

National Recognition, Local Care: Leever Honored for Excellence in Breast Care



Area breast surgeons, including (left to right): Dr. Nicole Sookhan, Dr. Scott Kurtzman, Dr. Ellen Polokoff and Dr. Beth Sieling, helped lead the Leever Cancer Center through the rigorous NAPBC accreditation process.

FOR NEARLY 10 YEARS, THE EXPERT MEDICAL TEAMS FROM SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL, WATERBURY HOSPITAL, AND THE HAROLD LEEVER REGIONAL CANCER CENTER HAVE WORKED IN CONCERT TO DELIVER WORLD-CLASS CANCER CARE. Throughout that time, their shared vision of advanced, high-quality cancer care in a patient-centered, compassionate community has driven growth, advancement and technological leadership. And it hasn't gone unnoticed: The National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC), a program administered by the American College of

Surgeons, recently awarded their top honor to The Breast Center of Greater Waterbury at the Leever Cancer Center.

"NAPBC accreditation is a meaningful achievement that reflects not only our commitment to providing state-of-the-art, comprehensive care for patients with breast disorders, but also that we effectively deliver that care in accordance with the industry's highest quality standards," explained Kevin Kniery, Executive Director of the Leever Cancer Center.

The Breast Center of Greater Waterbury was awarded full, three-year accreditation by exceeding NAPBC requirements in all 27 program standards and 17 program components of care. Collectively, those measures define comprehensive, efficient and advanced breast care at its best. All of the Breast Center's individual service areas, from imaging to surgery, were awarded specialized accreditations.

Dr. Scott Kurtzman served as Chairman of the Breast Program Leadership Committee that shepherded The Breast Center of Greater Waterbury through the extensive accreditation process.

"NAPBC accreditation recognizes excellence at every level," noted Dr. Kurtzman, "and comes as a result of a substantial requirement to demonstrate excellence in all areas of operation."

Dr. Kurtzman is also Chairman of Surgery at Waterbury Hospital.

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National Recognition...

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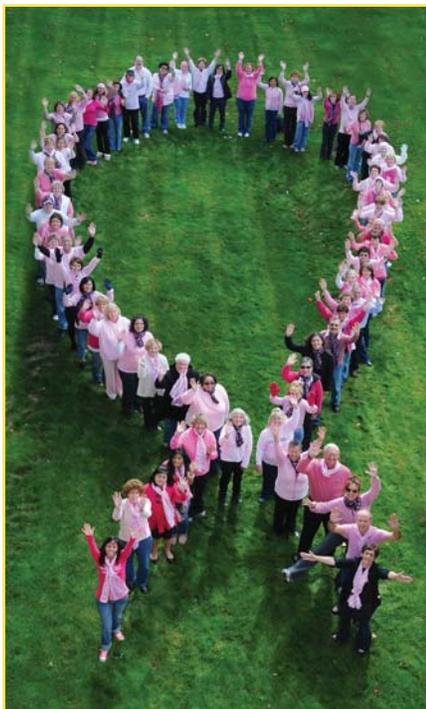
All of the breast surgeons affiliated with Saint Mary's and Waterbury hospitals participated in the process.

“The NAPBC review process was all-encompassing,” explained Dr. Kurtzman. “The fact that this was a true team effort with the surgical team leading the way was not only satisfying and rewarding, but a clear representation of the collaboration that makes the Leever Cancer Center unique.”

Accreditation ensures that Leever patients have access to: comprehensive care, including a full range of state-of-the-art services; multidisciplinary, expert teams working together to develop individualized treatment plans; information about ongoing clinical trials and new treatment options; and quality breast care close to home.

For more information, please visit the Leever Cancer Center website at leevercancercenter.org or the NAPBC site at accreditedbreastcenters.org.

Leever Cancer Center staff, patients and supporters do their part to raise awareness.



ask the Doctor



**Breast Program Leadership Committee Chair
Dr. Scott H. Kurtzman talks about multidisciplinary care and treatment options for newly diagnosed breast cancer patients.**

MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE IS COMPREHENSIVE CARE

Q What does the term “multidisciplinary care” mean for breast cancer patients?

A When someone is diagnosed with breast cancer – or any type of cancer – he or she may need more than one type of care. For example, a breast cancer patient may need a tumor removed by a surgeon. Sometimes trying to make the tumor smaller before surgery can be helpful, which may be accomplished through chemotherapy or hormones. Whenever possible we offer patients “lumpectomies” instead of mastectomies. Patients who have lumpectomies will also need radiation treatments. If the disease has spread to the lymph nodes, chemotherapy may follow surgery. Each of these treatments may be managed by a different doctor who specializes in those particular fields or **disciplines**: a breast surgeon for surgery, a radiation oncologist for radiation treatments, a medical oncologist for chemotherapy. At The Breast Center of Greater Waterbury at the Leever Cancer Center, our medical team is **multidisciplinary**. That is, we have physicians on our team who have completed specialized training in each field that you, as a cancer patient, might need. That team will meet to discuss your case and develop the most effective treatment plan for you. If needed, a radiation oncologist will recommend a radiation treatment plan; you and your surgeon will determine the right surgical course for your case; a medical oncologist will review your records and determine what chemotherapy, if any, you might need. The multidisciplinary team also includes nurses, dietitians and other professionals who help us deal with all of the patient’s needs. In this unique approach to **multidisciplinary care**, even your primary care physician is invited to sit in with your oncology specialists to chart the course that is right for you.

Q I was just diagnosed with breast cancer. Do I definitely need surgery?

A Since most breast cancers are diagnosed when a tumor is found, surgery to remove the tumor is often the first line of defense. There are certainly exceptions, and your doctor will help you to understand and decide what is best for you. That said, breast cancer patients have many different options today when it comes to surgery. For some patients, there are options that are significantly less invasive. Those procedures often spare the breast or breast tissue, and have shorter recovery times. Your doctor will give you all the information you need to determine which treatment options will be most effective in treating your specific cancer.

Scott H. Kurtzman, MD, FACS, is Chairman of Surgery and Director of General Surgery Residency Program at Waterbury Hospital and also Chairman of the Breast Program Leadership Committee at The Breast Center of Greater Waterbury.

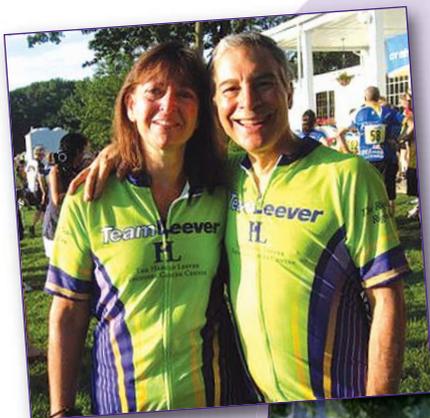
“The fact that this was a true team effort with the surgical team leading the way was not only satisfying and rewarding, but a clear representation of the collaboration that makes the Leever Cancer Center unique.”

Scott Kurtzman, MD, FACS

A Record Day for Cancer Survivors

Thirty-seven Greater Waterbury residents donned Team Leever jerseys this summer and raised more than \$40,000 through the Connecticut Challenge, a non-competitive cycling event that, in its seventh year, attracted a record 1,200 cyclists and raised over \$1.3 million for cancer survivorship programs throughout the state.

This is the second year that the Leever Cancer Center fielded a team for the event, and the first year that the impact will be felt immediately in our community. This fall, Stepping Forward, our own survivorship program, kicks off at Leever (see article on page 6). The program is funded in part by a direct donation from the Connecticut Challenge, as well as from funds raised by Team Leever during the past two years of participation in the event. Stepping Forward offers a wide range of programs and services for cancer survivors, including physical therapy and rehabilitation, emotional support, social services, nutrition, and complementary medicine.



Above: Sandy Alfano (left) and Dr. Kert Sabbath rode for survivors.

Right: Team Leever was a significant presence at the recent Connecticut Challenge cycling event.

Below: Team Leever members included (from left): Michael Christie, Kevin Kniery, Patricia Lindenman, Karen Sabbath and Sandy Alfano.



The Right Team. Right Here.

Team Leever

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Sandra Alfano | Robert Feldman |
| Mark Amero | Jamie Griffard |
| Donald Bellemare | Chris Hibbs |
| Elisa Benzoni | Kevin Kniery |
| Jeffrey Bitterman | Jeremy Kortmansky |
| Sherrie Bitterman | Patricia Lindenman |
| Susan Broderick | Ben Meyers |
| Emmalee Monica Caisse | Jeff Meyers |
| Richard Caisse | Mary Beth Olah |
| Mo Carleton | Debbie Parkinson |
| Michael Christie | Tim Rancourt |
| Greg Cimmino | Angela Ribas |
| Nancy Cimmino | Riccardo Ribas |
| Betsy Daniels | Erika Sabbath |
| David Daniels | Karen Sabbath |
| Thomas Ercoli | Kert Sabbath |
| Ann Feinberg | Kathy Sweeney |
| Michael Feinberg | Lori Sweeney |
| Elaine Feldman | Shahen |

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Bronze

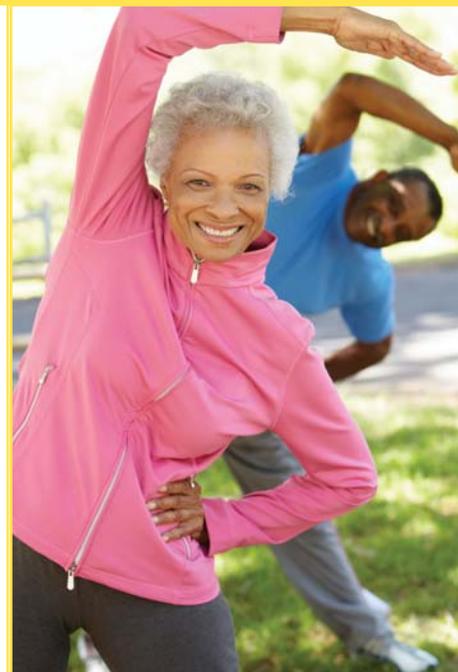
- David Knight, MD
- MBR
- Staff of Medical Oncology and Hematology
- Naugatuck Savings Bank
- Naugatuck Valley Radiology Associates
- Walgreens Infusion Services (formerly Collins IV)
- Waterbury Hospital



Breast Cancer: The Food and Fitness Connection

by Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO

MANY BREAST CANCER PATIENTS ASK, “WHAT CAN I EAT TO PREVENT MY BREAST CANCER FROM COMING BACK?” UNFORTUNATELY, THE ANSWER IS UNCLEAR. Clinical trials have fallen short in demonstrating a direct connection between what you eat and your chances of developing breast cancer or of having breast cancer recur. What we do know is that in populations who eat a plant-based Asian or Mediterranean diet, there appears to be a lower incidence of breast cancer. We also know that there are many things you can do to lower your risk of getting breast cancer or a recurrence, and that nutrition plays a big part.



For women who want to be proactive, the two most important lifestyle recommendations that may reduce their risk of breast cancer or a recurrence: 1) Try to reach an ideal body weight and 2) Exercise on a regular basis.

Getting your weight into the normal range can be a challenge, especially for newly menopausal and postmenopausal women. As women age, their metabolic rates slow down, so the weight comes on faster than it comes off. At the rate of five to 10 pounds a year, a weight gain of 20 to 30 pounds in a few years is not uncommon. In a study sponsored by the American Cancer

Society, women who gained 21 to 30 pounds after the age of 18 were 40% more likely to get breast cancer than their normal-weight counterparts. The higher the weight gain, the higher the risk.

There are many reasons that being overweight or obese increases the risk of a recurrence.

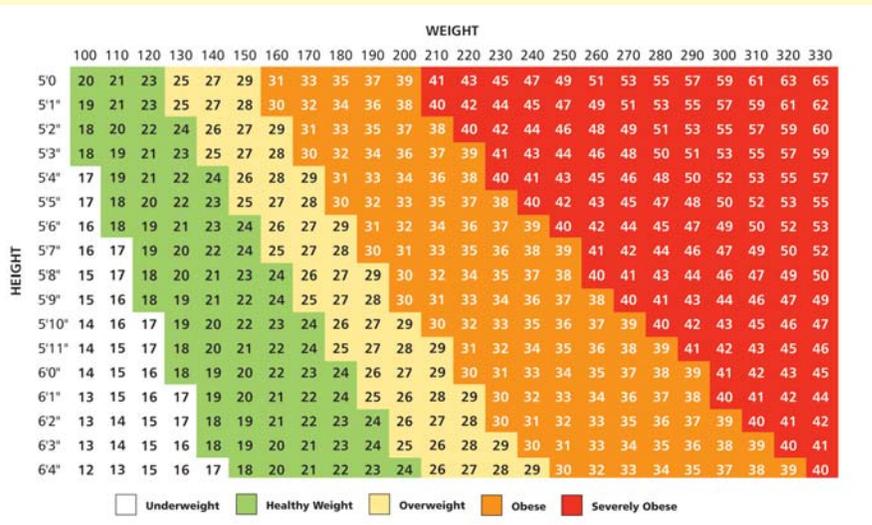
The estrogen connection: Fatty tissue (also called adipose tissue) produces estrogen. In women with estrogen-receptor positive (ER+) breast cancer, the goal is to minimize exposure to estrogen in order to prevent the breast

cancer cells from growing. Women who are significantly overweight may be fueling their breast tissue with estrogen on a daily basis, potentially increasing their risk of recurrence. This is true even if they take medications to block estrogen production (Femara, Aromasin, Arimidex) or protect breast cancer cells from estrogen (Tamoxifen).

Haywire hormones: Too much body fat interferes with the internal regulation of certain hormones that can lead to chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and even certain cancers (including breast cancer).

How do you know if you are overweight?

You can calculate your Body Mass Index, or BMI, which is a ratio of weight to height. If your BMI is greater than 25, your weight is too high. If it is over 30, it falls into the obese range.



MEDITERRANEAN PILAF WITH PUMPKIN SEEDS



Ingredients:
 2 packets Kashi 7 Whole Grain Pilaf
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 6 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
 3 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 1/2 tsp. lemon zest
 1/4 tsp. crushed red chili flakes (or more, to taste)
 1 tsp. salt
 2 bunches fresh basil, coarsely chopped
 Fresh ground pepper to taste
 1 red pepper, diced
 1 yellow pepper, diced
 1 cup roasted pumpkin seeds

Directions:
 1. Cook Kashi Pilaf according to directions on package (2 cups water for 1 cup pilaf; boil water first, add pilaf, simmer for 25+ minutes; cooking time varies from 30-45 minutes).
 2. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the garlic, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon zest, chili flakes, salt, basil, and pepper. Set aside.
 3. In a large mixing bowl, combine cooked Kashi Pilaf, pumpkin seeds, bell peppers and dressing. Mix well and serve. Can be made ahead and refrigerated. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Serves 12
 Adapted from www.kashi.com/recipe

PUMPKIN BREAD PUDDING



Ingredients:
 2 cups vanilla soy milk
 1 can of pure pumpkin (15 oz)
 1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. brown sugar
 2 large eggs
 1-1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
 1-1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 10 cups egg bread (challah), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
 1/2 cup golden raisins
 Powdered sugar

Directions:
 1. Preheat oven to 350°
 2. Whisk soy milk, pumpkin, brown sugar, eggs, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon and vanilla extract in a large bowl to blend.
 3. Fold in bread cubes.
 4. Stir in golden raisins.
 5. Transfer mixture to a 9" x 12" Pyrex dish sprayed with nonstick spray.
 6. Let stand for 15 minutes.
 7. Bake until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 40 minutes.
 8. Before serving, sprinkle with powdered sugar (can also be served with caramel sauce, ice cream or whipped cream).

Serves 16
 Adapted from www.epicurious.com

Two of the recipes enjoyed at recent Healthy Cooking Classes:

Insulin resistance: Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels. In most people, eating a meal containing carbohydrates results in an increase in blood glucose/sugar. Typically, the pancreas produces insulin in response, which transports the glucose to the cells and tissues that need it for fuel or storage. In insulin resistance, the cells in the body ignore the insulin, and the pancreas keeps making more and more. Too much insulin can result in excessive weight gain and increased inflammation. It is felt that inflammation is how many diseases, including cancer, begin. Obesity causes increased insulin production.

Reaching a healthy weight is one piece of the puzzle. How do you do that? Eating a healthy plant-based diet plays an enormous role in losing weight. But in order to take off the pounds, you need to burn more calories. And that is where exercise comes in.

Exercise has been shown to be an independent factor in reducing the risk of cancer and/or cancer recurrence. Research has established that regular physical activity helps to maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints, reduce the risk of high blood pressure and diabete, and promote psychological well-being. In addition, exercise lowers insulin and other inflammatory hormones, lowers the amount of body fat and therefore estrogen, and helps people lose weight, all of which contribute to a lower risk of developing breast cancer. In fact, the latest research has provided convincing evidence that moderate physical activity, just 150 minutes a week, or 30 minutes five days a week, can reduce the risk of breast cancer by 30 to 50%, and reduce the risk of a recurrence or death from breast cancer.

Other nutrition-related suggestions that may lower your risk include:

- ▶ Limit your alcohol intake to no more than one drink a day. Remember that 1 drink = 1½ oz. hard alcohol, 6 oz. wine or 12 oz. beer.
- ▶ Lower your intake of animal fat, which is high in saturated fat and

potential cancer-causing substances. Even though a diet very low in saturated fat only showed a slight decrease in the risk of invasive breast cancer, it decreases the risk of many other chronic diseases.

- ▶ Lower your intake of refined sugars, which can add empty calories AND increase insulin production.

We all know that there are no guarantees in life. All we can do is try our best to lead a healthy life by doing the

things that are felt to make a difference. If you try to modify your lifestyle by eating a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and lean proteins, mostly from plants, and getting your weight into a healthy range with regular exercise, you will be maximizing your odds for a long and healthy future.

If you have nutrition questions that you would like answered, contact our oncology nutrition specialist, **Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO**, at 203-575-5510 or ksabbath@leevercancercenter.org.



Welcome Douglas Housman, MD Radiation Oncologist

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Douglas Housman to our radiation oncology team. Board eligible in Therapeutic Radiology, Dr. Housman earned his undergraduate degree at Johns Hopkins University and his medical degree at the Yale University School of Medicine. He completed internship and residency training at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital, where he was a Health Outcomes Research Fellow in the Department of Epidemiology-Biostatistics. He also studied at Harvard University, and Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK.

Dr. Housman is an award-winning professional photographer, who roasts his own coffee. Look for him on “Cash Cab” reruns! Welcome, Dr. Housman.

Stepping Forward

Living With, Through and Beyond Cancer



UPCOMING DATES

“DEALING WITH STRESS”

Monday, October 24
5:30 - 7:00 PM

Topics covered:
Learning about Relaxation and Stress Reduction through Massage and Guided Imagery
Stress Eating
Exercise Guidelines

“MAKING YOUR BODY WORK FOR YOU”

Monday, November 28
5:30 - 7:00 PM

Topics covered:
Managing Fatigue Through Diet and Exercise (Core Work)
Behavioral Changes to Help Promote Health

ADVANCES IN CANCER TREATMENT, RESEARCH, AND TECHNOLOGY ARE HELPING MANY PATIENTS LIVE HEALTHY LIVES LONG AFTER THEIR ACTIVE THERAPY IS COMPLETE. Stepping Forward is a new program at the Leever Cancer Center that helps survivors thrive by offering an effective post-treatment plan for care, disease prevention and support.

Program participants will receive a summary of their medical history, a personalized plan of medical follow-up and lifestyle recommendations, and the support of survivorship teams members, including nurses, nurse practitioners, a physical therapist, a registered dietitian, and a social worker. Anyone who has completed treatment for cancer in the past 12 months is eligible to receive a treatment summary and survivorship care plan. All survivors, regardless of their time out of treatment, are encouraged to attend our community health series and YMCA programs.

Our no-cost, community health series kicked off in September with a look at exercise and nutrition for survivors. Community health series programs are held at the Leever Cancer Center, and include a light healthy dinner. The series continues on Monday, October 24 at 5:30 p.m. with strategies for managing stress, and on Monday, November 28 with strategies

for making your body work for you. To register for either program, please call 203-575-5548, or email dparkinson@leevercancercenter.com

Stepping Forward is a comprehensive program that brings together many community partners, including the Greater Waterbury YMCA, the CT Challenge, Access Rehab Centers, Massage Therapist Nancy Traver, the Connecticut Community Foundation, the American Cancer Society and Saint Mary’s Hospital Physical Therapy. If you would like more information about the Stepping Forward program, call 203-575-5544.



“When I enter the portals of the Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center, I feel warmth and the energy of hope and love.”

“To Harold Leever, the pioneer whose name honors this Healing Temple, we extend our grateful appreciation.”

“The gift of cancer has enriched my life by allowing me to meet with such great Warriors of the Spirit.”

A Community of Caring

The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center wishes to express its appreciation and a sincere thank you to its neighbors and friends by recognizing the spirit and hard work of the members of our community in fulfilling the Mission of the Leever Cancer Center.

We offer our deepest appreciation to the **Sacred Heart Mustard Seed Fund** for their very generous donation of \$1,000 to help our patients meet their medical costs. The fund, established through a bequest from sisters Irma and Mildred Ziegler to Southbury's Sacred Heart Church, awards grants to charitable organizations. Special thanks to HLRCC's own Lisa Gilmore for submitting a grant application on our behalf.

The girls from **Middlebury Brownie Troop 64076** made and delivered 225 goodie bags for our patients. Thanks to Rebecca Hare and all the girls in the troop – you certainly made our day!



Special thanks to **Gabriella Gagas and friends** for the lovely “get well” cards (left). They were appreciated and enjoyed.

Thanks to **Patsey Demsey** for the beautiful, handcrafted dried flower arrangements that have helped make our treatment waiting areas cheery and bright.

The attorneys at Farmington, CT law firm **Bendett & McHugh** have graciously gifted the Leever Cancer Center with funds raised through firm-wide and community initiatives. We sincerely appreciate your support.

Catalyst Health and Fitness, Southbury, matched donations raised during a recent spin- and Zumba-thon to benefit the Leever Cancer Center. With thanks and admiration for your kindness and for your dedication to health and fitness.

We credit **Sam Arroyo** for the lovely plants and flats of flowers that remind us how much joy and beauty there is to be found in each day.

Generations of Hope Campaign Brings New Therapy to Leever



This year we launched the Generations of Hope campaign to bring a new form of radiation therapy to eligible breast cancer patients. HDR Brachytherapy is a highly precise, targeted form of radiation therapy that can dramatically reduce both treatment and recovery times for patients who meet specific criteria as determined by their radiation oncologist. Championed by survivor Patsey Demsey and her family and bolstered by a substantial bequest from a local benefactor's estate, the campaign, which has now officially ended, raised the funds needed to bring HDR Brachytherapy to the Leever Cancer Center. We are pleased to announce that the new equipment has arrived; installation and extensive training are underway, leaving us poised to begin HDR Brachytherapy treatments within six months. Our sincere thanks go to the Demsey family, corporate donor Timex Group of Middlebury, CT, and all of our individual campaign donors.



Kindergarten students in **Deborah Pisciotti's class at St. Francis of Assisi School, Naugatuck**, recently collected new and homemade hats, scarves and blankets (some pictured above) for Leever patients. We are grateful for your thoughtful gifts.

“Gratitude
is the memory
of the heart.”

Jean Baptiste Massieu

AWARE!

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We encourage your feedback.
If there is a cancer topic you
would like covered, to respond to
an article you've read, or to be put
on our mailing list, please call
203-575-5555 or email:
dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org

HL THE HAROLD LEEVER
REGIONAL CANCER CENTER

1075 Chase Parkway
Waterbury, CT 06708
203-575-5555 phone
203-575-5592 fax



Make a difference

The American Cancer Society is looking for new drivers for their Road to Recovery program. Volunteer drivers take patients to and from treatment while providing encouragement and support. Requirements include a valid driver's license, a safe and reliable vehicle, and proof of automobile insurance. For more information, contact Jessica at the ACS, 203-756-8888.

The Future is Now

PET/CT (Positron Emission Tomography/Computerized Tomography) is a unique, state-of-the-art diagnostic tool that helps physicians effectively pinpoint the source of cancer.

A non-invasive test, this powerful tool combines metabolic and anatomic imaging, providing a more complete picture and making it easier for your doctor to diagnose problems, determine the extent of disease, prescribe treatment, and track progress. The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center is widely recognized as a leader in the use of PET/CT scan technology.

To find out more about PET/CT scans at HLRCC, call us at 203-575-5501, or visit www.leeverpet.com.

Community Events & Monthly Support Groups

STEPPING FORWARD SURVIVORSHIP PROGRAM "DEALING WITH STRESS":

Monday, October 24. For more on this new program, see article on page 6. Please RSVP to 203-575-5548

SURVIVOR'S DAY CELEBRATION "DARE TO SOAR": Tuesday, November 1.

5:30 PM – 7 PM, please RSVP to 203-575-5544

FLU CLINIC: Tuesday, November 1. 10 AM – 12 PM, call 203-575-5555

STEPPING FORWARD SURVIVORSHIP PROGRAM "MAKING YOUR BODY WORK FOR YOU": Monday, November 28. Please RSVP to 203-575-5548

JOURNALING: A WAY TO HEAL FROM YOUR CANCER EXPERIENCE:

Fridays, 10 AM – 11:30 AM, contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

THYROID CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, last Tuesday, 6 PM – 7 PM, contact Dot Torretta at 203-756-3481

WOMAN TO WOMAN BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 7 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Theresa Lombardo at 860-274-2200

BRAVE AT HEART BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 2nd Wednesday, 7 PM – 9 PM, contact Anne Pringle at 203-910-7582

CT MULTIPLE MYELOMA FIGHTERS SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 6 PM – 8 PM, contact Robin Tuohy at 203-206-3536

HOPE MUTUAL AID GROUP FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES: monthly, 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 12 PM – 1 PM, contact Melissa Seres at 203-575-5511

BETTER BREATHING CLUB: monthly, 3rd Friday, 1 PM, contact Rachel Kirchner at 203-757-4991

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY: LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER!: monthly, 1st Monday, 2 PM – 4 PM, contact the ACS at 203-756-8888

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY: REACH TO RECOVERY: by appointment, contact the ACS at 203-756-8888

WATERBURY AREA OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 1st Monday, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Sue Wise, 203-597-8942

AMPUTEE SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Friday, 2:00 PM, contact Cornelia Downes, 860-567-5810

ART THERAPY: monthly, 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 2:00 PM, contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

Please call contact person to confirm that group is running as scheduled. Meeting times may be rescheduled to accommodate holidays or special meetings. See www.leevercancercenter.org for ongoing community events.

Autumn