

CONNECT

News and Information from Oncology Hematology Care

FALL 2023

Bringing Hope
& Saving
Lives Through
Clinical Trials

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OHC
SPECIALISTS IN CANCER
AND BLOOD DISORDERS

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

ON YOUR CANCER JOURNEY

When patients hear a diagnosis of cancer, their world stops. We understand the impact this has on the patient and their loved ones. This is why our team treats you like family, providing both expert care and emotional support, so you never walk your cancer journey alone.

Kimberly Rhyan's experience with cancer started with her mother dying of brain cancer followed by her father passing of kidney cancer. During that time, Kimberly learned the value of remaining positive in the face of overwhelming fear, and the value family can provide by giving positive emotional support to people as they struggle on their cancer journeys.

Then unexpectedly in early 2023, Kimberly was herself diagnosed with metastatic ovarian cancer. Kimberly went from giving to needing the emotional support of family. Fortunately, she found OHC.

Gynecologic oncologist, Ajit Gubbi, DO, was the first OHC caregiver on Kimberly's cancer team. When thinking back to the first time he met Kimberly, Dr. Gubbi notes, "She was obviously devastated by her metastatic ovarian cancer diagnosis. However, as a mom, her primary thought and concern was that for her 12-year-old son. Kimberly knew from personal experience what a strain her cancer journey could place on him. Kimberly is so

strong of spirit and mind that she was motivated to do anything that she needed to do to overcome this disease without negatively impacting his childhood."

When first faced with her diagnosis, Kimberly was overwhelmed. She didn't know what to do or where to go for treatment. Kimberly was given the recommendation to make an appointment with Dr. Gubbi by a physician in the emergency room. "When I first came to OHC and met with Dr. Gubbi, I cried when he told me about my stage 4 diagnosis. They were out of tissues in the room so on my way out I made mention of that to the front desk. The very next time I came, there wasn't a spot in the building where I couldn't see tissues. I thought, OK, I feel that I've been heard and seen and that says a lot. Knowing I was heard for a simple request brought me a sense of peace. I knew I was in the right place."

Kimberly's treatment plan included an aggressive strategy including 7 cycles of the chemotherapy drugs Carboplatin, Paclitaxel, and Avastin, as well as an extensive ovarian cancer debulking surgery performed by Dr. Gubbi. She endured chemotherapy both pre- and post-operative. She is currently in remission thanks to the targeted treatment plan created by Dr. Gubbi and the rest of her OHC care team.



OHC patient Kimberly Rhyan stands with several of her art pieces.

Kimberly acknowledges the compassion that's required for her situation and is very thankful to Dr. Gubbi and the nurses at OHC. They made her feel like family. Kimberly is particularly appreciative of Suzanne, RN, one of her nurses. "We formed a special connection, a bond. Another patient and I talk about Suzanne a lot, about how compassionate she is. Suzanne's the type of person who you just feel her kind presence when she's with you. Everyone at OHC has been great, but she in particular has been amazing."

Another focus of Kimberly's throughout her cancer journey has been to help her son understand what she is going through and to help him cope with things beyond his control. Together, they are a wonderful team. He supports her when she needs extra help, and she supports him by making sure he still gets to be a kid. For example, encouraging him to go to a sleepover, knowing she'll be alone recovering from a round of chemo. Even while she is struggling, Kimberly puts her son ahead of herself.

A master's prepared artist, Kimberly has always found art to be the best way to express her feelings. Now Kimberly uses art to help her son better understand her struggle with cancer. Kimberly is able to process her pain and her emotions by putting those feelings down on paper in self-portraits.

Throughout her life's struggles, she's often experienced times when expressing her emotions verbally has been challenging. "I have a strong faith and try not to ask too many questions. There are not always answers, but through my art, I can explore the answers on my own. It helps me cope."

Expressing her emotions through art is also a way to help her son understand what she is feeling. Kimberly says "Sometimes it's a way for my son and I to have conversations about cancer. He knows these are helpful to me and so when he gives feedback or has an idea or likes something, we can have that conversation openly and it allows us to have that connection."

For patients with ovarian cancer, the road to recovery is generally a long one. "It's a long-term fight and Kimberly will have many ups and downs with her care along the way," states Dr. Gubbi. "But her personal strength, family support, and unrelenting motivation allows her to continue to battle this horrific disease exceptionally well. It is an honor to be a part of her medical family."

To Dr. Gubbi's point, you can see Kimberly's conviction to be victorious in her drawings. Through her choice of vibrant colors and bold text, the positive emotional approach Kimberly has decided to take on her cancer journey is evident. When asked what she'd say to other women who have just received her same diagnosis, Kimberly says "Know that you're not alone. Through your cancer journey, you're going to meet Suzanne's and Dr. Gubbi's who come along unexpectedly. There are people I don't even know that have prayed for me because someone told them my story. Don't let your pride get in the way of receiving a blessing."

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer, call the experts at OHC at 1-800-649-4800 or visit ohcare.com to request an appointment.

TELL US YOUR STORY

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



MINDFUL MEDITATION

CAN HELP REDUCE STRESS,
MANAGE PAIN, AND INCREASE
ENERGY.

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



Dr. John F. Sacco, an OHC radiation oncologist and integrative medicine specialist, is a regularly featured contributing author who shares a wealth of information to benefit our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.



Cathy Sacco, a certified educator and mindfulness instructor, certified in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindful Self Compassion (MSC)



Unexpected events and alarming news are part of life. But when someone is delivered the news they have cancer, the roller coaster begins for patients and their loved ones with an untold amount of emotional, mental, and physical stress. The uncertainty of your health and the side effects of treatment can be taxing. While your cancer team is focusing on helping you beat cancer, your mind is racing as you struggle to cope with so many changes and fear of what is to come. This is where meditation can help!

“Mindfulness meditation, is being present in the moment with intention, meaning you are purposefully aware of your body, your senses, your thoughts, and you do so without judging yourself,” says Cathy Sacco, an experienced MBSR educator. “As a cancer patient, there’s so much worry and anxiety during and after treatment and whether the cancer will come back. This self-practice of mindfulness has been shown to reduce those worries, anxiety, and stress,” adds Cathy.

There are a variety of ways to practice mindfulness meditation as John F. Sacco, MD shared in our OHC Connect Spring issue, “Deep breathing can help relax the body and produce both a physical and mental health benefit.”

The impact of meditative practice on a patient’s ability to overcome stress, anxiety, and depression is significant, but there is also a physical aspect. “Patients are able to separate themselves from, for example, a pain in their leg, with the practice of a self-guided body scan,” says Cathy. “Taking themselves through their body, noticing their feet, legs, then torso, they can separate themselves from the pain or really, focus on another part of the body entirely and find some relief.”

Caregivers can also directly benefit and may consider practicing mindfulness meditation with their loved ones. If possible, practice mindful awareness daily. It can be done anywhere, even when you are eating, showering, or doing activities of daily living.

John and Cathy suggest the following benefits of mindfulness meditation:

- Reduce stress, anxiety, and depression
- Improved levels of energy and sleep
- Increased ability to be more skillful with challenging situations in a calm, composed way
- Improved immune function
- Reduced feelings of anger and frustration
- Better relationship management at work and in your personal life, increased empathy and compassion
- May help reduce pain

There are many simple ways to practice mindfulness. Some examples include:

- Be aware - It can be hard to slow down and notice things in a busy world. Try to take the time to experience your environment with all your senses — touch, sound, sight, smell, and taste. For example, when you eat a favorite food, take the time to smell, taste, and genuinely enjoy it.
- Live in the moment - Try to intentionally bring an open, accepting, and discerning attention to everything you do. Find joy in simple pleasures.
- Be Kind to Yourself - Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.
- Sitting meditation. Sit comfortably with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap. Breathing through your nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. If physical sensations or thoughts interrupt your meditation, note the experience, and then return your focus to your breath
- Walking meditation. Find a quiet place 10 to 20 feet in length and begin to walk slowly. Focus on the experience of walking, being aware of the sensations of standing and the subtle movements that keep your balance. When you reach the end



of your path, turn, and continue walking, maintaining awareness of your sensations.

Self-Guided Body Scan Meditation

1. Lie on your back with your legs extended and arms at your sides, palms facing up.
2. Focus your attention slowly and deliberately on each part of your body, in order from toe to head.
3. Be aware of any sensations, emotions, or thoughts associated with each part of your body.
4. Hold those thoughts, then let them go, moving on to the next part of your body.

SHAWL DONATIONS



Pictured are (first row) Darla Tipton, (back row) Bekah (OHC Eastgate RN), Erika Smith, Katie (OHC Eastgate RN), Suzanne, (OHC Eastgate RN), and Emma (OHC Eastgate RN).

The patients at OHC love receiving the hand made blankets, and the nurses go out of their way to make the donation personal to each patient, helping them select their favorite colors or even warming the blankets before passing them out.

The first recipient of the most recent donation was Darla Tipton, a patient undergoing treatment at OHC. She picked a bright pink shawl that will help her be a little more comfortable as she fights cancer. OHC is amazed at the generosity of others, the kindness of our nurses, and most of all, the spirit of our patients.

OHC is honored to be a recipient of shawl donations from The Shawl Knitting Ministry of Guardian Angels. Erika Smith, a volunteer of the Ministry, delivered 16 shawls for our patients receiving treatment at the OHC Eastgate location. Each shawl is made with love and prayers for recovery, then Father Tom King of Guardian Angels blesses each one before they are donated.

BiTE THERAPY

REVOLUTIONARY
TREATMENTS
FROM OHC'S
CANCER RESEARCH
AND CLINICAL
TRIALS PROGRAM



OHC is one of only 31 in the world to offer the latest ground breaking therapies in solid tumor treatment.

Cancer is the second most common cause of death in the United States, with nearly 2 million new cases expected this year alone. In the US, an estimated 1,670 people die each day from cancer. OHC doctors are relentlessly searching for new ways to treat cancer, ways that give patients improved and longer-lasting outcomes. Our clinical trials program consistently breaks the mold when it comes to finding innovative treatments with longer remissions, lower side effects, and better patient quality of life.

OHC is presently offering a phase 1 clinical trial, AMG509, for patients with metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer. One of only 31 locations in the world and the only practice in Ohio, "OHC's evaluation of BiTE therapy in patients with prostate cancer once again means OHC is leading in cancer care," states OHC medical oncologist, hematologist, and Director of Early Phase Clinical Trials, David M. Waterhouse, MD, MPH. "BiTE first emerged in blood cancers, and it seems overnight, we're now testing it for solid tumors. Patients who are in advanced stage of cancer have more options with immunotherapies like BiTE."

At OHC, BiTE therapy is being evaluated in prostate and lung cancer that had metastasized. The lung cancer

trial, results of which will be published later this year, was recently closed, while the prostate cancer trial remains open. “We’re seeing phenomenal responses. We have one patient with prostate cancer who has been part of the trial for 3 years now. Hard to believe it’s been that long, but he’s still very active in his life, on his farm, and he tells me all the time that he says to all of his friends, ‘if you get prostate cancer, go to OHC.’ He was out of options and thought he was near the end of his life, but OHC changed that,” states James H. Essell, MD, an OHC medical oncologist, hematologist, cellular therapy expert, and principal investigator for blood cancer clinical trials.

As with most immunotherapies, the side effects are significantly less than other traditional options for care. While chemotherapy side effects are vastly improved from where they were 20 years ago, immunotherapies provide patients a generally better quality of life. “Side effects are almost guaranteed with any treatment, but with BiTE, we’ve absolutely seen a lesser amount than traditional treatments. Patients might experience a low-grade fever, chills, or more severe reactions could be a general sense of confusion. However, these are all manageable and temporary, which is much different than chemo or even radiation,” states Dr. Waterhouse.



What is BiTE?

BiTE (bispecific T-cell engager) therapy is an immunotherapy that uses the patients’ own T-cells to attack the cancer cells. BiTE® molecules are designed to form a bridge between cancer cells and cytotoxic T-cells—white blood cells that can destroy other cells that pose a threat (cancer cells). One arm of the BiTE molecule binds to CD3, an antigen found on the surface of a patient’s T-cells. The other arm is engineered to bind to a tumor-associated antigen (TAA). BiTE works as a bridge, connecting T-cells, which are the immune system’s natural defense system, to the invading cancer cells. It’s different than CAR-T and NK cellular therapies because instead of transferring cells into the patient’s body, the patient is given a medication that will help build the bridge between the 2 cells.

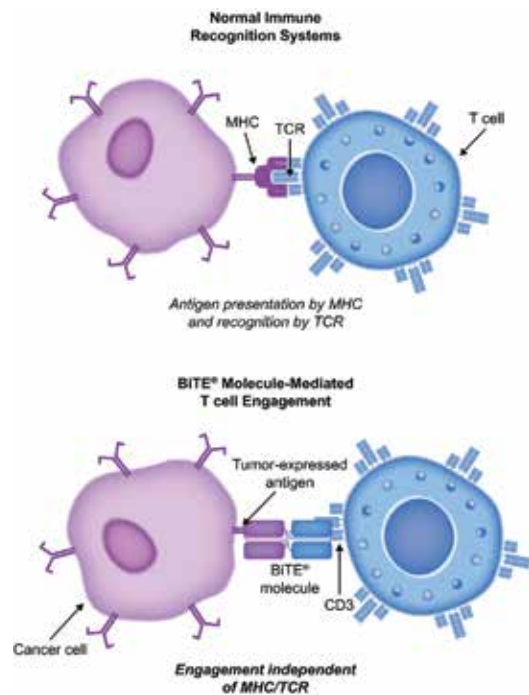


Illustration courtesy of the American Cancer Society Journals web page.

Dr. Essell believes that OHC's clinical trials program "brings tomorrow's treatment to today. It provides people the opportunity for treatments that no one else in the area offers. The first person in the world to receive allogenic CAR-T, meaning CAR-T using donor cells, was treated at OHC. For years, this patient alternated between rounds of chemo and brief remissions, lasting no more than 1 year. Because of his participation in a clinical trial, he is now 30 months in remission. That's what OHC's clinical trials program can give to people."

The number of new treatments and medications being evaluated in the US are vast. OHC has consistently been the first in the region to offer some of the most

successful immunotherapies emerging today. The only practice in the state of Ohio to offer BiTE, OHC is the first line of defense in the Cincinnati area. OHC strives to be a beacon of hope for all adult patients who are diagnosed with cancer. A cure for cancer is the goal states Dr. Waterhouse, "We're not going to be satisfied until we have all of the answers, all of the treatments available, to cure cancer." With OHC clinical trials, we're getting closer and closer to the finish line.

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with cancer, call the experts at OHC at 1-800-649-4800 or visit ohcare.com.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST CANCER EXPERTS

Rahul N. Prasad, MD, MBA,

is a board-eligible radiation oncologist who recently joined OHC. With an interest in breast, prostate, lung, brain, and spine cancer, Dr. Prasad knows that cancer is the most challenging diagnosis that many patients and their loved ones will ever face, and he is honored to be enlisted in their fight to beat the disease. "Deeply understanding patients—their hopes, dreams, and goals—is just as essential to healing as is medicine." Dr. Prasad is energized by the modern era of increasingly personalized care. "We are moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach to cancer treatment and customizing patient treatment based on detailed knowledge of tumor biology or genetic code." Dr. Prasad is seeing patients at OHC's Kenwood and Fairfield locations.



Emma Shaffer, PA-C,

an advanced practice provider, has joined OHC's Eastgate, Fairfield, and West care teams. Emma received her Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science from the University of South Carolina and her Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies from Charleston Southern University. She was drawn to the field of oncology after acting as an end-of-life caregiver for her grandparents who suffered from terminal cancer. When describing her patient care philosophy she states, "making my patients feel valued and appreciated is essential."



Stacey Brock, MSN, APRN,

an advanced practice provider, has joined the care team at OHC Fairfield. Stacey received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Ohio University and her Master of Science in Nursing from Walden University. Stacey's areas of interest include leukemia, lymphoma, and breast cancer. Her approach to patient care starts with empowering patients and building a strong foundation of trust. "I want them to know I am there for them and will do whatever I can to make them feel comfortable."



Amanda Little, MSN, APRN,

an advanced practice provider, has joined OHC's Kenwood care team. Amanda earned both her Bachelor and Master of Science in Nursing from Northern Kentucky University. Her area's of interest include hematology, survivorship, and bone marrow transplant. Amanda's philosophy of patient care is simple, "I spend time listening to my patient and their family. I try to identify their needs and concerns so we can work together to develop a personalized plan."



ARE YOU FOLLOWING OHC?



If you are a Facebook user but not yet following OHC, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/OHCInc/>, like our page, and like, share, and comment on our posts. We want all patients to learn more about leading-edge cancer treatments, hear stories of hope, and know they have a choice when choosing their cancer doctor!



BLENDER WHOLE ORANGE DATE MUFFINS

Unusual in that you use a blender to mix the muffins. You could sub in dried apricots for the dates if you like.

The bonus for muffins is that they can be frozen and rewarmed in minutes. Muffins also make a thoughtful food gift. A basket of home baked muffins and a smile go a long way in making one feel valued.

Ingredients

- 1 juice orange, 8-10 oz, with peel left on
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup chopped dried dates
- 1 large egg
- 1 stick butter, cut up and softened to room temperature
- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon each: baking powder and baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400.
Cut orange into 8 or so pieces and remove seeds.
Put orange pieces, juice and dates in blender. Puree.
Add egg and butter and blend. It will look curdled. Set aside.
Mix flour, sugar, baking powder, soda and salt. Pour orange mixture over top and stir gently to combine.
Spoon into sprayed/greased muffin tins, filling 2/3 full.
Bake 15-20 minutes, until top springs back when pushed with finger. Don't over bake.

Makes about 12 muffins, or about 18 mini-muffins. (If making mini-muffins, check after 9-10 minutes.)

Gilding the lily: Drizzle a powdered sugar glaze on after they cool.

Perfect Muffin Tips

- If using paper liners, no need to spray/grease.
- Avoid soggy muffins by removing from tins right after they bake.
- Unfrosted muffins can be frozen several months.
- Cool completely before freezing to avoid condensation on muffins.



EXCLUSIVE SERVICE PROVIDES CANCER PATIENTS ADDED SUPPORT

OHC is proud to offer exclusive access to **FindHelp** for anyone facing cancer.

FindHelp is a web-based search platform with over 600,000 supportive services listed to provide cancer patients and caregivers with:

- Financial assistance
- Food pantries
- Transportation
- Counseling services
- Other Free or reduced-cost services

Through **FindHelp**, OHC patients can find the above services and more based on their own zip code. For more information, ask a member of your OHC care team today or search on your own at usonology.findhelp.com.



A QUALITY PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

