



Cedar Valley Cancer Committee

Touch of Courage Connection

Newsletter

October 2021

Celebrating over 30 years in the Cedar Valley

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What is Metastasis?

*By Barbara Christie-Pope, PhD,
Professor of Biology, Cornell College*

Metastasis is the movement of cancer cells from a primary tumor to a distant site in the body. This simple definition does not capture the fear and devastation felt by an individual when they learn that they have metastatic disease. The initial reaction is, why did this happen? Why didn't my therapy work? I thought I was "cancer-free"; how could this come back to haunt me ten years later? Is there something I did that caused this? The questions are endless and sometimes overwhelming.

Unfortunately, these questions lack answers. Around 90% of all cancer mortality is due to metastasis; therefore, research is necessary to treat metastatic disease and to prevent metastasis in the first place. The mechanisms underlying the development of metastatic tumors, often referred to as the metastatic cascade, is poorly understood but many avenues of research are piecing together the route tumor cells must travel to new sites in the body and, once there, how these cells respond to their new, foreign environment.

The cascade begins when a cell from the primary tumor detaches and enters the lymph circulation and on to the blood or enters the blood directly. This process requires the cells to navigate through the blood vessel wall, travel through the blood, then exit the blood vessel to gain entry to tissues. Tumor cells in the blood are met with a very hostile physical and cellular environment. These cells enter a fast-flowing river where they encounter obstacles such as the inner banks of the blood vessel wall. The shearing forces and pressure within the blood vessel can damage their fragile cell walls. Cells of the immune system are also found in blood. These natural killer cells are appropriately named and have the ability to recognize the tumor cells and destroy them. Unfortunately, platelets, small fragments of cells involved in blood clotting, can form a protective barrier around the tumor cells allowing survival and assisting with the exit of the tumor cells into the tissue surrounding the blood vessel.

Although thousands of cells may begin this arduous journey, few actually survive. This sounds like good news. But unfortunately, it only takes one seeding cell to begin the new formation of a secondary tumor.

Metastasis, continued on page 6

Advocate Story

A Warning Sign - *By Deanna Hughes, an advocate*



*Deanna
Hughes*

Over a period of 20 years or more, I had 6 benign biopsies of suspicious areas found during routine mammograms. In summer of 2018 I had a couple of episodes of spontaneous clear nipple discharge. A few weeks later during my annual physical my physician was able to express some fluid. I was referred for a diagnostic mammogram and to see a breast surgeon. The mammogram did not show any abnormality, but the surgeon did a breast ultrasound and found suspicious debris in a milk duct behind the right nipple. The area was removed under general anesthesia and showed atypical ductal hyperplasia. This is considered high risk for a future breast cancer and would require close surveillance with annual mammogram and breast MRI. I was also referred to an oncologist to discuss the risk of a breast cancer diagnosis in the next 10 years and how tamoxifen may reduce that risk. I asked for 6 months to think about it.

As my 6 month follow up neared, I told my breast surgeon I felt I needed to do the breast MRI before I made a decision on taking tamoxifen. The breast MRI showed 3 abnormal areas, including a milk duct behind the left nipple (same area as on the right side). After much consideration, I decided I would rather have a bilateral mastectomy and immediate reconstruction at age 65 than have to take drugs now and may still have to deal with surgery and chemotherapy at an older age. Unfortunately, one surgery turned into four due to infection on one side. Was it worth it to me? Yes. I

have been a member of the Beyond Pink TEAM for 32 years, and am a retired mammography technologist. I greatly admire the strong women who have dealt with breast cancer so bravely. I consider my nipple discharge a warning sign that I heeded so I did not have to follow the same path these courageous women and men have. Do I recommend it for others? No, it has to be your decision alone after weighing all of your options. There is no right or wrong answer to what is best, as long as you feel good about the decision you have made. I was fortunate to have a very supportive husband and family to back my decision.

What I have learned from my experience is how important the new vaccine research is. Mayo Clinic immunologist, Keith Knutson, PhD, has developed a vaccine that could prevent three subtypes breast cancer; ER-positive, HER2-positive and triple-negative. Rather than fighting an organism, such as a virus, his vaccine immunizes against natural proteins in our cells that trigger a breast cancer. A phase I clinical trial was launched in 2019 for women who had been treated for advanced metastatic breast cancer that is likely to recur. He is ready to launch a phase II trial for patients that are at high risk for breast cancer. Dr. Knutson estimates it will take 5-10 years to determine if the vaccine reduced incidence of breast cancer in the high-risk population. A

phase III trial will involve 100,000 women across multiple centers.

Dr. Knutson states that women that are currently around 25 years old may have a vaccine available to them at age 40 to prevent them from developing breast cancer. He already has three vaccines in clinical trials to reduce mortality from breast cancer recurrence, dating back to 2012. I find this thrilling and hopeful. I don't want our daughters and granddaughters to make tough choices or to endure surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. To read more, click on this link at <https://www.facebook.com/MayoClinic/posts/keith-knutson-phd-is-embarking-on-a-year-long-phase-1-clinical-trial-to-find-out/10156045514672517/>.

Until the day comes that we can be vaccinated to prevent breast cancer, won't you join the Beyond Pink TEAM in working to end this disease? Visit our website to see all the ways you can make a difference at www.beyondpinkteam.org.

Presenting Sponsors



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**We are celebrating so much
for our 15th Year!
Saturday, October 2, 2021**

There are options to participate in-person on or virtually as an individual or with a team, or you can skip the walk and just raise funds. Anyway, we appreciate you!

Thanks to our Survivor Sponsor, **Community Auto Group**, all breast cancer survivors still receive **FREE** registration.

Here's the information you need to participate:

🎀 On Saturday, October 2, participate in a 5k Run/Walk on Cedar Falls trails.

🎀 Or virtually participate in a 5K Run/Walk October 2-9.

🎀 Register online at **BeyondPinkTEAM.org**. Survivors FREE, everyone else is \$35. T-shirts are not guaranteed.

🎀 Packet pick-up will be at the Community Main Street Office 310 E. 4th Street, Cedar Falls.

- Thursday, September 30 11 am-7 pm
- Friday, October 1, 3 pm -7 pm.
- Race day morning 6:30 am-7:30 am.
- You can also choose to have your race packet mailed to you.

🎀 Pre-Race Announcements begin at 8 am at Community Main Street Office, 310 E. 4th. Street.

🎀 Post-Race festivities will be at the Cedar Falls River Plaza on the corner of 2nd and State Streets.

To Register go to: www.beyondpinkteam.org

Team Sponsor



Friend Sponsors

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Athletico
Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors
Center

Cheer Sponsors



UnityPoint Health



Ignite the Cancer Conversation - Rethink Cancer Hosted by Beyond Pink TEAM October 19, 2021

Dr. Cyrus Ghajar, a researcher at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, will speak about his investigation into the metastasis of cancer cells into distant sites of the body. Participants will learn how the microenvironments of these sites can put cancer cells to sleep-- or wake them up.

Ignite will also host a panel of professionals from the academic, political, and medical communities to help us gain greater insight into the mystery of metastasis.

Event takes place via Zoom

October 19, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

FREE to the public

Healthcare workers can receive CEU's for \$7

To Register go to BeyondPinkTEAM.org.



Metastasis, continued from page 1

In addition, these disseminated tumor cells, or DTCs, usually begin this cascade prior to detection of the primary tumor. Once leaving the blood and entering another tissue or organ, DTCs encounter a new environment, the so-called microenvironment, which contributes to and may determine their survival, their ability to stop multiplying and remain quiescent or dormant, and their resistance to therapy.

But, if cancer therapy is systemic or administered all over the body, how do DTCs escape this therapy only to revive and begin multiplying into a secondary tumor years to decades later? Because most cancer therapies target rapidly dividing cells, non-dividing DTCs are resistant to these therapies. We need strategies to target DTCs by either keeping them

dormant and stopping their reactivation or destroying them. Current research is identifying the factors including proteins and genes that determine and regulate the interactions between DTCs and the environment surrounding them. Therapies that target these interactions could conceivably halt the recurrence of cancer. Unfortunately, there are no tests to determine where DTCs are in the body; therefore, it is challenging to determine whether or not an individual will experience metastatic disease.

DTCs are ticking time-bombs. Defusing these bombs is going to take more research and is a major therapeutic challenge. Want to find out more about how researchers are working to prevent or stop metastasis

and death from cancer? On Tuesday, October 19, 2021, from 5:30-8:30 via zoom, Beyond Pink TEAM will feature Dr. Cyrus Ghajar, whose groundbreaking research into dormant cancer cells and the environments within which they may awaken is one of the most promising new developments in cancer research. Dr. Ghajar studies how the microenvironments within distant tissues regulate DTC dormancy and/or growth. He believes that solving these puzzles will allow the development of drugs that eradicate dormant DTCs before they can develop into full-blown metastases. He conducts this work within the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center Laboratory for the Study of Metastatic Microenvironments.



Where They Are Now!

By Patty Wandschneider

In 2005, at the age of 39 and 38 weeks pregnant with my third child, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. The next day I had my baby. My cancer was ER+ so I had a lumpectomy followed by chemo and then radiation.

I went 15 years cancer free and was diagnosed again right after Thanksgiving 2020. This time it was ER+ and Her2+. I had one chemo, surgery and will have Herceptin infusions until Thanksgiving of 2021.

My attitude going into this second journey with cancer was amazing. I had started a Gratitude Journal the beginning of



Patty Wandschneider

that November in honor of Thanksgiving month. I wrote down 3 things first thing in the morning and again right before bed I was grateful for. I know this made a huge difference in my outlook and staying positive most days through chemo and surgery! I did struggle with anxiety when I had to decide if I wanted reconstruction or not but prayed for an answer. The next day it became crystal clear when talking to a female nurse practitioner and reviewing studies on my treatment course, I would have the reconstruction. At times, I still worry but that is normal. I'm spend time

each day in prayer, devotions, exercising, getting plenty of sleep, spending time with friends and family, learning what foods are best to eat, and supporting my immune system with quality supplements. This is helping me feel in control of my future and I am happier than I've ever been!

The Beyond Pink TEAM helped us out this time with some doctor bills which alleviated the added stress of paying bills. (I wasn't substitute teaching like I normally would have been doing.) I am so grateful for their help!

The Beyond Pink TEAM All Cancer Support Group meetings have been very supportive through the years. The speakers have great topics and the fellowship with others that understand the struggles that come with cancer is super uplifting.

I have been spending time with a dear friend with metastatic cancer that I met at the support group. We text, have phone calls, and I go into her home and visit. She in turn prays with me and has supported me with my recurrence.

I hope my story has brought HOPE in knowing there are things we can do to help throughout a journey with cancer. Yes, there will be ups and downs but try not to feel down for too long. Try and find something to be grateful for each day, no matter how small it may seem. If you're feeling anxious don't be afraid to ask for support from friends, family, or maybe even a counselor. You can reach out to the Beyond Pink TEAM and please try to attend a BPT All Cancer Support Group meeting. It's so healing to talk with people that understand what you're going through!

Living Green

Fall Leaves

By Dawn Keller



Fall is in the air...Time for pumpkin spice, crisp mornings, and raking leaves. Or not? There are many things you can do with leaves that will benefit your lawn and garden!

Many people follow the fall routine of raking leaves, bagging them, and sending them on their way. But when you manage leaves in this way, you are missing out on a valuable resource, as leaves are a natural mulch and fertilizer. If you are a gardener, you can take leaves and put them on your garden after your harvest is finished. Doing so will reduce soil erosion and add organic matter and nutrients to your soil, improving soil health for the next growing season. No garden? No problem! You can either leave the leaves whole or chop them up with a mower. This will not only improve your soil but will also provide microhabitats for many beneficial organisms. In addition to these benefits, think of the time you will save by not raking and bagging! Enough time for a crisp morning fall walk followed by a pumpkin spice latte!

A Survivor Story

A Chance to Live Your Best Life

By Melissa Herold, a survivor



Melissa Herold Survivor

I will be celebrating 3+ years breast cancer free. To help me celebrate I want to ask all my women friends and family to do a self-exam before they go to bed tonight. Make this a part of your monthly routine.

I rarely give an update about my journey but a year ago I had some swelling in my left breast. My surgical oncologist originally diagnosed me with lymphedema (a secondary condition) due to having lymph nodes removed during my mastectomy. Concern arose when a heated rash spread and wasn't going away on its own. My oncologist did an ultrasound but could not rule out inflammatory breast cancer. The symptoms for lymphedema and inflammatory breast cancer are very similar. After a skin punch biopsy and a MRI it was determined that it is in fact lymphedema.

These tests and checkups are a reminder to me that breast cancer is always lurking in my shadow. But it reminds me to keep on living because you get one chance to live your best life. This does not paint the beautiful picture of a main street decorated in pink streamers or 5K runs with cutesy names. The real truth about breast cancer is it does not discriminate against age, race, body type, food preferences, or even gender. Early detection WILL save your life.

Spectacular Game!



The Waterloo Buck's Pink Out game, the jersey auction, along with the fireworks were spectacular benefiting the Beyond Pink TEAM with \$2,879.98.

As of this writing both BPT Support Groups (Touch of Courage and All Cancer Support Group) have met in-person outdoors. Please call first before attending any group. Wear a mask if indoors, and do not attend if you have been exposed to COVID-19.

October 4, 1:30 p.m.

**Touch of Courage
Breast Cancer Support Group**

Community Foundation of NE Iowa
3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls
Pat – 319-232-8691

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

Call Ahead

December 6, 1:30 p.m.

**Touch of Courage
Breast Cancer Support Group**

Community Foundation of NE Iowa
3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls
Pat – 319-232-8691

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

Call Ahead

October 5, 1:30 p.m.

**Care & Share Cancer Support
Group**

MercyOne Waterloo Cancer Center
200 E Ridgeway Ave., Waterloo
Jessica – 319-272-2816

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

November 1, 1:30 p.m.

**Touch of Courage
Breast Cancer Support Group**

Community Foundation of NE Iowa
3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls
Pat – 319-232-8691

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

Call Ahead

December 7, 1:30 p.m.

**Care & Share Cancer Support
Group**

MercyOne Waterloo Cancer Center
200 E Ridgeway Ave., Waterloo
Jessica – 319-272-2816

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

January 3, 1:30 p.m.

**Touch of Courage
Breast Cancer Support Group**

Community Foundation of NE Iowa
3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls
Pat – 319-232-8691

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

Call Ahead

November 2, 1:30 p.m.

**Care & Share Cancer Support
Group**

MercyOne Waterloo Cancer Center
200 E Ridgeway Ave., Waterloo
Jessica – 319-272-2816

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

November 18

**Splash of Color – Women of Color
Breast Cancer Support Group**

Call Cathy Ketton - 319-504-2703 for details

January 4, 1:30 p.m.

**Care & Share Cancer Support
Group**

MercyOne Waterloo Cancer Center
200 E Ridgeway Ave., Waterloo
Jessica – 319-272-2816

MASK REQUIRED IF IN PERSON

January 18, ca4:30-7:00

**BPT All Cancer Support Group –
Meet, Mingle and Learn**

Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
3912 Cedar Heights Dr., Cedar Falls
Angela – 319-232-4143 for meeting information
(Outdoors or Virtual_

Call Ahead



Donations received from June 1, 2021, through August 31, 2021.

Sorina Abernathy
 Glenda Aitchison
 Bill Colwell Ford
 Marty & Dee Hughes
 Donna O'Brien – Bambino Cookies
 Rob & Rhoda Olson
 Helen Steffen
 Martha Stephenson
 Waterloo Ball Club, LLC – Buck's
 Tina Wendel
 Dorothy Wheeland

TIPS ON HAIR 'N MAKE UP DURING CHEMO TREATMENT

By Mo Hardy and Shery Traetow,
 Cosmetologists at Vision Hair Salon



Hair –

Shampoo scalp even if you have lost your hair. This will help keep your follicles cleaned and opened for when your hair does grow back. Using a hair loss product line, such as Surface or Bosley will help with this. Use tepid water vs hot water so your skin won't dry out.

Make Up –

Moisturize your face and neck before starting your make up regime. Investing in a good moisturizer will also help in keeping a natural shine to your skin.

Avoid using a toner during treatments as it is drying to your skin. When recreating your eyebrow use an eyebrow pencil with a brush on the end. The brush will help soften up the harsh line the pencil creates making a more natural brow line.

Always finish your make up with a lipstick, whether a gloss or a bright pink...it completes the look....and puts a twinkle in your eyes!

MERCYONE.



Choose a date to grab a friend, your sister or neighbor for an evening of girl time and get your annual mammogram.



UnityPoint Health

Appointments are required and there are a limited number available. Call 319-292-2225 to schedule today!

October 14, 1-6:30 p.m. – Cedar Falls Medical Center
 October 21, 3:30-8 p.m. – Waterloo Breast Center – 4th floor Outpatient & Women's Center
 October 26, 1-6:30 p.m. – Oelwein Medical Center

Hosted by MercyOne Northeast Iowa with financial support from the Care For Yourself program, MercyOne Waterloo Foundation and Check the Girls Foundation.

Request an order from your provider and call (319)235-5100 to schedule an appointment. No primary care physician? Call our Family Medicine Residency Program at (319) 222-2711

October 4, 4-8 p.m. – Allen Hospital, Entrance 8
 October 12, 4-8 p.m. – Prairie Parkway, Main Entrance
 October 20, 4-8 p.m. – United Medical Park, Entrance 1
 October 28, 4-8 p.m. – United Medical Park, Entrance 1

unitypoint.org/waterloo/ladiesnightout

Financial Assistance: Learn more about the "Care for Yourself" program for underinsured patients at idph.iowa.gov/cfy or call (319) 292-2225



MISSION – Beyond Pink TEAM is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide breast cancer prevention, education, support, and advocacy for comprehensive, quality health care for ALL in the Cedar Valley and surrounding communities.

Resources – Information, support, counseling, and educational materials are available from the following:

Beyond Pink TEAM is a local breast cancer organization providing a variety of services. Our website lists services we provide as well as other services available in the Cedar Valley. www.beyondpinkTEAM.org

Living Beyond Breast Cancer includes a helpline, newsletter, and information. Survivors Helpline: 888-753-5222 www.LBBC.org

Young Survival Coalition connects with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer. www.youngsurvival.org

Cancer Care is a national nonprofit organization offering counseling, support, financial assistance, and education to individuals with cancer and their families. www.cancercare.org

Iowa Cancer Consortium offers cancer information and links to resources in Iowa. www.canceriowa.org

American Cancer Society offers cancer information and services. www.cancer.org.

National Breast Cancer Coalition the NBCC's mission is to eradicate breast cancer by focusing the government, research institutions, and consumer advocates on breast cancer. It encourages advocacy for action and change. www.stopbreastcancer.org.

National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN) provides state-of-the-art treatment information in easy-to-understand language to people with cancer and their caregivers. NCCN.org/patients

National LGBT Cancer Network works to improve the lives of LGBT cancer survivors and those at risk. www.cancer-network.org

National Cancer Institute offers information about cancer, breast cancer, clinical trials, cancer statistics, research and funding, and the latest news. They will also answer your questions by calling 1-800-4CANCER. www.cancer.gov

National Cancer Institute for NCI dictionaries of cancer terms, genetics terms, and cancer drugs. www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries

Connect with us . . . Your support financially or through volunteering is both needed and appreciated. Please feel free to complete the following and forward to Cedar Valley Cancer Committee at the address listed below.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

I would like to participate with the Beyond Pink TEAM by:

- Writing a survivor story for the newsletter
- Become part of the Breast Cancer Advocacy Network
- Volunteering: *((check all that apply))*
- Assist with Support Groups
- Development (Publicity)
- Events (Fundraisers, Projects and More)
- Donate. Make checks payable to Beyond Pink TEAM. *(All donations are tax deductible)*
- BPT Fund
- Advocacy Fund
- Area of Need
- Making phone calls and sending emails to policy makers for breast cancer issues
- Become a member of the Beyond Pink TEAM -Complete this form, send with a check for \$5 to Jeanne Olson, BPT Treasurer, to address at bottom of this page. Meetings are 3rd Thursdays each month (except December) at 7:00 a.m.
- Education (Health Fairs/Presentations, Newsletters)
- Advocacy – Contact Congress/Ignite the Cancer Conversation

Touch of Courage . . . Connection

Quarterly Newsletter of Beyond Pink TEAM

Cedar Valley Cancer Committee
Dba Beyond Pink TEAM
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Waterloo, IA 50701
www.beyondpinkteam.org