

Cancer Support Now Newsletter



Winter 2018
Issue 8.1

When A Loved One is Diagnosed The "C" word nobody wants to hear

Katie Frego

Oct 24, 2017

<https://www.theodysseyonline.com/when-loved-one-is-diagnosed>

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Cancer has been in my life in many different ways for almost all of my life. I don't remember ever not knowing someone who was suffering from cancer. My uncle died when I was very young from cancer, my step-dad's mom passed away from lung cancer when I was young as well, my brother has on and off bone cancer, a family-friend of mine passed away from stomach cancer a few years back, and now my father is diagnosed with prostate cancer.

When a loved one is diagnosed with cancer it seems as if the world around you is caving in and you can't find a minute to breathe. The worry, fear and anger that comes along with watching a love one suffer is constant. You can never seem to catch a break. The feeling is unexplainable. Throughout my whole life, the word "cancer" has become more and more dreadful.

Feeling helpless is something that nobody wants to feel. When a loved one is diagnosed, helplessness is all you feel. Since there is no cure for cancer, there is nothing you can do to stop the one who is suffering get away from this ugly disease. There are some things you can do to make them feel more comfortable, but over all there is not much you can do to solve the problem, which is frustrating and quite frankly depressing.

No matter how many times cancer has appeared in one of my loved one's life, it never gets any easier. Actually it gets harder each time. There is nothing about cancer that is easy, and watching someone you love suffer through the incurable pain is frightening. I would never wish this pain on anybody.

To anyone who is care-taking for a loved one with a terminal illness: Stay strong, even though you think you can't. Take care of yourself... don't put your health on the back burner. Reach out for help! There are a lot of people around you who are willing to help out, and remember that you are a great person for helping your loved one.

This is the **Winter 2018 edition** of the CSN Newsletter. We have expanded listings of all the numerous support groups for survivors and caregivers online.

This year we will try four issues, in February, May, August, and November

E-mail works best, send items to me at jeraldcross@comcast.net

Thanks,
Jerry Cross
505-228-6768

Cancer Survivors Offering Support

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**For support and information
call our**

Helpline at

**505-255-0405 or
toll free 855-955-3500.**

**All CSN support services
are free.**

CSN Affirmation

Cancer Survivors Offering Support

We offer our presence, a presence that listens without judgment, a presence that is comfortable with silence, tears and laughter, a presence that offers encouragement. Support is just that—being there, listening attentively, accepting moments of silence, tears and laughter, encouraging without judgment. What is the gift we have to offer a support person? We have a personal experience of cancer—we understand and we are not afraid to be there to listen.

We live in a community where no one has to go through cancer alone, whether as survivor or caregiver, whatever their needs may be.

Mission statement: We are a community of survivors reaching out, supporting, educating, and assisting survivors, their loved ones, and caregivers.

In Memoriam

We lost the following Cancer Support Now friends since the last newsletter.

Mary Marquez

Arturo Olivas

We are sorry to have lost them as our friends, but we are grateful to have had them as part of our lives.

The CSN webpage, www.cancersupportnow.org has many pages of resources, other websites, articles, and documents of help for anyone. It also has page links in Spanish and Chinese.

Please like our Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/cancersupportnow>

You do not have to be a Facebook member to see our postings, just click on the link.

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Two Hidden Cancer Causes: Diabetes and Obesity

Nicholas Bakalar Dec. 5, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com>

Does a widening waistline put you at risk for cancer? Apparently so. According to a new study, nearly six percent of cancers are attributable at least in part to obesity and diabetes.

Researchers compared incidence data for 12 cancers in 175 countries in 2012 with body mass index and diabetes prevalence figures from 2002, on the assumption that it takes at least ten years for cancer to develop.

They found that in 2012, diabetes and a B.M.I. above 25 were independent risk factors for 792,600 new cases of cancer, about 5.6 percent of the 14,067,894 cases reported to a worldwide cancer registry.

Among the cancers associated with diabetes and high B.M.I. were tumors of the colon, gallbladder, liver and pancreas. Obesity and diabetes weren't the only causes of these cancers, but the conditions played a role.

"We know a lot about what causes obesity and diabetes, but what it is about being obese or diabetic that causes cancer is less clear," said the lead author, Jonathan Pearson-Stuttard, a clinical fellow at Imperial College London. "It may be that exposure to high insulin levels or insulin resistance may also be a cause of cancer."

The study, in **The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology**, [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/landia/article/PIIS2213-8587\(17\)30366-2/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/landia/article/PIIS2213-8587(17)30366-2/fulltext)

found considerable differences in the proportions of cancer cases attributable to B.M.I. on the one hand and to diabetes on the other.

For example, high B.M.I. was associated with about twice as many cases of colorectal cancer as diabetes, and nearly three times as many cases of breast and endometrial cancers. Diabetes was not associated with kidney cancer at all, but high B.M.I. was linked to about a fifth of kidney cancer cases.

High B.M.I. and diabetes combined accounted for 38.4 percent of endometrial cancers but only 8.9 percent of breast cancers. In men, the two conditions combined accounted for 23.3 percent of liver cancers but just 8.6 percent of colorectal cancers.

There were variations by region as well. About 16 percent of cancer cases were attributable to high B.M.I. in high-income Western countries. But only about 5 percent of cancer cases in the high-income Asia-Pacific region were linked to B.M.I.

Diabetes and obesity are increasing worldwide, and the researchers project that cancers, particularly those of the gallbladder, liver and endometrium, will rise as well.

Unless diabetes and obesity are much better controlled, the growth in cancers will be significant. "By 2035, because of increases in obesity and diabetes, there could be a 20 percent increase in men's cancer and a 30 percent increase for women," Dr. Pearson-Stuttard said.

The 2017 Coleman Vision Tennis Tournament

had an event, **Rally in the Alley**, held on September 22, 2017, which raised approx. \$1,500 for Cancer Support Now. Thanks to Sue Jollensten, CVTC Tournament Director, and thanks to Kimberly Kraft for her assistance. We appreciate the tournament's generosity. This is their second year of supporting us. Their website is at

<http://rallyinthealley.weebly.com/about.html>

Cancer Survivors Offering Support

Cancer Support Now Groups & Services

For information, call our helpline: 505-255-0405

Blood Cancer Group

First Tuesday, 1:00-2:30PM
Carlisle & Comanche
Mary Josephson

“Southwest Sisters” Breast & Gynecological Cancer Support Group

2nd and 4th Wednesday, 5:30-7:00PM
Carlisle & Comanche
Sue Whipple and CJ Kreider

Friends and Family Writing Together [flyer](#)

Journaling Support Group for Grief or Anticipatory Grief
For caregivers/loved ones of someone with any type of cancer
Every Thursday, 4:00-5:30pm at UNM Cancer Center
Eleanor Schick & Anjie Cureton

North Valley Women’s Group

Every other Thursday, 6:30-8:30PM
Montano, West of 4th St.
Michele Brandwein & Geri Stayman

Ovarian Open Arms

Third Saturday of the month, 10:30AM
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Margaret Goga, Debbie Reynolds & Pamela Engel

Pueblo of Isleta Community Cancer Support

2nd Tuesday of the month, 10:30-Noon
Isleta Pueblo Health Clinic
Stephanie Barela

Sandia Breast Cancer Group

4th Tuesday of the month, Noon-1:00PM
Sandia Base **Temporarily Suspended**
Elaine Hinman-Sweeney

Santa Fe Women’s Group,

“Surviving Sisters”

2nd & 4th Tuesday, 4:00-5:30PM
2098 Calle Ensenada, Santa Fe
Ms. Fred, Emily Haozous & Elizabeth Harris

Survivors Writing Together [flyer](#)

Every Monday, 2:30-4:00
UNM Cancer Center
Anjie Cureton & Eleanor Schick

Taos Groups

Survivors and caregivers, men & women
Every Tuesday, 4:00-5:30PM
413 Sipapu St, Taos
Christine Sherwood

U27 (Under 27 years old)

3rd Wednesday of the month
Meeting Place TBD
Kimberley Craft

UNM/CSN Education & Support Group [flyer](#)

Survivors & Caregivers, all diagnoses
1st and 3rd Monday, 5:30-7:00PM
University & Copper
Anjie Cureton & Adele Frances

One-on-One Cancer Caregiver Session

One time 90-minute Session
Resources and Support for Cancer Caregivers
Scheduled individually to accommodate needs of caregiver
Call Patricia Torn: 505-307-3414

One-on-One Smoking Cessation

Scheduled individually. Call Patricia:
505-307-3414

One-on-One Peer Cancer Support or Peer Matching

Call our Helpline: 505-255-0405

Community Cancer Navigation [flyer](#)

Assists with non-medical needs of survivors or their loved ones
Call our Helpline: 505-255-0405

I will live with as much gusto and vigor as I did the day before I knew I had cancer; knowing that does not change who I am.

Cancer Survivors Offering Support

Cancer Support Now's Community Partners

**Prostate Cancer Support Association
of New Mexico** [flyer](#)

1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month
Bear Canyon Senior Center, 4645 Pitt St.
NE 505-254-7784

www.pcsanm.org pchelp@pcsanm.org

**Gynecological Cancer Awareness
Project (G-CAP) Circles of Hope**

2nd Saturday, 9:30am fellowship/light
breakfast,
10:00-11:00 am groups: breast cancer,
gyn cancers, and caregivers
Contact: Amy Gundlach

cleversenoras@gmail.com

or Pat Belletto pbelletto@msn.com
610-9300

Relaxation Support Classes

Last Friday of the month, 10:30-Noon
Carlisle Blvd. NE
Jean Stouffer, certified Hypnotherapist:
505-296-8423 jeansouffer@mac.com

New Mexico Cancer Center [flyer](#)
Support Programs

Head and Neck Cancer Support Group
for Men:
2nd & 4th Mondays, call: 505-796-3513
CLIMB Program for children when
scheduled, call: 857-8460 [flyer](#)
Gift Closet: every Wednesday
2:00-5:00pm call: 857-8460

Lovelace Breast Care Center [flyer](#)

Young Breast Cancer Survivors
Support Group
3rd Tuesday of the month, call 505-727-
6900
Yoga for Breast Cancer Survivors
Call 505-727-6933

Lymphedema Support Group

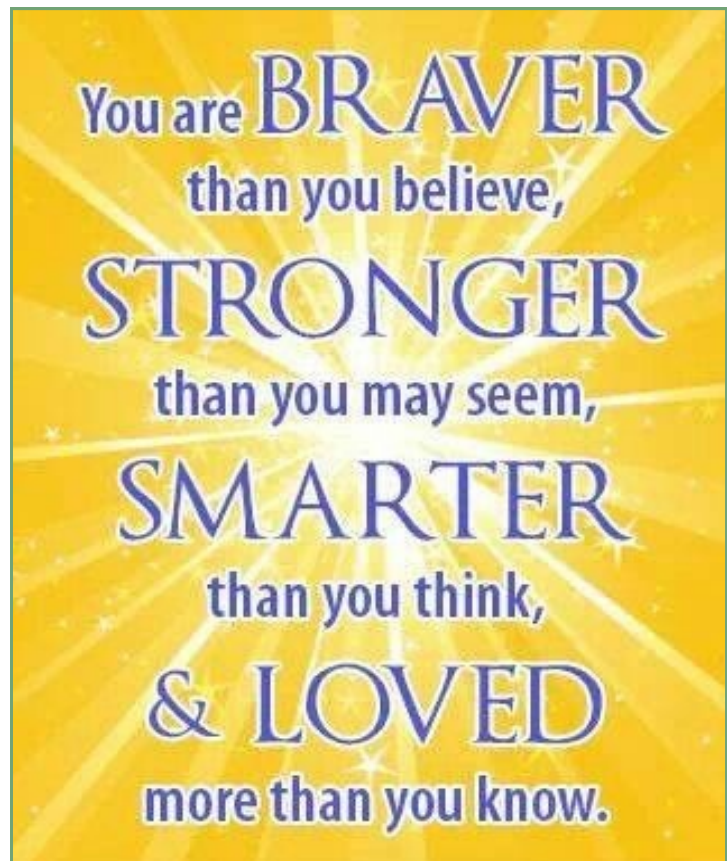
2nd Monday, 6 pm
Call Julia: 505-252-2339 or
Jackie: 505-265- 0024

Cancer Services of New Mexico

Family Retreat; Legal, Insurance, and Paperwork
Assistance Program; Family Cancer Resource
Bags

(505) 259-9583 info@cancerservicesnm.org

**More detailed information and
flyers for some of the groups can
be found on the Services page
of our website.**



Do You Know the Risk Factors for Cancer? Many Americans Don't

Rachael Rettner

October 24, 2017

<https://www.livescience.com/60755-cancer-risk-factors-survey.html>

Many Americans have misconceptions about risk factors for cancer, according to a new survey.

For the survey, called the National Cancer Opinion Survey, more than 4,000 U.S. adults answered questions to gauge their knowledge about risk factors for cancer. (The group of survey participants was representative of Americans, meaning the sample included the same proportions of people of different demographics and other characteristics as the country as a whole.)

Some risk factors were correctly identified by most survey participants. For example, nearly 80 percent correctly identified tobacco use as a risk factor for cancer, and 66 percent correctly identified sun exposure as a risk factor for cancer.

However, only 31 percent were aware that obesity is a risk factor for cancer. This is worrisome, the researchers said, because obesity is the second-leading preventable cause of cancer (behind tobacco use). Studies have linked obesity with an increased risk of colon, breast, prostate and uterine cancers.

"That so few Americans are aware that maintaining a healthy weight is associated with lower risk for many cancers should serve as a wake-up call," said Dr. Richard

chief medical officer at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). ASCO commissioned the survey, which was carried out by Harris Poll in July 2017. "Unfortunately, obesity is a problem that cannot be solved overnight and will require broad societal engagement to address," he said in a statement.

The survey also found that only 30 percent of Americans know that drinking alcohol is a risk factor for cancer. Studies have found that alcohol consumption can increase the risk of mouth, liver and breast cancers, the researchers said.

In addition, only 25 percent of Americans know that a lack of exercise can increase the risk of cancer. A recent study, for instance, found that exercise is linked with a lower risk of 13 types of cancer.

What's more, some Americans falsely believed that certain factors could increase their cancer risk: 14 percent said they thought cellphones could increase the risk of cancer, and 8 percent said they thought caffeine consumption could increase the risk of cancer. (ASCO does not recognize cellphones or caffeine as risk factors for cancer. Many studies have found no link between cellphone use and cancer. In addition, many studies have found that caffeine consumption is actually linked with a lower risk of cancer.)

The survey also found that many Americans are not taking some important steps that can reduce their risk of cancer. Less than half (48 percent) said they use sunblock or limit their sun exposure, and only 38 percent said they limited alcohol consumption.

Still, the majority of Americans (66 percent) said they do not smoke, and 50 percent said they eat lots of fruits and vegetables. Both factors can lower a person's risk of cancer.

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Cancer Survivors Offering Support

Participants were also asked questions about their personal experience with cancer. Concerningly, some Americans who have cancer said they have taken dangerous steps to cut their treatment costs, which could be harmful to their health, the researchers said. About one-quarter of the participants who said that either they or a family member has or has had cancer said they had taken steps to reduce treatment costs.

For example, 9 percent said they had skipped doctor appointments, 8 percent said they had refused treatment, 8 percent said they had postponed filling or had not filled prescriptions, 8 percent said they had skipped doses of prescribed medications and 7 percent said they had cut pills in half.

It's alarming "that Americans are potentially risking not only their health but also their lives due to high treatment costs," Schilsky said.

Patients should not have to make an "impossible choice" between their cancer treatment and other necessary expenses, he said.

Most of the survey participants also said they believed that the federal government should take action to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

Overall, the survey "helps us understand what our fellow Americans know and believe about cancer, and therefore where we need to focus as a nation in our efforts to conquer cancer," ASCO President Dr. Bruce Johnson said. "It is clear there are many important gaps we need to address — from educating the public about cancer prevention to confronting high treatment costs, to investing in cancer research that is vital to improving patients' outcomes in the future," Johnson said.

Cancer Support Now's
7th Annual Free Conference,
Living With and Beyond Cancer,
is being organized this year in
conjunction with the Prostate Cancer
Support Association of NM, and
G-CAP (the Gynecological Cancer
Awareness Project).

**It is being organized as this issue goes
to Press. We are looking to have it in
late April, 2018.**

At a site to be determined

From 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Free light breakfast and lunch.

Two keynote speakers

4 breakout sessions to choose from

Watch the Facebook page or website

www.cancersupportnow.org

for details and registration info

Cancer Support Now Library

The online catalogue of almost 1,000 books can be seen here:

<https://www.librarything.com/catalog/CancerSupportNow>

Over 100 new books are being added to the inventory.

It was moved to the office of the Prostate Cancer Support Association of New Mexico, 2533 Virginia St NE, Suite C, 87110.

Map is at

<http://goo.gl/maps/EUg9S>

For now, the CSN library is open during PCSANM office hours of 10 AM to 2 PM on **Mondays through Thursdays**, and by appointment.

We hope to get some volunteers to get the library staffed the other days. If you have books checked out from the library, please return them to this new location. There is a mail slot, so most smaller books could be returned when the office is closed.



We have two longtime volunteer support group facilitators retiring, Mary Ellen Kurucz and Connie Souza. We wanted to thank them for many years of service.

I am sad to say good bye to Mary Ellen Kurucz. What an amazing woman. I met Mary Ellen in October 2012. I had just moved to New Mexico 3 months earlier. I had spent those months driving back and forth to California to finish my chemotherapy treatments. My husband was the only person that I knew here and he was busy working. We lived 20 miles outside Albuquerque. I felt very isolated. I learned of PLTC and asked to meet with Mary Ellen. She greeted me with such a big smile and hug. She listened to me tell my story. I told her I was upset to be pulled away from my support system and to have my cancer reoccur just before moving. I felt so welcomed and supported by Mary Ellen. I have been going to her support groups for the past 5 past years. She has been such a blessing to me and many others. She has been such a positive, supportive, caring, understanding facilitator. We will feel lost without her in our lives. We wish Mary Ellen all the best always.

Mary Josephson

AND The first or second time I attended PLTC, I felt guilty talking about my easy recovery compared to others who had it bad. Mary Ellen told me "you can have compassion without comparison". I have never forgotten that. **Melody Coil**

Connie Souza had just turned 60 when her ovarian cancer was diagnosed and she discovered a community of support in Albuquerque. Following her second surgery for a recurrence in 1996, she breathed life into a group called Ovarian Open Arms that had been started in the 1980s; moderated another support group that was mixed; and coordinated a speakers' group of ovarian cancer survivors at the University of New Mexico Medical School. Through it all, she tried to ensure that everyone felt welcomed and nourished in the support groups, and worked to keep the group and her ladies going strong. Connie has provided guidance and compassion to dozens of women over the years. It's a tough job, often with sadness at the end. She shows courage and kindness always.

Pamela Engel

