In This Issue:

- Taking the Sun Seriously ........................................ 2
- Baylor Researchers Developing Melanoma Vaccine ........... 4
- Graft-Versus-Host Disease ........................................ 5
- Blood and Bone Marrow Cancers ............................... 6
- For Them, It’s Personal ........................................... 8
- Sun Safe Clothing at Ernie’s ...................................... 9
- Exercise and the Cancer Patient ................................. 10
- How Collaboration of Tumor Conference Benefits Patients ..... 12
- Update: New Baylor Dallas Cancer Center ...................... 13
- Education and Support Programs ............................... 14
- National Cancer Survivor’s Week .............................. 16
Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, with more than one million cases diagnosed annually, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. The Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is committed to the early detection and successful treatment of all types of skin cancers.

Basal and squamous cell carcinomas are the two most common—and treatable—forms of skin cancer. Approximately 90 percent of these skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. Basal cell cancers are the most common form of skin cancer and, although they are highly curable, treatment can be disfiguring. Squamous cell cancers occur twice as often in men than women and rarely appear before age 50. Although darker-skinned people have a lower incidence of skin cancer, the majority of skin cancers in African Americans are squamous cell, usually at the site of a pre-existing skin injury or burn.

“These cancers arise in the top layers of the skin in areas that have been exposed to the sun,” says Dan McCoy, M.D., dermatologist on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas. “They typically appear on the face, forearms and neck and patients will have a scaly area of skin or a bump that is bleeding.”

When detected early, these types of skin cancer can often be treated easily in a physician’s office. “These have a very good cure rate, about 95 percent,” says Dr. McCoy. “The key is being seen and treated early when suspicious areas or symptoms first appear.”

**Melanoma**

Melanoma cancers are a much more serious diagnosis and the number of cases is rising in the United States. While melanoma still accounts for only three percent of skin cancers, it causes more than 75 percent of skin cancer deaths, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. Heightened awareness of melanoma symptoms and early detection has led to an increase in survival rates from 1996 to 2003.

“Melanoma is the most deadly, but least common skin cancer,” says Dr. McCoy. “It can occur in any age group without warning, on normal skin or near an existing mole.” It can occur anywhere on the body, but it often is found on the upper back of men and the legs of women.

“One person dies of melanoma cancer every hour,” he says. “A significant part of the problem is that it becomes metastatic at an early stage in its evolution. This is why early detection is key to successfully treating melanoma.”

The most effective ways to detect any form of skin cancer, especially fast-spreading melanoma, is being alert to any changes in your skin and having a physician examine your skin on a regular basis. “Everyone should do self exams once a month,” says Dr. McCoy. “Have a spouse or partner check the areas you cannot see like your back. The most sensitive indicator for melanoma is a new lesion that changes in size or color. Those at low risk should be examined by a physician once a year. If you have a personal history or a first degree relative with a history of melanoma, you should be screened by a physician more frequently.”

Doctors recommend following the “ABCDE” system of checking moles and freckles for skin cancers. Report any changes to a physician promptly:

**A—Asymmetry:** Normal moles or freckles are symmetrical. If these spots do not look the same on both sides, skin cancer may be present.

**B—Border:** If a mole or spot has blurry or jagged edges it should be checked by a doctor.

**C—Color:** A mole that is more than one color should be evaluated. Normal spots usually are one color.

**D—Diameter:** If it is larger than a pencil eraser (about 1/4 inch), it needs to be examined by a doctor.

**E—Elevation:** Have a doctor check any moles that are above the skin’s surface or have an uneven surface.
“Watch your skin for an ‘ugly duckling,’” says Dr. McCoy. “If you have a mole that is standing out or different from your other lesions or moles, promptly have it examined.”

Treatment of a non-melanoma cancer usually is a surgical procedure in the physician’s office. Depending on the depth in the skin and size of the affected area, a melanoma cancer may need to be removed and the lymph nodes tested for metastasis. “It cannot be emphasized enough that early detection is essential,” says Dr. McCoy. “There is a direct correlation between the melanoma survival rate and early detection.”

**Prevention Is Key**

Of course, even greater than early detection is preventing melanomas and other skin cancer in the first place. Excessive sun exposure before age 18 puts you at a dramatically increased risk for developing skin cancer. Given that, some mistakenly believe they can continue to overexpose themselves to the UV rays, believing the damage is already done. “They think, ‘I’ve done this all my life, what’s the point of changing,’” says Alan Menter, M.D., chief of dermatology at Baylor Dallas and chair of dermatology research at Baylor Research Institute. “It is never too late to practice safe sunning and lack of tanning.”

He adds there are other myths about the sun and tanning. “There is a debate about people not getting enough Vitamin D, which comes from sunlight,” says Dr. Menter. “We should all get out and carefully enjoy the sun, but at 10 to 15-minute intervals and not at 4 p.m. in August.”

He also cautions that you need to know your skin type and understand your exposure risks. “People in the U.S. have a wide diversity when it comes to skin types,” he says. “If you are fair skinned, never tan and always burn, you need to be ultra cautious in the sun. Those people should never get red, especially on the nose, ears or lips. If you have darker skin and tan more easily, you can tolerate more exposure. But all important is moderation with sun exposure and using sunscreen appropriately.”

**New Legislation Would Prohibit Minors From Tanning Beds**

While individual use of sunscreen outdoors has increased during the past several years, many, especially those under 18, continue to use tanning beds, mistakenly thinking they are safer than the sun. Dr. McCoy is working with Texas State Representative Burt Solomon and the Texas Dermatologic Society to pass legislation restricting access to tanning beds to those under 18 without medical consent. Dr. McCoy previously helped pass landmark legislation prohibiting access to minors without parental consent. This law was among the first in the nation and has since been adopted by several other states.

“These tanning beds were originally touted as ‘safe’ tanning because they are UVA rays and thought not to cause long-term problems such as skin cancers or aging of the skin,” says Dr. Menter. “This has been definitively proven untrue. The World Health Organization has even warned young females about tanning beds and the risk of developing melanoma.”

“We know excess exposure to ultraviolet light in the first 10 years of life dramatically increases the risk of melanoma later,” says Dr. McCoy. “These tanning beds often promote the idea tanning is healthy and essential and it’s not. Legislation that prohibits minors from having access can help prevent future health issues. We need to bring this to the forefront so children are not able to make the decision to expose themselves to a carcinogen until they are an adult.”
For the past decade, researchers and physicians on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas have been working to develop a vaccine to destroy melanoma cells. These clinical trials are showing results in not only possibly preventing and fighting this deadly form of skin cancer, but possibly other types of cancer as well.

Working in a special Federal Drug Administration-approved lab at Baylor Research Institute (BRI), a team of scientists is taking dendritic cells (DC) from a patient’s blood to make a vaccine which is easily injected under the patient’s skin. “Dendritic cells are cells responsible for inducing an immune system response,” says one of the lead researchers, Joseph Fay, M.D., director of Immunology Therapy for Cancer at Baylor Institute for Immunology Research and a hematologist and medical oncologist on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas. “Without DCs, no immune response can occur. When activated, DCs are injected into the patient, they migrate to areas of the immune system such as the lymph glands and carry out the assignment of destroying what we want them to destroy, which in this case is melanoma.”

Early in the research, physicians and scientists had to figure out the best way to direct the vaccine-filled DCs to selectively activate T-cells that kill melanoma cancer cells. “We discovered in our research that the same DC vaccine was also inducing a population of cells whose job it was to suppress or regulate the immune response,” says Dr. Fay. “The immune system is a very fine-tuned system. Once you are immunized against something, the immune system that regulates the immune response is also activated. Therefore, we must couple our DC vaccines with measures to prevent the co-activation of cells that suppress the immune response. These clinical trials have allowed us to understand how to give DC vaccines in conjunction with other treatments to suppress the T-cells at least temporarily and give the vaccine time to work.”

Supported in part by peer-reviewed grants from the National Cancer Institute, these clinical trials at Baylor Dallas are showing hopeful results. During the trials, a significant number of patients with advanced melanoma had clinical regression after DC vaccinations and these responses have been remarkable, according to Dr. Fay. At this point, approximately 20 percent of participants appear to be long-term melanoma survivors, compared to the two percent survival rate with current treatment.

While this particular clinical trial is focusing on a melanoma vaccine, Dr. Fay says this research may lead to the development of vaccines to fight other cancers. “Melanoma was picked to study because we already know a fair amount about the immunology involving melanoma cells,” he says. “This may work with other cancers as well in the future. It is very exciting and there is a lot of research in cancer immunology and biology here at the Baylor Institute for Immunology Research and the Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center.”
When a patient receives an organ transplant, one of the most serious complications that may occur is the body rejecting the organ. When a patient receives a bone marrow transplant however, the new cells injected into the body may actually reject the host instead—the exact opposite of an organ transplant. This bone marrow transplant complication is called graft-versus-host disease (GVHD). Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas has been working to better understand this condition and treat it, offering patients a better quality of life after bone marrow transplantation.

GVHD occurs in approximately 50 percent of long-term survivors of certain types of cancer who have received an allogeneic transplant—or bone marrow from another individual. Those who had no cancer in their bone marrow can often use their own marrow for the transplant, removing the concern for GVHD post transplant.

There are two categories of GVHD—acute and chronic. Acute GVHD generally occurs within the first 100 days post transplant and chronic graft versus host disease (cGVHD) can occur anytime post transplant. cGVHD is the most serious and common long-term complication from an allogenic transplant, according to Alan Miller, M.D., Ph.D., chief of oncology for Baylor Health Care System and director of Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Dallas. “It can occur in 30 to 70 percent of adults and children surviving more than 100 days,” he says. “In most cases it occurs four to six months after a transplant but five to 10 percent are diagnosed beyond one year.”

Approximately half of the patient population experiencing cGVHD have three or more organs involved and experience lesions on the skin and in the mouth. Other areas that can be affected include the liver, the gastrointestinal system, lungs and eyes. Treatment is dependent upon individual symptoms and can include topical steroids, medicated mouth wash, eye drops and other treatments for dry eye. One-third to one-half of all affected patients respond well to steroid treatments, according to Dr. Miller. These are taken over several months until the new marrow starts tolerating the body. If severe organ involvement occurs, physicians may use systemic immune suppressive therapy. A small percentage of all affected patients die from the disease or complications of the treatment.

In 2003, under the guidance of Estil Vance, M.D., a medical oncologist on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas, the bone marrow transplant program at Baylor Dallas established a multidisciplinary clinic approach to study and enhance treatments for graft-versus-host disease. The team includes transplant physicians, dermatologists and psychologists on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas, along with nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, enterostomal therapy, dieticians, social workers and chaplains. “We plan to expand upon this approach and increase the research aspects of the program in two areas—genomic analysis and therapeutic intervention,” says Dr. Miller. “The genomic analysis will look to identify patterns that may predict the development of chronic graft-versus-host disease, identify patterns associated with response to therapy and identify potential targets for therapeutic intervention. Our goal is to investigate interventions based on the clues provided by the genomic analysis. We will use methods pioneered by scientists here at the Baylor Institute for Immunology Research.

“Bone marrow transplants have proven a very successful therapy for previously untreatable cancers but cGVHD is not well understood yet,” says Dr. Miller. “Our primary goal with this program is to continue to improve the outcome and lives of transplant patients here at Baylor Dallas and also be a place other transplant centers respect and send their patients with chronic graft-versus-host disease to receive their care.”
Discovering you have leukemia, non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma or any type of blood/bone marrow or lymph system cancer can be overwhelming. There is no tumor to attack with radiation therapy or lump to remove through surgery. However, innovative treatments such as specialized blood stem cell and bone marrow transplants not only fight many of these types of cancer, in some cases, they are cured. Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is at the forefront of research and treatment options for these cancers and is home to one of eight nationwide donor registry programs offering a complete range of services, including these potentially life-saving transplants.

“What sets these cancers apart from other cancers is the treatment’s intent—a blood stem cell or bone marrow transplant is curative,” says Edward Agura, M.D., a medical oncologist on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas and director of blood and marrow transplantation. “The whole purpose is to try to cure the cancer, not just put it into remission. Our goal is to eliminate the cancer permanently and quite often, we are able to do that.”

Bone marrow is important to the body’s overall defense system because it fights off illnesses. When a blood or bone marrow cancer occurs, it can affect the body’s entire immune system. “I like to describe it like the body is a castle,” says Dr. Agura. “At the top are the ramparts and the guys with the spears are keeping the enemy at bay. The bone marrow is the guys with the spears. If they disappear, you still have a castle and the walls are still standing, but only for a while because you would be overrun by the enemy.”

If a blood or lymph system cancer occurs, chemotherapy is often the first course of treatment. A blood stem cell or bone marrow transplant may also be an option for some and are less complicated procedures than many people think. “Many people probably think of transplant as a month-long hospital stay in a bubble room,” says Dr. Agura. “In reality, for at least one-third of patients, it is about a two-week medical infusion process which allows them to come during the day to the infusion center and then go home to sleep in their own beds at night.”

The first place physicians look to find a suitable donor is within the patient’s immediate family. If no one qualifies, they can turn to the BE THE MATCH™ Registry at Baylor Dallas (formerly the National Marrow Donor Program). The program at Baylor Dallas is one of only eight in the nation that offers all components of the nationwide program—donation, collection, apheresis and transplant. About 70 percent of patients needing a marrow or blood stem cell transplant require the services of BE THE MATCH Registry.

Although blood stem cell and bone marrow transplants have been available for 40 years, some patients are unable to receive this treatment. Many cannot find an appropriate match in time to stop the cancer. Minorities in particular are underrepresented on the BE THE MATCH Registry where volunteer donors are actively recruited. Another roadblock can be that a patient is not referred to the transplant physicians early enough in their cancer’s development.

“Not everyone who should have a transplant gets one, sometimes the problem is the patient’s fear of the procedure,” says Dr. Agura. “I always tell patients, transplants are never as risky as the underlying illness. There are risks and side effects to a transplant, but they are always less than the risk of the illness. I believe if patients are able to weigh the risk versus the benefit, they almost always will choose having the transplant over not having it.”

Advances in the blood stem cell and marrow transplant process have made it a much more viable option for many patients. Treatment can now be so mild, many patients no longer experience the psychological impact of hair loss and now transplants are available to a wider range of patients. “It used to be only for young people with a matching sibling,” says Dr. Agura. “Now, the truth is that we can successfully transplant patients through about 80 years of age. “There is no age limitation at the Baylor Dallas center and technology and
treatment methods have improved so much, we can help many more people.”

Physicians and researchers also have learned how to safely use stored umbilical cord blood to perform transplants. This is taken and stored at the parent’s consent when a baby is born. A worldwide network of about 200 umbilical cord blood banks, including one at Baylor Dallas, work cooperatively to find appropriate donations to save patients across the world. “We have even moved forward and learned how to combine the blood from two or more cords into one ‘supercord’ donation for a faster recovery that is safe,” says Dr. Agura. “With these and other advances, we can look forward to much improved access to care and outcomes because cord blood banks can give us safe units of cord blood. In the past, some people had to go without a suitable donor.”

Baylor Dallas continues to push forward to learn more about these cancers and how to best treat them. “In the past five years alone, the treatment options for a variety of blood cancers have expanded and new therapies are continually being developed,” says Dr. Agura. “Patients come to Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center from all over because we have the treatment options, clinical trials and transplant procedures other facilities may not have available. Baylor Dallas has many world-class hematologic oncologists and blood and bone marrow transplant physicians who are focused on the care of patients.”

Volunteer donors are always needed by BE THE MATCH Registry at Baylor Dallas. Qualifying for the registry takes about 10 minutes and includes a brief medical history and personal information. Four swabs are taken on the inside of your mouth to get a sample to be used to match donors and recipients. Information is coded and everything remains confidential. Volunteer donors can remain on the registry from age 18 to 60.

To become a blood stem cell or marrow donor or find out more information, please call (214) 820-4279 or visit Baylorhealth.com/DallasCancer.

Nechelle Ervin, left, and Cliff Ackerman, right, explain the blood and marrow registry procedure to Kimberly Shepard, second from left, and Myrtle Carter, at a recent donor drive.

Baylor Dallas’ Adult Blood Stem Cell and Bone Marrow Transplant Accomplishments

Baylor Dallas:
• Performed the first bone marrow transplant in North Texas in 1983 and has since performed almost 4,000 bone marrow and blood stem cell transplants.
• Is the 9th largest blood and marrow transplantation center in the country and the program was the 5th in the nation to receive accreditation from the Foundation for Accreditation of Cellular Therapy.
• Nationally recognized as a Center of Excellence among multiple insurance carriers.
• Performed Texas’ first matched unrelated donor transplant in 1988.
Blood stem cell and bone marrow transplants are now saving the lives of many people facing various cancers. However, the only way to have this successful outcome is for people to be willing to donate. The BE THE MATCH® Registry program (formerly National Marrow Donor Program) at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas goes into the community to educate and register donors. Last year alone, Baylor Dallas conducted 235 donor drives and registered 5,031 donors, more than 100 percent over their goal.

Much of this success is thanks to the personal passion of two Baylor Dallas recruiters. Cliff Ackerman was the recipient of a bone marrow transplant in 2000, and Nechelle Ervin donated the blood stem cells that saved a 15-year-old boy’s life in 2005.

Cliff Ackerman—Bone Marrow Recipient
Ackerman was working long hours in the restaurant industry in 1997 when he had recurring pain in his leg. A scan revealed two tumors pushing on his spine. A physician later diagnosed Stage IV non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

After more than two years of treatment that included chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery to remove a metastatic tumor and his spleen, he says his cancer just never responded. His physician searched for a donor match on the national registry and he received a bone marrow transplant on June 9, 2000. “It went wonderfully,” he says. “I did not have graft-versus-host disease afterwards and I felt great. I wanted to help others facing the same thing and let them know there is hope.”

Ackerman began volunteering with the Virginia R. Cvetko Patient Education Center at the Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center, often visiting patients waiting for a bone marrow transplant at Baylor Dallas. During his four years as a volunteer, he logged more than 300 hours of volunteer time and was named volunteer of the year.

He also began volunteering with the registry, attending drives to help recruit donors. “One thing led to another and I was offered a permanent position,” he says.

Ackerman now organizes and attends recruitment drives and health fairs across the Metroplex, sharing his personal story and encouraging people to become donors. “I can show them it really works,” he says. “I am a recipient, living proof that they can give the gift of life and hope.”

Nechelle Ervin—Blood Stem Cell Donor
In 2004, Ervin helped a friend by working a local health fair. During a break, she walked around the fair and came upon the Baylor Dallas registry booth. “The lady explained to me the need to add more African Americans to the registry and I thought if I could help someone with leukemia, why not?” So Ervin signed up.

In 2005, on her birthday, she received a call from the registry telling her she was a good match for a 15-year-old boy with leukemia, the same age as Ervin’s own son. “When I went to get prepped for collection, they asked me if I was really committed to this,” she says. “How could I not be? I would want someone to do this for my son. I had no choice as a mother.”

She was to undergo a procedure called blood stem cell collection. For five days prior to her donation, she received an injection to stimulate production of her blood stem cells. On July 26, 2005 she went to the apheresis collection center at Baylor Dallas and spent three to four hours donating the cells. “I tell people it is like giving blood,” says Ervin. “It just takes a little longer.”

They collect only one bag of stem cells during that time, but according to Ervin, it is enough to save a life. “It is overwhelming to think I was able to give that boy my healthy immune system,” she says. “He now has my blood type, my allergies and a healthy life.”

Ervin went back to her normal life, but in August 2007, registry employees followed up with her. “I started talking to the coordinator about how wonderful it would be to work for Baylor Dallas in this area because I felt so passionate about it,” she says. “They asked me to send a resume and started my new job as a recruiter in October 2007.”
Now, Ervin also works to recruit new donors, sharing her own experience. As an African-American woman, she is especially passionate about recruiting minorities, which are dramatically underrepresented on the registry. Of the 7 million committed donors in the United States, 73 percent are Caucasian with only 10 percent Hispanic/Latino and 8 percent African American. “It is very fulfilling when I tell my story and people get on board and sign up,” she says.

Three years after Ackerman’s transplant, he was able to meet his donor at a “Celebration of Life” party. Ervin’s recipient is now 18 and she was recently contacted for a possible meeting. She is looking forward to seeing him healthy.

For more information about being a donor, call the **BE THE MATCH** Registry at Baylor Dallas at (214) 820-4279.

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**Sun Safe Clothing At Ernie’s**

Staying safe in the blazing Texas sun is important for everyone—whether you have had skin cancer or not. More than one million basal and squamous cell skin cancers are diagnosed each year according to the American Cancer Society. To help you stay safe in the sun, Ernie’s Appearance Center, serves the needs of cancer patients and their families with a special line of skin-protective clothing.

“This clothing is made without chemicals in the fabric,” says Dusty Clark, manager of Ernie’s. “The secret is in the way the fabric is woven. It creates a shadow on the skin to keep you from getting sunburned.”

Ernie’s carries several styles of hats, pants and shirts that reduce sun exposure. “They are long sleeved, but not at all hot to wear,” she says. “They range in sizes from small to extra large, for men and women. These are things we should all be wearing.”

Ernie’s Appearance Center also offers wigs, hats, scarves, breast prosthesis and mastectomy and fashion bras, camisoles and swimsuits. The boutique also carries non-metallic deodorant and skin lotion for use during radiation treatment. Beautiful jewelry, gift items and decorative canes are also available to lift your spirits and enhance your appearance.

Ernie’s is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is located in the first floor lobby of the Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center. For more information, please call (214) 820-8282.
Although cancer treatment effects everyone differently, most patients do not feel up to exercising. However, even limited amounts of movement can help a patient recover both mentally and physically, according to physicians.

“Studies have shown a clear correlation between exercise and an improved quality of life,” says Amy Wilson, M.D., a physiatrist on the medical staff and chief of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas and medical director at Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation (BIR). “It can improve a patient’s energy level and reduce fatigue and depression.”

Researchers are investigating exactly how exercise might effect a cancer patient’s immune system. “Research is looking for more concrete evidence as to exactly why it is so beneficial, especially to the immune system,” she says. We are trying to determine whether it somehow improves the regulation of the immune system or whether there is another mechanism that exercise helps on a molecular level,” she says.

Dr. Wilson emphasizes that exercise for a person recovering from cancer doesn’t mean an hour at the gym. “It doesn’t have to be anything fancy,” she says. “It should be what the patient can do; brief walking, riding a stationery bike or lifting light weights. The important thing is moving. Studies show benefits when patients get up and move as much as they can tolerate—even if it is only five minutes walking down the hall.”

Dr. Wilson works with many cancer patients at BIR to develop an exercise routine. Patients who were physically active before treatment probably cannot return to the same performance level immediately. “People have to understand that they have been through a lot with cancer treatment,” she says.

“They can’t go into this thinking they can do what they formerly did, whether that is running or biking. Instead, I have them look at what is possible now and work up to where they would like to be.”

Patricia Carpenter, 55, a retired speech pathologist, understands firsthand the benefits of exercise in her recovery from chronic lymphocytic leukemia. After treatment, including a blood stem cell transplant,
It's A Guy Thing
Free Health Event Devoted Just To Men

Join Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas on Saturday, June 20 for a morning dedicated to men’s health and wellness at It's A Guy Thing. Health screenings, education and wellness booths will be available along with chair massages and a light breakfast. Presentations by physicians on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas will include cardiovascular health, orthopaedics, urologic health, cancer and healthy snack ideas.

Saturday, June 20
7:30 a.m.–Noon
Doubletree Hotel
8250 N. Central Expressway
Dallas, Texas 75206

For more information or to register, please call 1-800-4BAYLOR or BaylorHealth.com/GuyThing.

Baylor Dallas Opens New Outpatient Oncology Clinic

To further improve access and quality of care for cancer patients, Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Dallas has opened a new Outpatient Oncology Clinic. The clinic offers cancer care by physicians on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas, who specialize in bone and soft tissue, head and neck and lung cancers in one convenient location. Speech therapy and radiology services are also located onsite for convenient patient access.

The Outpatient Oncology Clinic is located in the Tom Landry Health and Wellness Center, Suite 7300, at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, 411 North Washington Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75246.

Call (214) 820-6767 for more information.

Carpenter has had some setbacks in her quest to exercise and regain her health. Twice she has fallen and suffered compression fractures, but continues to exercise as much as possible because of all the benefits she has experienced. “Exercise has been great for me,” she says. “I haven’t gained all my weight back yet, but I am working on it. I have so much more energy now.”

During the up and down journey of recovering from cancer, even the smallest amounts of exercise can play a big role. “Typically someone will have good days and bad days,” says Dr. Wilson. “Do what you can in the realm of what you can do that day. Try and remember the importance of keeping up with activity even while undergoing treatment. It will always help in the long run.”

she developed graft-versus-host disease. Her weight plummeted to 89 pounds. When she first met with Dr. Wilson, her husband had to lift her out of her wheelchair and place her on the exam table. “I could barely hold my head up,” she says. “I am a pretty upbeat person, but that was a low point. Rehabilitation was the best thing for me. Now, I exercise four to five times a week with about 30 minutes in the pool every other day.”
Kenneth Wing is a walking testimonial for Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas’ team approach to fighting disease and illness. At Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Dallas, physicians from various specialties, nurses and other medical professionals meet on a regular basis to discuss individual oncology cases presenting challenges. There are 13 site-specific tumor conferences which meet regularly throughout the year. Their collective experience and expertise often spark an innovative treatment approach that can have breakthrough benefits for the patient.

Not all the patients helped through these collaborative tumor conference meetings have cancer. Since 1985, Wing had suffered from a rare form of psoriasis on his legs that had resisted all forms of treatment. His life was severely impacted. He was unable to wear most types of pants, including jeans, and even the weight of the sheets on his bed at night caused him pain. His case was presented at the skin cancer tumor conference in hopes of uncovering a viable treatment option.

Among the types of physicians on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas attending tumor conferences are medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons, dermatologists, Mohs surgeons, pathologists, plastic surgeons and others. They discussed Wing’s treatment history, including the use of a laser to burn off the growths and developed a plan to try a treatment traditionally used by cancer patients—radiation therapy.

The radiation oncologist took a slow approach, specifically targeting the lesions with the radiation. “After the second dose, all of the lesions had reduced in size and some had gone flat,” says Wing. “Even the stubborn areas around my knee were flat after two more sessions. There are just white marks and it looks like a recovered burn.”

Almost two years later, his psoriasis is still gone. “I am thrilled,” says Wing. “No other treatment has worked before. I can wear regular jeans and have my life back. I am grateful they were willing to think outside the box and work together for my treatment.”

In 2008, 250 Tumor Conferences were held and 900 cases were presented with a total attendance of more than 7,000 medical professionals.

Baylor Site-Specific Tumor Conferences include:
- Breast Cancers
- Bone and Soft Tissue Cancers
- Chest Cancers
- Endocrine Cancers
- Gastrointestinal Cancers
- Gynecologic Cancers
- Head and Neck Cancers
- Hematologic Cancers
- Lymphomas
- Neurologic Cancers
- Skin Cancers
- Stem Cell Transplant
- Urologic Cancers
Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is developing North Texas’ first dedicated cancer hospital along with a new outpatient cancer center which will be the largest in North Texas.

The new 10-story outpatient center will be located on the south side of the Baylor Dallas campus. The existing Collins building will be renovated into a 120-bed inpatient cancer center. A new circular sky bridge will connect all the buildings housing cancer services.

“When completed in 2013, it is our goal to be a nationally and internationally renowned cancer care destination,” says Joel Allison, president and CEO of Baylor Health Care System. “We want to build on Baylor Dallas’ commitment to providing advanced cancer treatments and leading the charge of improvement in cancer care through research.”

Baylor Health Care System will improve the access that cancer patients in North Texas have to advanced cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment and research. And it’s close to home where cancer patients can better receive support from their loved ones and friends.

Baylor Health Care System Foundation supports that vision and to that end, it is raising funds for the new $350 million cancer center project. To learn more about giving opportunities, please contact the Foundation at (214) 820-3136 or Foundation@BaylorHealth.edu.

**Update: New Baylor Dallas Cancer Center**

An aerial view shows the planned location of the new 10-story outpatient cancer center on the south side of the Baylor Dallas campus. The existing Collins building will be renovated into a 120-bed dedicated inpatient cancer hospital. A new circular sky bridge will connect all of the buildings housing cancer services and parking garage #4.
The Virginia R. Cvetko Patient Education Center is designed to help you and your loved ones understand and manage the challenges of cancer. The Cvetko Center offers general and disease-specific education programs, a variety of educational resources, spiritual and emotional support, and pastoral care.

Services are provided by both staff members and trained volunteers who are cancer survivors. All educational services of the Cvetko Center are provided to patients, family members and cancer survivors free of charge.

The Cvetko Center is located in the Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Dallas, Collins Building, Suite 615. For information on educational resources or to register for activities and programs, please call (214) 820-2608.

New Parking Garage
Garage #4, a new six-level, 829-space parking garage, is now open adjacent to the Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center. This garage is accessible from both Worth Street and Junius Street. Patients attending Cvetko Center programs will receive a free-parking voucher. Patients attending Cvetko programs in Truett Hospital may park for free in Parking Lot #9 (accessible from Hall Street).

Special Programs

National Cancer Survivors Week
June 1 – 5
Please see the back cover for more information.

25th Annual Barrett Lectureship
“The Human Side of Cancer: Living With Hope, Coping with Uncertainty”
Jimmie Holland, M.D., Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center Thursday, June 4
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Please see the back cover for more information.

A Journey with a Caregiver: Lessons Learned.
Betty E. Garrett, author of From Hiccups to Hospice: A Survival Guide for the Cancer Caregiver. Also covered will be enhancing communication and incorporating complementary methods for better self care.
Saturday, June 13
9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Virginia R. Cvetko Living with Cancer Series
This special educational series will provide information specifically for the cancer patient and his or her family/caregiver. Program topics will address nutrition, exercise and communication. This series also provides patients and their family/caregiver an opportunity to share their cancer experience with other cancer survivors. Call (214) 820-2608 for dates and times.
Virginia R. Cvetko
Patient Education and Support Programs

July 2009–September 2009

15

• Reservations required for this event. Please call (214) 820-2608.

* Family members are invited to attend these support group meetings.

Living with Cancer Workshop
Topics include the importance of exercise during treatment, coping with emotional and spiritual issues that accompany a cancer diagnosis and legal/financial discussions.
Friday, August 21
For more information, please call (214) 820-2608.

Answers to Your Social Security and Health Insurance Questions
Tuesday, July 7
6 – 8 p.m.
2900 Live Oak, Dallas

Wisdom for Women with Cancer Series
Touch
Tuesday, June 16
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

Also, watch for more details on:
Ovarian Cancer Survivorship Celebration
Luncheon with speaker Fran Di Giacomo
Monday, Sept. 21

Breast Cancer Survivorship Celebration
Luncheon with speaker Rev. Dr. Sheron Patterson
Tuesday, Oct. 13

Disease-Specific Education

Amyloid Support North Texas*
Quarterly – second Saturday
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Room 7, lower level
Truett Hospital (near cafeteria)

Carcinoid Cancer Texas Survivors*
Monthly – second Saturday
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Room 1, lower level
Truett Hospital (near cafeteria)

North Texas Myeloma Support Group*
Monthly – second Saturday
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Room 7, Basement level
Truett Hospital (near cafeteria)

Ovarian Cancer Support Group
Weekly – Mondays
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

Prostate Cancer Education and Support Group*
Monthly – first Tuesday
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Room 8, Basement level
Truett Hospital (near cafeteria)

Support for People with Oral and Head and Neck Cancer (SPOHN)*
Monthly – second Tuesday
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

A separate SPOHN group now meets in Plano on the first Tuesday of the month at Baylor Regional Medical Center at Plano 4700 Alliance Blvd., Plano 75093 6 – 8 p.m.
Rooms A and B, Garden level

Waldenström’s Macroglobulinemia Support Group*
Bi-monthly – third Saturday
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Room 7, Basement level
Truett Hospital (near cafeteria)

New Spanish Language Support Group
Last Thursday of every month
Noon – 1 p.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

Ongoing Complementary Programs

Healing Through Journaling
Reduce stress and worry, improve communication skills and enhance the healing process. Join us and experience the power of journaling. Pre-registration is required.

Call (214) 820-2608.
Monthly – second and fourth Wednesdays
10 – 11:30 a.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

Express Yourself
Words can escape us when we try to communicate our thoughts, feelings, hopes and fears. Let the world of color and shapes help you explore your cancer journey through artistic expression. Knowledge of art and experience in art are not required. Pre-registration is required.

Call (214) 820-2608.
Monthly – second Wednesday
9 – 10:30 a.m.
Suite 620, Collins Building
Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

Gentle Yoga for Cancer Survivors
Pre-registration is required.
Call (214) 820-2608.
Bi-monthly—second and fourth Fridays
10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Basement level, Baylor Sammons Cancer Center

For details, visit BaylorHealth.com/DallasCancer.
Celebrate cancer survivorship during National Cancer Survivor’s Week, June 1–5 with a variety of activities at Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Dallas. Events include information booths, giveaways, music, an ice cream social and a patient art exhibit. Special events include:

25th Annual Barrett Lectureship
“The Human Side of Cancer: Living With Hope, Coping with Uncertainty”

A highlight of this year’s Survivor’s Week activities is the 25th annual Charlotte Johnson Barrett Lectureship on Thursday, June 4. This educational event was established in 1983 in memory of Barrett, a breast cancer survivor who, along with close friend Virginia R. Cvetko, helped establish support groups for cancer patients at Baylor Sammons Cancer Center. The Barrett endowment supports annual programs and seminars relating to cancer patient education and psychosocial issues.

This year’s Barrett lecture will feature Jimmie Holland, M.D., the Wayne E. Chapman Chair in Psychiatric Oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, NY. Dr. Holland is a pioneer in the study of the psychosocial issues that can affect the cancer patient, as well as a strong advocate for including emotional care into patients’ overall healing plan. Dr. Holland will address these needs in her discussion, “The Human Side of Cancer: Living with Hope, Coping with Uncertainty.”

“I hope to put the development of psycho-oncology in the context of society’s attitudes, which have created barriers to patients’ willingness to acknowledge and ask for help with emotional problems when dealing with cancer,” says Dr. Holland. “I will discuss how these barriers have been addressed and how important—based on solid research—the field of psycho-oncology is for patients.”

Thursday, June 4
Registration begins at 11:30 a.m.
Lecture from Noon to 1 p.m.
Davis Auditorium, 17th Floor, Roberts Hospital
Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas

This event is free, but registration is required. Please call (214) 820-2608 to register or for more information.

The Power of Two Book Tour

Another highlight of National Cancer Survivor’s Week is a talk and book signing by Brian Monaghan. Monaghan, a 59-year-old attorney at the top of his game, got the news that all of us dread—Stage IV melanoma had metastasized to his brain; he was given three to six months to live. That night, he and his wife Gerri made a pact: “We are going to love and laugh and fight this. And we are going to win.” That was ten years ago. Together they have written The Power of Two: Surviving Serious Illness with an Attitude and an Advocate. It is the first book to speak to both patient and advocate, providing a road map for everyone facing a tough medical challenge, and for the people who love them.

Monaghan was the first patient to participate in the clinical trial for a new melanoma vaccine being developed at Baylor Research Institute (see story on page 4).

The Monaghans will be in Dallas to promote their book on Tuesday, June 2 during Baylor Dallas’ Cancer Survivors Week celebration at Baylor Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center.

For more information, call (214) 820-2608.