

CONNECT

News and Information from Oncology Hematology Care

SUMMER 2021

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I am a survivor!

Honoring Cancer Survivors and Life After Cancer

OHC

SPECIALISTS IN CANCER
AND BLOOD DISORDERS



Gary (second from the right) and his wife Joni with their daughter Kristen, sons Jeremie and Jonathan, and daughter-in-law Kristen

FAITH, OPTIMISM, AND ÓHC EXPERTS HELP ONE MAN BECOME A SURVIVOR

To endure, pull through, or flourish—for cancer survivors, it's a daily battle. The National Cancer Institute considers someone a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis through the balance of their life. Gary Carlson, a metastatic renal cell carcinoma survivor, will celebrate 10 years cancer-free in September.

Gary, a resident of West Chester, Ohio, was diagnosed with kidney cancer in November of

2009. The cancer had shut down one of his kidneys and spread to his other kidney, lungs, and liver. His doctor referred him to OHC's Patrick J. Ward, MD, PhD, medical oncologist, hematologist, and Co-Director of OHC's Cancer Research Department. Almost immediately, Gary's survivor mindset kicked in. "I never admitted to myself that I had cancer," said Gary. "I kept telling myself not to lose faith. I knew God had a plan."

After an eight-hour surgery to remove a kidney and take the tumor off the vena cava, a vein that carries blood to the heart, Gary met with Dr. Ward. Dr. Ward recommended he join a clinical trial for an oral chemotherapy (Sutent). "I never really hesitated to join the trial," said Gary. "Dr. Ward and his staff thoroughly explained that the benefits of being on the trial included being closely monitored with blood tests and scans."

Gary began treatment in March of 2010. "The chemo worked miracles," said Gary, who never missed a day of work from his sales manager position that involved travelling across the country. "I had manageable side effects and some neuropathy," noted Gary. His cancer slowly started disappearing, and the small portion that remained in the upper lobe of his lung was removed by surgery in July of 2011. Every CAT scan post-surgery has remained cancer-free.

"DR. WARD IS ONE OF MY HEROES, AND HIS NURSE, LISA, WAS LIKE AN ANGEL," SAID GARY. HE CHUCKLES WHEN HE RECALLS DR. WARD'S ADVICE REGARDING LIVING FOR THE MOMENT.

"During one of my visits with Dr. Ward, I told him I wanted a Corvette, but my plan was not to buy one until I got the results from my next scan," said Gary. "Dr. Ward told me to go out and get the Corvette. He always told me to live my life to the fullest."

Gary, who did buy a new car (although it wasn't a Corvette), found solace in prayer and the support

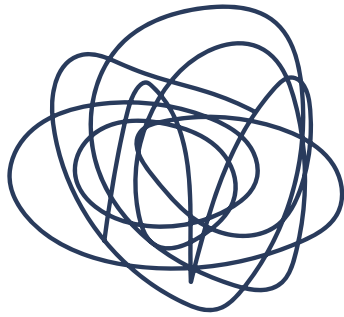
of his wife of 40 years, Joni. During his most recent appointment at OHC on April 1st, Dr. Ward told Gary that his scans showed no signs of cancer and that he would no longer have to have follow-up visits. "I immediately called my wife, and my favorite song came on the radio," said Gary. The name of the song—*What Faith Can Do*, by Christian rock band Kutless. It dawned on Gary that this song was also on the radio about 10 years ago as he received his first clear scan results.

Gary, now semi-retired, becomes emotional when reflecting on his survivorship and the impact cancer had on his entire family. "It has given me a new perspective on what is really important and reminds me not to fret over the 'little things'," said Gary. He deeply values the time he spends with his wife and three adult children. They still enjoy at least one vacation together every year. "Staying healthy is also vital," adds Gary. "Thanks to Joni, I'm eating better and staying active." He offers this advice for fellow survivors, "Never give up. No matter how bad reports are one day, they could be better next month. Don't lose faith."

TELL US YOUR STORY

If you would like to share your story, please email joan.manzo@usoncology.com or noel.balster@usoncology.com or tell an OHC team member.





HOW TO SURVIVE STRESS

A SERIES BY OHC'S JOHN SACCO, MD,
RADIATION ONCOLOGIST AND
INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE SPECIALIST

National Cancer Survivors Month gives us an opportunity to celebrate the approximately **17 million cancer survivors in the U.S.** We also recognize their family members, friends, and caregivers who have been on the survivorship journey with them.

An individual is considered a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis through the balance of his/her life. There are several possible physical, mental, emotional, social, and financial effects related to both a cancer diagnosis and the period of adjustment after completing treatment. Cancer Survivors Month provides OHC with a timely opportunity to introduce a series of helpful tips incorporating integrative medicine into the healing process.

Integrative medicine considers the whole patient and uses both conventional and evidence-based complimentary approaches to optimize health and improve quality of life. OHC's series will focus on Dr. Sacco's five pillars of good health: **stress reduction, sleep hygiene, nutrition, exercise, and social connectivity.**

Let's dive deeper into the first pillar of good health: **stress reduction.** Studies have shown that a cancer patient's stress level is high at the time of diagnosis, decreases during treatment, and then increases again post-treatment. While coping with the physical effects of treatment like fatigue, loss of appetite, and neuropathy, patients also must adjust to their new normal. Many ask themselves: What now? What if the cancer comes back? What if my support system leaves me?

Following are some helpful stress reduction tips for all of us:

- Practice breathing exercises for 15-20 minutes once or twice a day. Use a 4-7-8 count: breathe in for four seconds, hold the breath for seven seconds, then breathe out for eight seconds.

- Take a mindfulness-based stress reduction course (MBSR) like the free one offered at palousemindfulness.com.
- Use apps like Headspace, Calm, and Insight Timer that offer guided meditations.
 - insighttimer.com: free app for sleep, anxiety, and stress
 - headspace.com: free trial, then fee-based sleep exercises, audio experiences, meditations, and workouts
 - calm.com: app for sleep, meditation, and relaxation; free trial, then subscription
- Attend a support group. Cancer Support Community and Cancer Family Care are local organizations with a variety of support programs for patients and family members.
 - mycancersupportcommunity.org
 - cancerfamilycare.org
- Begin journaling by writing down your daily thoughts and feelings.
- Stay physically active even if it is only walking around the house, gardening, cleaning, or light yoga.

(See the Distress Screening Tool on page 7)





Suzanne M. Partridge, MD

Perhaps you've heard the terms precision, personalized, or individualized medicine in cancer treatment and wondered exactly what they meant. These terms refer to the method cancer doctors use to determine which cancer therapy or treatment is best for their individual patient.

All cancers are caused by genetic mutations, or changes. Cells with too many mutations can grow out of control and become cancerous.

Fundamental to OHC's patient care philosophy is the idea that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to treatment and each patient's cancer is unique. Precision medicine is another tool in our arsenal allowing us to better provide care to patients for their specific cancer.

"We now know that two patients with the same type of cancer might respond to treatment differently based on the individual molecular profile of their tumors," said OHC's Suzanne M. Partridge, MD, medical oncologist, hematologist and principal investigator for OHC's melanoma clinical trials. "Understanding a patient's tumor DNA helps us to make an individualized treatment plan using the most effective regimen for a patient's cancer and providing the best outcome," added Dr. Partridge.

PRECISION MEDICINE



Using molecular diagnostic testing and next-generation sequencing, physicians identify genetic changes in tumor cells. These changes can be inherited or caused by lifestyle and environmental factors like smoking or sun exposure. "Having this deeper understanding of the biological makeup of a patient's tumor helps us to customize the best therapy for that individual," said Dr. Partridge.

OHC is currently participating in the TAPISTRY (Tumor-Agnostic Precision Immuno-Oncology and Somatic Targeting Rational for You) trial to evaluate how genetic testing can help physicians select the best treatment for patients with advanced solid tumors that cannot be surgically removed. "At OHC, when a patient is newly diagnosed with cancer, we test them for genetic mutations," said Dr. Partridge. "Some mutations are irrelevant, but we can target other 'driver' mutations with treatment for cancer." A driver mutation is a change that gives a cancer cell significant growth advantage. TAPISTRY will evaluate specific mutations and the safety and efficacy of various immunotherapies for treatment.

"Only through ongoing research will we better understand cancer and ultimately find a cure," noted Dr. Partridge. OHC is leading the region in novel and advanced treatments and is committed to finding a cure through its nationally recognized cancer research program. Discover more about our cancer research team and clinical trial opportunities at [ohcare.com](https://www.ohcare.com).

Promising Therapy for Incurable Cancer

On June 7, OHC cellular therapy experts and the Mercy Health - Cincinnati Cancer and Cellular Therapy Center at The Jewish Hospital became the first providers in the region, and one of only four sites in the state, to treat a multiple myeloma patient with a newly approved CAR-T therapy, Abecma. Patients with multiple myeloma can find themselves on a dizzying rollercoaster ride of ups and downs dealing with an incurable disease that often presents with periods of remission and relapse. "The FDA approval of Abecma is a monumental advancement for our patients," said OHC's Edward A. Faber, Jr., DO, MS, hematologist, blood and marrow transplant specialist, and principal investigator for OHC's multiple myeloma clinical trials. "Multiple myeloma patients often try many treatments that only work for a few months, while causing debilitating side effects," noted Dr. Faber. "New therapies and newer combinations are often continued indefinitely, taking 'treatment free' time away from patients."

Abecma received approval based on findings from a phase 2 clinical trial in which 83% of enrolled patients responded to the therapy in as little as one month after the infusion. During remission, patients do not need any other multiple myeloma treatment. Abecma has given patients back their quality of life. Learn more about this promising therapy at: <https://www.ohcare.com/promising-car-t-therapy-for-multiple-myeloma/> or read Amanda's story at <https://www.ohcare.com/young-ohc-multiple-myeloma-patient-car-t/>.



CANCER SUPPORT RESOURCES

OHC understands the impact a cancer diagnosis can have on you, your loved ones, and caregivers. Integral to our comprehensive cancer care program is connecting you with cancer-focused community support resources to help alleviate your burden. Our goal is to make daily life easier so that you can focus on beating cancer.



American Cancer Society (ACS)
1-888-227-2345 / cancer.org

While most people know the ACS for their research, ACS does so much more. They promote healthy lifestyles to help with prevention. They research cancer and its causes to find more answers and better treatments and fight for lifesaving policy changes. ACS provides everything from emotional support to the latest cancer information for those who have been touched by cancer. And, they do it all 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services include:

- Connect with a breast cancer patient via the Reach to Recovery App
- Education online
- Online support groups
- tlcdirect.org wigs and more catalog



Karen Wellington Foundation for LIVING with Breast Cancer (KWF)
(513) 888-7183 / karenwellingtonfoundation.org

The KWF believes that having something to look forward to is part of the treatment and healing process for cancer patients. In that spirit, they send patients LIVING with cancer on special vacations, relaxing spa days, concerts, and other FUN-ONLY activities. Experiences are made possible by generous donors, and anyone can nominate someone actively battling cancer to receive a special vacation or event. Use the following link to make a nomination: <https://www.karenwellingtonfoundation.org/nominate.html>.

Distress Screening Tool - How are you doing?

We ask that you complete this form to help you determine if you might benefit from programs to help relieve any stress, anxiety, anger, fear, etc. that you may be feeling.

PART 1: Please circle the number (0-10) that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week, including today.

No distress 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extreme Distress
 mild moderate severe

PART 2: Please  any items that may be of concern for you:

Emotional Problems:

- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Fears
- ☐ Hopelessness
- ☐ Loss of interest in usual activities
- ☐ Nervousness
- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Substance Abuse
- ☐ Worry

Family Dynamics:

- ☐ Dealing with children
- ☐ Dealing with partner
- ☐ Family member health issues
- ☐ Ability to have children

Practical Problems:

- ☐ Child Care
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Financial
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Treatment decisions
- ☐ Balancing work/school

What do my answers mean?

If you have circled moderate or above or checked any of the items listed, you may benefit from services provided by Cancer Family Care, a community organization that specializes in helping cancer patients and their caregivers and families to deal with the emotional side of the cancer journey and to help find other available resources.

513-731-3346

www.cancerfamilycare.org

OHC CANCER SURVIVOR HELPS YOUNGSTERS IMPACTED BY CANCER. "DUMP" CANCER

Most of us can remember playing with a dump truck as a child. There was something so satisfying about loading it up with sand, rocks, and dirt and then tipping it upward to dump the contents in a heap. Perhaps it was an infatuation with getting dirty, or maybe, deep down, we were drawn to the sweet release of dumping a burden.

OHC patient Arthur Vogt knows what it is to carry a burden. In April 2019, he was diagnosed with aggressive stage 3 bladder cancer. "I was determined not to let cancer define me," said Arthur. "I prayed to God for strength to get me through the treatment and keep a positive attitude."

OHC's David M. Waterhouse, MD, MPH, a noted oncologist and hematologist whose specialties include lung cancer and urologic cancer treated Arthur with immunotherapy and chemotherapy. Arthur received radiation under the expert care of OHC radiation oncologist David Pratt, MD. "Dr. Waterhouse told me he doesn't like to lose, and I don't either, so we hit it off right away," said Arthur.

"I always told Arthur that I had a plan B for every plan A," said Dr. Waterhouse. "His positive attitude made a big impact on his treatment."

"Whenever I went to OHC for treatment, they always made me feel like I was the most important person in the room," said Arthur. "They made sure I was comfortable, explained everything, and asked about my wife, Joanie, when she couldn't be with me because



Arthur Vogt and Abigail and Caroline Zhang look on as Edmond Zhang "dumps cancer" with his new truck donated by Arthur. OHC will help Arthur distribute his trucks to Cancer Family Care, Dragonfly, and OHC patient families.

of COVID. I recall Dr. Pratt spending over an hour explaining my radiation plan. He didn't want me to leave until I understood what to expect. He was amazing."

Arthur, a skilled carpenter, developed his passion for woodworking after he found himself unhappy with his job. "I felt there had to be something else out there," said Arthur. "I worked on a job putting a deck around a pool, and I fell in love with carpentry."

Arthur eventually started his own custom cabinetry company called A Work of Art. He was successful in the business for 25 years and retired in 2012. "I was working 80-100 hours a week," said Arthur. "I never had a customer call to say my work wasn't right. My motto was, 'There's only one way to do things. If you take time to do it right the first time, you won't have to do it again.'" Arthur's retirement lasted six months before he started doing woodworking projects for select friends and building Shaker furniture and cabinets out of reclaimed salvage wood.

Strong in faith and active in their church community, Arthur and Joanie refer to themselves as “Good Will Snipers.” They do acts of kindness silently, never seeking recognition.

Now, Arthur wants to share his good will with children affected by cancer. He recently came across a book on building wooden trucks with a chapter on dump trucks. A light bulb went off in his head. In his basement workshop, he could build wooden toy dump trucks filled with lettered tiles that spell CANCER. Giving them to children impacted by cancer would provide them a way to “dump” the disease.

Arthur sources four different types of wood to make the trucks. He hand paints the letters on each tile. “They have to be perfect,” said Arthur. He has created an assembly line system to build them efficiently, but each truck takes 25 hours to make.

With the help of OHC, Arthur is donating his works of “art” to children and families and to local cancer organizations who work with families affected by cancer. “My only desire is to bring some hope and perhaps some fun to the children who can ‘dump cancer away’,” said Arthur.

Arthur recently shared his joy of woodworking and gifted his first truck to Abigail Zhang and her family. Abigail is an OHC patient being treated for ovarian cancer and was thrilled with the symbolic dump truck. Her son Edmond, age four, immediately took to the dump truck and his younger sister, Caroline, joined in on the fun.

Arthur feels much lighter these days. His scans in February showed no signs of cancer. Reflecting on OHC, Arthur said, “I couldn’t have gone to a better place. It’s the most tremendous group of people in one building that you could have. I could sing their praises as long as I had a voice!”



Recipe photo and design by Bella Balster

MIXED BERRY PARFAIT

*Recipes courtesy of Rita Nader Heikenfeld, CCP, CMH.
Abouteating.com*

It's berry season and nothing shouts summer like a lovely mixed berry parfait. Plus, berries are good sources of vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants. Antioxidants scavenge free radicals, which are unstable molecules that can harm your cells. Free radicals are linked to several illnesses, including diabetes and cancer.

Ingredients

1 cup sugar free raspberry jam (or your favorite sugar free jam)
1/4 cup orange juice or orange liqueur
8 oz. reduced fat cream cheese (not fat free)
1/4 cup sugar or substitute
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla
8 oz. container fat free whipped topping, thawed or equivalent whipping cream, whipped and sweetened with stevia
Ladyfingers split in half or sugar free angel food cake, cut up in small pieces
Raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and strawberries (mixed or use your choice)*

Instructions

Mix jam and orange juice together. Whip cream cheese, sugar and vanilla until light. Gently stir in whipped topping or whipped cream, but reserve a little for topping. Line bottom of a small casserole dish with split ladyfingers. Or, to make individual parfaits, use small glass bowls or wine glasses. Layer with preserve mixture, cream cheese mixture and fresh fruit. Repeat layers, then top with a dollop of topping and a few more berries. Cover and refrigerate a couple hours or overnight before serving.

*Can substitute with frozen berries or fresh, peeled and chopped peaches

For a simple twist on this recipe, make tartlets. Use mini phyllo shells (already baked in the frozen food aisle). Spoon cream cheese mixture into shells and then top with a dollop of jam mixture. Add a fresh berry and enjoy!

UPCOMING EVENTS



SAVE
THE
DATE

OHC is proud to partner with these fine organizations in the fight against cancer as a sponsor for their upcoming events. We invite you to come and join us to support these very worthwhile organizations



**Ovarian Cancer Alliance of
Greater Cincinnati Teal Power
5K Run & Walk**

Live event: Saturday, August 21, 8:30 am at Summit Park

Virtual: August 14-21

More details: <https://runsignup.com/Race/Info/OH/BlueAsh/TealPower5k>

Come visit us at our OHC tent!



**Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's
Light the Night Walk**

Thursday, October 7 at Yeatman's Cove

Please visit OHC at the Innovation Celebration Tent

More details: <https://www.lightthenight.org/events/cincinnati-n-ky>

Join our OHC team!

