

Survivorship Care at the Brown Cancer Center

We are all survivors from day one and beyond

“Benefit Finding” after a Cancer Diagnosis – What does that mean??

A cancer diagnosis is a traumatic event in someone’s life. For many, it can be a time of struggle, fear, worry and grief. A cancer diagnosis can also represent an opportunity: A chance to see the world through new lenses and with greater focus. This is called benefit finding. Benefit finding refers to the act of reinterpreting a cancer diagnosis as an opportunity for personal growth.

How do I find benefit from having cancer when it often is such a difficult time? Cancer survivors often report an increase in social resources, personal resources and coping skills. An example of an improved social resource would be an improved relationship with your spouse or friends. Personal resources include a better outlook on life or an increase in compassion and understanding for others. Improving coping skills could mean learning to take things as they come or a greater acceptance of your circumstances.

Where do I start to work on benefit finding? Some ideas include journaling or cognitive behavioral therapy, as benefit finding can take some practice. Survivors who write down emotional feelings or facts about their cancer report less distress. Cognitive behavioral therapy includes relaxation exercises and usually meeting with a group or individual to enhance coping skills through training and emotional expression.

If you are interested in journaling or cognitive behavioral therapy, talk to your oncologist or nurse. You can also stop by the Brown Cancer Center Resource Center for more information.

July is Sarcoma Awareness Month

Sarcoma is a type of rare cancer that occurs in connective tissues of our body. It can affect both men and women, adults and children. Overall, sarcomas are estimated to include about 1% of all cancers and approximately 12,000 people in the U.S. each year are diagnosed with sarcoma. These types of tumors most commonly occur in the bones, muscles, tendons, cartilage, nerves, fat and blood vessels. Sarcomas can be grouped into two different kinds: soft tissue sarcoma or bone sarcoma (osteosarcoma). Soft tissue sarcomas are difficult to find, but often begin as a painless lump that may grow and begin to cause pain over time. They are most often found in the arms, legs, chest or abdomen. Osteosarcomas often have symptoms of pain in a bone (sometimes worse at night), swelling or limping. Treatment options for sarcoma varies based on the tumor, but options include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and targeted therapies.

If you or someone you know has been affected by sarcoma, contact the Brown Cancer Center Hope Line at 502-562-HOPE.

What's in a Schedule?

Our schedulers at the Brown Cancer Center know that they are an important part of your cancer care. They have many responsibilities including arranging appointment times for doctor visits, scheduling radiology exams like CT scans or PET scans and they also help arrange procedures like biopsies through our interventional radiology department. They literally are a part of every patient's care, and many of our patients get to know our schedulers very well and look forward to their smiling faces.

The next time you see Connie, Dana or Tara, say "hello," they would love to help you on your journey.

Five Questions with.....Kelcey Thompson, APRN

1. How long have you worked at the Brown Cancer Center?

1 ½ years

2. What area do you work in at the Brown Cancer Center?

GI cancer clinic, Head/Neck cancer clinic and Survivorship clinic

3. What is your favorite thing about your job?

Being able to be there to help and encourage patients. I feel honored to be able to care for someone when they're going through one of the hardest times in their life.

4. What do you want patients at the Brown Cancer Center to know about us?

We love our patients!

5. Fun question, where is your dream vacation?

I am thrilled to be going on my dream vacation this fall! 10 days in Rome, Venice, Cinque Terre, Paris and London!

Upcoming info in our August newsletter

1. Nutrition and cancer survivorship: is there a special diet to follow?

2. Skin cancer safety tips

3. Get to know Lori from our Resource Center

4. 5 Questions with Bill, infusion RN