free to everyone. But we can only continue to do this thanks to donations from those who value our services.

Any amount helps! Please donate today!

If you would prefer to donate your time, we are always seeking new board members and volunteers.

Please contact the Helpline if you are interested.

"Thank you for always being there when I need to talk."

Caregiver grieving loss of brother to lung cancer

"You've helped me more than you know."

Breast cancer survivor

"Your words tread softly on my heart. No one has ever spoken to me with respect and validation as you do."

Colon cancer survivor



REKINDLE Your Ability to Cope With
a Life-Changing Medical Diagnosis.

Are you experiencing mental health distress due to a diagnosis of cancer or other medical illness? **The rekindle Psychedelic Study may be an option.**

Right now, researchers are recruiting adults diagnosed with cancer or another serious illness who are struggling with symptoms of depression and/or anxiety due to the diagnosis of their medical illness.

Neither you nor your loved one should face this alone.

Scan the QR code to learn more and check your eligibility to participate in the REKINDLE study.

To be eligible to participate, you or your loved one must be:
Between 18 and 80 years old
Diagnosed with cancer (stages 1-4) or other serious conditions such as ALS, MS, Parkinson's disease or idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (PF)
Experiencing symptoms of depression and/or anxiety and feeling overwhelmed for at least 4 weeks

There is no charge to participate and reimbursement may be available for eligible study-related expenses.



rekindlestudies.com

All CSN support groups are currently meeting on Zoom, except those designated with red asterisks: ***. Using Zoom, we are able to include individuals who live outside Bernalillo County. In addition, we are able to support individuals while they are going through treatment, as they can attend groups from home. For those of you who struggle with computers in general, or Zoom in particular, we are happy to assist you in learning how to join us remotely. Please contact Anjie Cureton at 505-925-0104 if you are choosing to join a support group and need help using Zoom.

To join a group, or to learn which group and/or services might support you best, please call our Helpline. When you decide on which group feels right for you, we will connect you with the group facilitator who will send you a zoom invitation to join the group or will explain where the group will meet. For all those who are unable to use a web-based platform, you may use any cell or landline phone to call in and participate in any of these groups by phone. For those of you who would like our other free services, just call the Helpline.

Please call our Helpline for direct and/or ongoing support for patients/survivors and/or loved ones challenged by cancer and/or to be referred to one of our groups or services: 505-255-0405.

LGBTQ+CANCER PEER SUPPORT Referrals:

Jeff Hurley and Deb Openden: Call our Helpline to be connected..

PANCREATIC CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Patients/survivors and/or caregivers of pancreatic cancer. All stages, men & women. Second & fourth Thursdays, 3:30 - 5:00 pm. *Jim Pitcher & Lillie Ortiz*

UNM/CSN Friends and Family Writing Together

Journaling Support Group for Grief or Anticipatory Grief. For caregivers of someone with any type of cancer. Every Thursday 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. *Eleanor Schick & Anjie Cureton*

WOMEN'S CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Women only, all diagnoses. Caregivers welcome. Every other Thursday, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. *Geri Stayman*

SANDIA CANCER SUPPORT GROUP ***

Survivors, all cancers, all stages, men and women, 2nd Wednesday, noon-1:00pm. Sandia Base. *Christina Chavez*

SANTA FE WOMEN'S GROUP SURVIVING SISTERS

All diagnoses, all stages, all women. 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 4:00- 5:30 pm. *Ms. Fred & Emily Haozous.*

U27 (UNDER 27 YEARS OLD)

Peer Support: Kimberly Craft.

Call our Helpline to be connected

UNM/CSN SURVIVORS WRITING TOGETHER

Journaling Support Group for survivors, men & women, all diagnoses. Every Monday, 2:30 - 4:00 pm. *Anjie Cureton & Eleanor Schick*

UNM/CSN ADVANCED CANCER SURVIVORS WRITING TOGETHER

Journaling Support Group for survivors of metastatic cancer, men & women, all diagnoses. Every Tuesday, 3:30 - 5:00 pm. *Anjie Cureton & Eleanor Schick*

TAOS CANCER SUPPORT ***

Survivors of all cancers, all stages, Men and Women. Meets every Tuesday, 4:00 to 5:30 pm. *Victoria Prince.* Call Christy Elliott at Taos Cancer Support Office: 575-751-8927. TaosCancerSupport.org

CREATE TO HEAL

Using art, music, writing, meditation to explore the journey of cancer Survivors and/or caregivers, all diagnoses, men or women One-on-one sessions, by appointment Patricia Varga Call our Helpline for more information

ONE-ON-ONE PEER CANCER SUPPORT OR PEER MATCHING

Survivor to Survivor and/or Caregiver to Caregiver (by phone)

COMMUNITY CANCER NAVIGATION

Referrals to assistance for non-medical needs. For patients, survivors and/or their loved ones. Call our Helpline for more information

RELAXATION SUPPORT SESSIONS provided by phone

Learn Stress Management Techniques to Deal with Cancer. For Cancer Patients/survivors, and/or their caregivers. Offered by *Jean Stouffer*, Certified Hypnotherapist. Call our Helpline for more information

SMOKING CESSATION

Patricia Torn on Zoom or by phone. Call our Helpline for more information

CAREGIVER SUPPORT (Educational Sessions)

Patricia Torn on Zoom or by phone. Call our Helpline for more information

FREE CANCER SUPPORT NOW SERVICES • For Information, call our helpline: 505 255 0405

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

*** indicates in person meetings

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT ASSOCIATION OF NEW MEXICO (PCSANM) ***

First & third Saturday, Meetings are in person.

[View Website](#)

THE GYNECOLOGICAL AWARENESS PROJECT

Support for anyone with a gynecological cancer. Call for info: Kat Adams at 505-610-9300; Email: kat@thegcap.org

HEAD, NECK & ESOPHAGEAL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Men & women, all stages. Second & 4th Mondays. 4:00-5:00 pm. Jess Quiring: 1-913-991-8848

COMMUNITY GIFT CLOSET FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Free wigs, hats, post mastectomy bras & breast prostheses. Wednesdays, 10:00 am - 1:00 p.m. All cancer patients are welcome

New Mexico Cancer Center: 505-842-8171

HEALING TOUCH

for Survivors & Caregivers, men & women, in person, by appointment. Call Deanna Flores, Nurse Navigator, Lovelace Cancer Center: 505-727-3041.

CANCER SERVICES OF NEW MEXICO ***

Family Cancer Retreat, Spring & Fall, call Janet: 505-288-0331

FORCE (FACING OUR RISK OF CANCER EMPOWERED)

Support for those with genetic mutations:

<https://www.facingourrisk.org>

Peer Support in New Mexico: Lou Wilburn: 505-507-3347

ALBUQUERQUE NETS (NEUROENDOCRINE/CARCINOID SUPPORT GROUP)

Terry Nelson: 505-298-6356. or nls306@aol.com. [view website](#)

WRITE TO HEAL

A FREE ONLINE WRITING WORKSHOP

Based on (but not limited by) the life-changing diagnosis of cancer. Call or email Joanne Brown: 510-381-1205 or joanne@joannebrown.com.

LAND OF ENCHANTMENT MULTIPLE MYELOMA GROUP- Men & Women: Patients, Caregivers & Adult Family Members ***

1st Wednesday each month, 11:00-12:30pm Contact: Susan Benjamin: 505.690.4597 or Benjamin4@cyber-mesa.com Or John DeFlice: 505-897-4167 or jdeflice@gmail.com More info here

OSTOMATE SUPPORT GROUP of CENTRAL NEW MEXICO ***

This is a support group for individuals living with an ostomy and their caregivers and families. It is also for those who may need to have an ostomy and want to learn more about it. North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center on the Second Saturday at 1 PM. Meeting in person. Call Barbara D'Amore at 505-797-4388 More info here

DESERT SOUTHWEST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP in Las Cruces ***

Survivors or Caregivers of all cancers, all stages, men & women. In person: 4th Saturday, 10:00 am to Noon. Virtually the following Monday, 6:00 pm. Call or text Maricela Sandoval: 505-453-1789 or email: cancerwarriors.desert.sw@gmail.com

MORE RESOURCES

Fall Equinox Sound Bath & Labyrinth Experience

Reset Your Nervous System
Release Stress
Restore Balance

Tuesday, September 22

10:00–11:00 AM

St. Paul Lutheran Church – Prayer Labyrinth

1100 Indian School Rd. NE Albuquerque, NM 87102

South parking lot – Free parking

This Session Includes:

- Wellness Event
- Crystal singing bowls & sound instruments
- Guided meditation & breathwork
- A safe, supportive space for rest and reflection
- Yoga mats & blankets

Bring water & wear comfortable clothes

Facilitator: Monique Montes de Oca

Questions: 505-925-0154

For this special session, patients will have the opportunity to experience a guided labyrinth walk followed by sound healing as we welcome the first day of fall together. The theme will center around balance, transition, release, and renewal—creating an opportunity to pause, reflect, and connect with the changing season.