

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2022

# THE SPECIALIST

## EDITION HIGHLIGHTS

6

### STORIES

A Voice For The Voiceless  
Elizabeth Stoke's Story

13

### HEALTH

Lung Cancer  
Prevention

29

### WELLNESS

Nutrition Management  
for Pancreatic Cancer





TABLE OF CONTENTS

6

**Stories**

*A Voice For the Voiceless - Elizabeth Stoke's Story*  
Angelina Lorello's Story



12

**Health**

Lung Cancer Prevention  
The Flu  
Breast Cancer Monthly Group  
Galleri Early Cancer Detection  
Understanding Diabetes  
NYCF + Unique Fitness



26

**Wellness**

Understanding Pre-Diabetes  
Nutrition Management for Pancreatic Cancer  
Healthy Eating for Lung Cancer



32

**Bulletin**

4th Annual Raising Hope Golf Classic  
Breast Cancer Summit  
What I'm Grateful For  
Career Opportunities  
New Hires





# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

## My Friends,

November encourages us to embrace the power of gratitude. Nature celebrates autumn with the trees shedding leaves and entering a dormant season of rest. Likewise, we can mirror nature's changes by slowing down this fall, resting, and reflecting with gratitude on everything wonderful in our lives.

It is the perfect opportunity to thank the people around us—colleagues, partners, family, friends, neighbors, and especially our patients.

At New York Cancer & Blood Specialists (NYCBS), we are grateful for the opportunity to provide world-class cancer care close to home for our patients and to be a resource of education, hope, and support.

In this issue of The Specialist, we bring awareness to pancreatic cancer, diabetes, flu season, palliative care, and lung cancer. In addition, you'll learn preventive and healthy eating strategies, important screening information, and a powerful story of lung cancer survivor Liz Stokes. Liz spent years of her life being a voice for others. So when she found Dr. Sharma, she was grateful for NYCBS, a place that could help her.

We're thankful for our patients, whose stories continue to inspire us each and every day. We're grateful they allow us to be part of their lives and that their part of the NYCBS family.

Warm regards,

**Dr. V**



# Patient Feedback



## Dr. Alexander Zuhoski

"I scheduled this appointment as a second opinion and saw the kind of care given by NYCBS and switched immediately. I need a more personal experience than the others can give. Everyone is so attentive and knowledgeable. Applications were put in for me to have treatments covered that my insurance wouldn't cover, and I have still not seen a bill! NYCBS actually cares about their patients. It's not a patient factory like the other centers around."



## Dr. Nolyn Nyatanga

"My Doctor is very nice and helping me with my problem. The staff is nice, clean environment and nice atmosphere. They are very helpful, and they take good care of you. They listen to your needs, this is what patients are looking for - people that care."



## Dr. Abhirami Vivekanandarajah

"The staff was kind and encouraging, as always. They looked out for my needs by making me comfortable. They made my experience a good one. I had no stress while getting my treatment."



## Dr. William LiPera

"I was very pleased with the entire staff, from the receptionist to the nurse who did my B/W, the doctor's PA, and Dr. LiPera himself. He took his time to explain things to me, and he called my surgeon while I was there to make sure we were all on board with the medical plan. He was very kind and patient."



## Dr. Triantafillos Fillos

"Highly qualified front office clerks. Easy to get an appt for my next visit. The professionalism of the Healthcare provider, his concern for details about questions from patients, and his advice are very much appreciated!"



# A Voice for the Voiceless: Elizabeth Stoke's Story

She thought to herself, "Isn't it ironic? I spent a lifetime helping others, and now I need to put my faith in someone who will help me." When Elizabeth (Liz) Stokes was diagnosed with Stage 1 lung cancer, the retired community activist knew she was in good hands from the moment she entered New York Cancer & Blood Specialists.

Liz spent 34 years in community outreach, serving as Riverhead library's patron services coordinator, helping people find resources, and always offering a listening ear or providing a voice for the voiceless. For 12 years, Liz volunteered with a women's empowerment group at the county correctional facility. She would bring books from the library into the facility to help the women find careers. Liz did that volunteer work through the

Riverhead chapter of the nonprofit Council for Unity, through which she also helped children learn to lead nonviolent lives and stay out of gangs. She also served on the town's veterans advisory committee.

Shortly before retiring in

**"NYCBS is a gift for Riverhead," she said. "It's a gift for any town with this organization."**

2019, Liz came down with a case of recurrent pneumonia. Since she had been a smoker for 40 years, her doctor suggested she have a CT scan. The test showed a small tumor on her lung. Days after retiring, Liz went out to celebrate with her colleagues. Unfortunately, the evening ended in a trip to the emergency room

after she suffered an allergic reaction to sulfates in the wine she was drinking. She stayed in the hospital to have a biopsy, which pierced her lungs, resulting in a five-day stay in intensive care. The results were inconclusive, but there was no doubt in Liz's mind, "If this is retirement, retirement sucks." Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

For two years, Liz prayed the tumor would not grow or spread. Then, in 2021, she had it biopsied and was referred to NYCBS' Dr. Deepali Sharma.

"When you're diagnosed with cancer, first you go into shock," Liz explained. "Then your heart breaks. So you need to find someone who can not only help you physically but can fix your broken heart." For Liz, that was Dr. Sharma.

Dr. Sharma made her feel safe and secure. She explained to Liz her treatment options, and Liz opted for TrueBeam non-invasive radiation therapy. So for one week, Liz would go to the office every day and receive twenty minutes of radiation. She followed each visit with a two-mile walk.

decreased, and her PET/CT scans show no evidence of disease. She quit smoking cold turkey and has been smoke-free for over a year. Liz walks for an hour a day and has even changed to a Mediterranean diet. She goes to the office for follow-up appointments every six months.

days, I stay in my pajamas all day, and it's okay," said Liz. "We get so busy in our lives. When you get diagnosed with cancer, you appreciate the little things." And Liz couldn't be more grateful for NYCBS in her community. Her daughter-in-law has even joined its team as a licensed practical



Everyone in the office took the time to ease her mind, answering her questions and showing her how the modalities worked.

After radiation, Liz underwent six months of immunotherapy. "Cancer care has come a long way," said Liz. "And this place is a miracle." Since treatment, her tumor marker levels have

Liz has finally found enjoyment in her retired life. She spends time with her six grandchildren and one great-grandchild and continues to help others whenever she can. She fills her time listening to the sounds of the waves crashing at the beach, between the pages of a good book, or simply relaxing at home. "Some

nurse (LPN) and is now in the nursing program.

"NYCBS is a gift for Riverhead," she said. "It's a gift for any town with this organization."



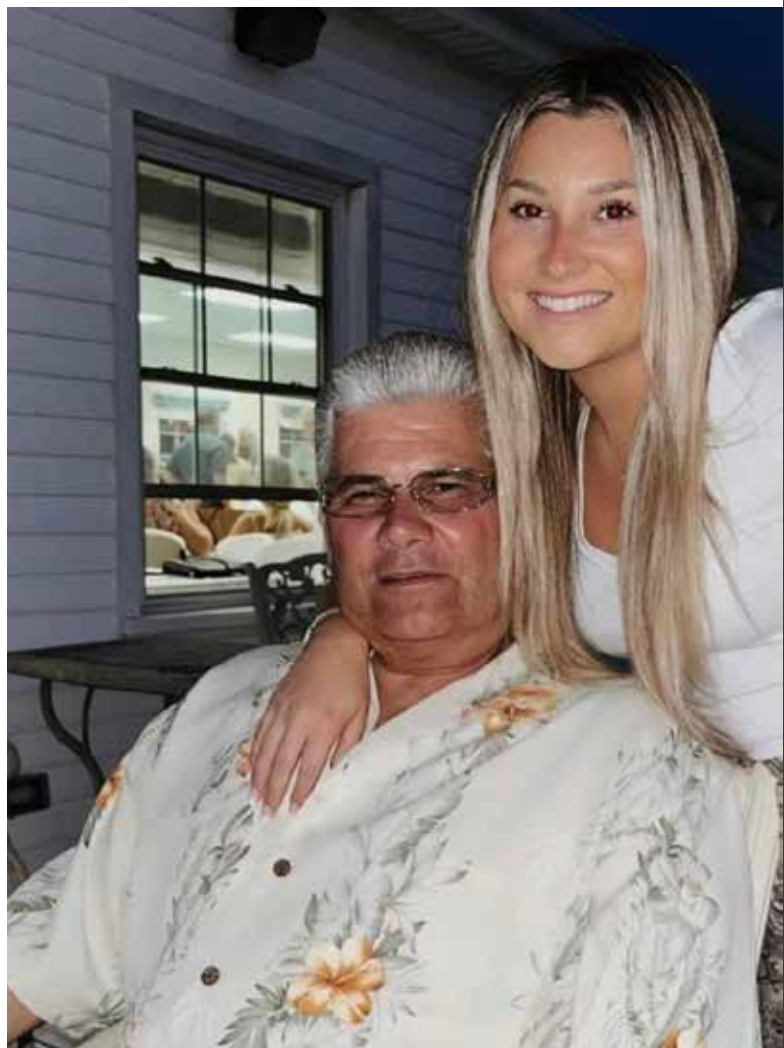
# Angelina Lorello's Story

**My name is Angelina Lorello. I've been with New York Cancer & Blood Specialists (NYCBS) since I was 16 years old.** Before I was born, my father was diagnosed on his 30th birthday with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. My father's chances of living were slim due to the tumor wrapped around his heart. He was on the verge of a massive heart attack. My father was given three days to live but was saved and cured when he was put in the hands of NYCBS.

NYCBS gave me my life when the odds were against my parents for having more children. My father's strength and mindset have taught me never to give up. His famous words since I was a young girl, right before I hung up the telephone or even in a verbal conversation, Angie keep pushing forward."

My father is my best friend, my hero, and NYCBS gave me that. NYCBS gave me my life and my father, keeping the Lorello name alive. That is something that I will never be able to repay. So my goal for the last six years is to give back to NYCBS, spread positivity and set the mindset never to give up.

To the patients to their loved ones, NYCBS is different from the rest. We make miracles happen, and I can vouch for that.



# Patient Family Advisory Council



The Patient Family Advisory Council gathered in October at the NYCBS Executive Building to continue their efforts in patient experience enhancements. The group welcomed two new council members to the team, Dorothy and Colleen! "It is always such a pleasure to welcome new council members. With new council members come different voices, stories, journeys, and perspectives. The goal of this council is to include our patients in decisions that affect their experience at NYCBS. "I hope this council continues to grow and expand to include diverse group members," said Brittany Kaliscik, Director of Patient Experience.

During their meeting last month, the PFAC met with leaders across the organization to review and provide feedback regarding current patient forms. Brittany says, "When we started reviewing these forms internally, we thought this would be a great opportunity to engage with our council members. We know what fields are necessary; however, our patients who complete these forms regularly would be able to provide a different perspective and insight as to how these forms could be more patient-friendly."

The council discussed making various changes to the packet's design, format, and content. We look forward to incorporating their valuable feedback into upcoming revisions.

We seek council members; this includes any patients, family members, or caregivers. If you are interested in joining the Patient Family Advisory Council, please contact **Brittany Kaliscik, Director of Patient Experience**, at [BKaliscik@nycancer.com](mailto:BKaliscik@nycancer.com).

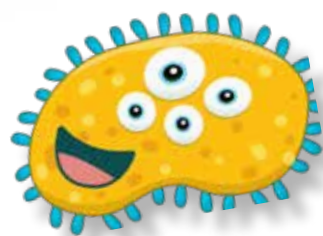






# The Flu

how to stay safe and active this fall season



As the leaves change color and the cold weather rolls in, so does flu season. Preventing the flu, not only for yourself but those around you, is essential during the winter months. The flu, or influenza, is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu attacks your respiratory system making you feel sluggish and achy. Some other flu symptoms include fever, chills, headache, cough, runny nose, and a sore throat. These symptoms may seem familiar to you, and that is because they are also symptoms commonly associated with Covid-19. Telling the difference between the two is a difficult task, and because of this, we recommend getting tested by a doctor if you exhibit symptoms during this flu season.

When the holidays begin, we spend more and more time with friends and family. Whether sitting around the TV watching Sunday night football or preparing a Thanksgiving meal, keeping those around you as safe as possible is important. Preventing the flu can be as easy as washing your hands more frequently. But other easy ways to prevent the flu are avoiding close contact, avoiding people who may be sick, and avoiding other people if you become sick. If you cough or sneeze, it is important to cover your nose and mouth, so your germs do not spread.

When it comes to keeping your home clean, it is important to disinfect surfaces frequently, especially if you or someone you know is sick.

Staying active during flu season is also important to prevent the flu. With cold weather and warm drinks, most people would rather curl up on the couch instead of running the annual turkey trot. But keeping active during the winter helps your immune system fight away the flu. This is because exercise boosts your immune system, which helps keep the flu at bay, and away from destroying your holiday plans. Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to give yourself added protection. We recommend discussing the flu vaccine with your primary care doctor to see if it is the right decision for you. We administer the flu vaccine at all of our New York Health locations.

**To make an appointment, call (631) 758-7003.**



# Lung Cancer Prevention:

## The Importance of Lung Screenings

Lung cancer found at early stages is easier to treat and may be curable. Lung screenings are important because early detection improves outcomes and saves lives. Our lung specialists encourage patients at high risk for lung cancer to participate in our Lung Cancer Screening Program.

Our specialists provide innovative treatments and individualized care for patients with all types of cancers that affect the lungs, including non-small cell lung cancer, small cell lung cancer, and mesothelioma.

Before receiving a lung screening, your doctor will determine if you meet the high-risk criteria determined by your age, smoking history, and additional risk factors. For example, you have a higher chance of developing lung cancer if you are, or ever have been, a smoker or have been exposed to secondhand smoke.

We proudly offer a comprehensive lung cancer screening program that provides low-dose lung CT screening to current and former smokers at high risk of developing lung cancer. Through this program, we provide low-dose CT screening for patients between the ages of 50 and 80 who currently smoke or quit smoking within the past 15 years. Through this program, we also offer navigation and support for any future follow-up or referral needs pertaining to your results.

It is especially important to receive these screenings if you were, or are, a smoker because, in most cases, people don't experience the symptoms of lung cancer until the disease is already at an advanced stage. Low-dose CT scans help detect abnormal lung areas that may be cancerous.

Your doctor will discuss your next steps, regardless of the results. If you feel you may be high-risk or want to consult your lung screening options with a physician, you can schedule an appointment on our website or by calling our office. Nurse Wellness Navigator **Jessica Schaffer, RN, is also available to assist you with the screening process. You may contact her at (631) 675-5213.**



# National Hospice & Palliative Care Awareness Month!

By MaryAnn Fragola, DNP, ANPC, ACHPN

While we try to have gratitude all throughout the year, there is something about November that brings more awareness about having more gratefulness. November celebrates National Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month!

Palliative care focuses on the alleviation of suffering by improving a patient's quality of life. It is not giving up or giving in; instead, it goes along with disease-modifying treatments throughout the course of their illness.

This year's theme is "It's About How You Live." The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization states that Hospice is not a place but high-quality care that enables patients and families to focus on living as fully as possible despite a life-limiting illness. Palliative care brings this holistic model of care to people earlier in the course of a serious illness. Hospice and palliative care programs provide pain management, symptom control, psychosocial support, and spiritual care to patients and their families. These programs combine the highest level of quality medical care with the emotional and spiritual support that families need most when facing a severe illness or nearing the end of life.

When we think of severe illnesses such as cancer, we tend to witness patients begin to have grim thoughts, thoughts of mortality, and end of life. While having end-of-life and advanced care planning discussions is essential, focusing on living with a chronic, serious illness is also important.

The Palliative team seeks to help you live as well as possible for as long as possible. Palliative care is not about dying but, rather, about living. You do not need to choose between quality or quantity of life. Palliative care helps you have both. Much of our focus is on learning the values and goals patients hold dear. In doing so, we can tailor the treatment plan to what is important to them, allowing them "live" how they want to live. When you often take the focus off the disease and change the mindset to living as normal as possible, a sense of empowerment is delivered. Research has shown that if a person with a cancer diagnosis discusses their options for care with their providers early on, the level of stress decreases, and their ability to cope with their illness increases.

As part of National Palliative Care Month, I am humbled to acknowledge the acceptance of the Palliative and Supportive Care Program as an extra layer of support for our patients here at NYCBS. For this month of thankfulness, I want to express how truly appreciative I am for all of your support! November is our time to celebrate hospice and palliative care workers who serve our nation, and it is the perfect time to learn more about what both palliative and hospice care can offer.



# Breast Cancer Monthly Group

Have you heard about NYCBS's new breast cancer monthly group? Our first meeting was held on Wednesday, October 12th, and subsequent sessions will continue on the second Wednesday of each month from 6:00-7:00 pm in our Lake Success site.

This group is unique because three members of our multidisciplinary team facilitate it: Wendy Kaplan, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist; Dr. Janaya Raynor, Palliative Care; and Dr. Yelda Nouri, medical oncologist. Our facilitators talk and get together regularly to identify how best to serve the unique needs of breast cancer survivors. Each one brings their expertise and perspective to the table.

This collaborative endeavor includes nutrition education, medical information, and social support. The group design was developed based on the needs and wants of this population. They provide plenty of resources to empower patients with knowledge and know-how to help navigate a new normal.

The group offers a safe space to discuss various issues to help you overcome the fears and concerns you face after a cancer diagnosis. In an informal setting, we share tips and ideas about specific topics and discuss emotions that stem from treatment and recovery. You will have the opportunity to share experiences, listen to others, and share a sense of connectedness that is essential to overall well-being.

Our first group focused on the importance of hope in survivorship, where to find hope during difficult times, and how to circumnavigate the negativity surrounding us.

Your mind and body deserve to be nourished, and we are strongly committed to helping meet your needs. This non-threatening environment provides a great start to discuss nutrition, self-care, and other concerns while enhancing social interaction and building support within the community.

Please contact **Wendy Kaplan, RDN**, to express your interest by email at [nutrition@nycancer.com](mailto:nutrition@nycancer.com) or call **631-675-5063** to reserve a spot. The Lake Success office is accessible from many locations, and our meetings are sure to be worth the once-a-month commitment!

**We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you into the group.**

## Galleri Early Cancer Detection

**By Harry Staszewski, MD, FACP**

*Medical Oncology & Hematology  
Chief Medical Officer at NYCBS*



Among the many challenges associated with aging, an increased incidence of cancer is common. This is because our cells can become damaged over time as we age. Often this damage can be repaired by our body, but sometimes it builds up and can cause cells to grow and multiply, leading to cancer.

Older individuals need to continue recommended cancer screenings. Regular screenings can improve outcomes by detecting cancers in more treatable stages before they have a chance to spread. Unfortunately, few cancers have tests that can do so, except for a few in places such as the breasts, colon, cervix, prostate, and lungs. But, thanks to the Galleri test, there's a game-changing technique to catch more than 50 kinds of cancer in one simple blood test.

At New York Cancer & Blood Specialists (NYCBS), this prescription-only blood test is offered to adults with an elevated risk for cancer by age, family history, lifestyle, or exposure to known carcinogens. The Galleri test is intended to be used in addition to, and not replace, other cancer screening tests. The Galleri test finds DNA that tumor cells release into the bloodstream as they die and replicate. It spots markers on DNA shed by tumor cells and feeds that data into a machine-learning algorithm to detect whether cancer is present and in which organ.

"A positive test will guide the patient and physician towards further directed testing that helps diagnose an otherwise occult early cancer and enables earlier treatment that may be lifesaving," said Dr. Harry Staszewski, Chief Medical Officer of NYCBS. "This test complements standard screening tests and is not recommended for patients with symptoms or the common warning signs of cancer. Instead, those persons need to see their doctor immediately."

With cutting-edge treatments, clinical trials, and additional scientific advancements in cancer care to treat every type of cancer, NYCBS can provide world-class, patient-centered affordable care to patients with cancer and blood disorders in their communities, close to family and friends. **For more information on Galleri or to make an appointment, call NYCBS at 631-751-3000 or visit [nycancer.com](http://nycancer.com).**



# Is **CLINICAL RESEARCH** right for me?

Clinical research is medical research that involves **people**.



It's led to the **DISCOVERY** of every disease treatment prescribed today.

**Study volunteers** play a critical role in this process.

Are you interested in joining a study or trial?

**CLINICAL RESEARCH** may be right for you if you want to:

# WHY DO RESEARCHERS DO DIFFERENT KINDS OF CLINICAL STUDIES?



Clinical research is the study of health and illness in people.

Scientists may have many reasons for doing a clinical study, such as:

- To explore the cause of a disease or a set of symptoms
- To test if a treatment will help with a symptom or condition
- To learn how a certain behavior affects people's health

Different types of clinical studies are used in different circumstances. Depending on what is known and what isn't, scientists may even study the same research question using different kinds of studies and in different groups of people. Here are different types of clinical studies and why they might be used.

## Observational Studies

In many studies, researchers do not do experiments or test new treatments; they observe. Observational studies help researchers understand a situation and come up with hypotheses that can be put to the test in clinical trials. Observational studies can find associations between things but can't prove that one thing causes another. Types include:

- Case Study/Case Series**  
A detailed description of one or more patients. By documenting new and unusual cases, researchers start to generate hypotheses about causes or risk factors.
- Ecological Study**  
Compares the rate of a disease or condition for groups of people, such as towns in different climates or with different average incomes.
- Cross-Sectional Study**  
A snapshot of many people at one moment in time. These studies can show how common a condition is and help identify factors associated with it.
- Case-Control Study**  
A group of people who have a condition is compared to a control group of people who don't. Possible causes or risk factors can emerge.
- Cohort Study**  
A large group of people is observed over time. Some eventually develop a disease or condition. Researchers can learn how often the condition occurs and find possible causes or risk factors.

## Clinical Trials

In these studies, researchers test new ways to prevent, detect, or treat disease. Treatments might be new drugs or combinations of drugs, new surgical procedures or devices, or new ways to use existing treatments. Clinical trials can also test other aspects of care, such as ways to improve the quality of life for people with chronic illnesses.



A well-designed clinical trial is the gold standard for proving that a treatment or medical approach works, but clinical trials can't always be used. For example, scientists can't randomly assign people to live in different places, or ask people to start smoking or eating an unhealthy diet. Clinical trials are conducted in phases:

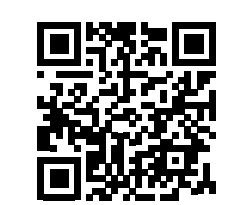
- Phase I**  
• Purpose: Find out whether a medical approach (e.g., drug, diagnostic test, device) is safe, identify side effects, and figure out appropriate doses.  
• Number of people: Typically fewer than 100
- Phase II**  
• Purpose: Start testing whether a medical approach works. Continue monitoring for side effects; get information that goes into designing a large, phase III trial.  
• Number of people: Typically 100-300
- Phase III**  
• Purpose: Prove whether a medical approach works; continue monitoring side effects.  
• Number of people: As many as needed or able to enroll—can be 1,000 or more
- Phase IV**  
• Purpose: When a medical approach is being marketed, continue gathering information on its effects.  
• Number of people: Thousands

How good are these kinds of studies at showing cause and effect?

The strength of a study depends on its size and design. New results may confirm earlier findings, contradict them, or add new aspects to scientists' understanding. In the end, cause and effect are usually hard to establish without a well-designed clinical trial.



SCAN TO SEE NYCBS CLINICAL TRIALS



## What can I do to help?

You've begun! Learning about what results mean will help you make good choices with your health care provider.

You could also consider volunteering either as a healthy volunteer or as a participant who has a particular disease or condition.

For more information about clinical trials: [ClinicalResearchTrials.nih.gov](http://ClinicalResearchTrials.nih.gov)

[CRAY@mail.nih.gov](mailto:CRAY@mail.nih.gov)



Produced by the National Institutes of Health, the largest source of public funding for medical research in the world. NIH's mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.



# Understanding Diabetes:

## Type 1 vs. Type 2 & Their Symptoms

*November is American Diabetes Month. This month, educating yourself on diabetes and how it affects us and the people around us is important.*

### What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic health condition that affects how your body turns food into energy. Normally your body takes the food you eat, breaks it down into sugar (glucose), and releases it into your bloodstream. This increases your blood sugar, and in turn, your pancreas releases insulin, which in turn works with glucose to conduct various processes in your body. With diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it as well as it should.

### Type 1:

Type 1 diabetes is when the pancreas makes little or no insulin. Type 1 diabetes usually starts when you're a child, teen, or young adult but can happen at any age. Type 1 diabetes symptoms can develop in a few weeks or months and can be quite severe.

Many people experience extreme thirst, frequent urination, excessive hunger, sudden weight loss, irritability, mood changes, fatigue, and blurred vision.

### Type 2:

Type 2 diabetes is when your body struggles to regulate and use sugar as a fuel for energy, which results in too much sugar circulating into your bloodstream. Insulin plays an important part here as well. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed with healthy lifestyle changes. These lifestyle changes include losing weight, eating healthy, and being active.

People with type 2 diabetes may experience similar symptoms as type 1, as well as slow-healing sores, frequent infections, numbness or tingling in the hands or feet, and areas of darkened skin, usually in the armpits and neck.

### Gestational Diabetes

Another form of diabetes is gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes is when diabetes is diagnosed for the first time during pregnancy. Gestational diabetes is so important to be aware of during pregnancy because of how much it can affect you and your baby's health.

Whether you are affected by type 1 or type 2 diabetes, or if this is your first time learning about diabetes, it is important to understand how diabetes affects someone's body. At New York Health, we encourage everyone to have a diabetes screening once a year when they see their doctor for an annual physical. The screening consists of a complete examination and screens for complications of diabetes, like early peripheral neuropathy. It also checks a hemoglobin A1c level, which helps your provider understand what your blood sugar averages have been over the prior three months.





# Patient Community Meeting

*Coming Together to Inspire, Share, Learn & Support Throughout Your Cancer Journey*



## Where:

NYCBS  
49 Nesconset Hwy,  
Port Jefferson Station,  
Waiting Room

## When:

Wednesday  
November 16th @ 6PM

## \*Learn about Enrolling in Medicare\*

Learn about enrolling in Medicare, Medigap and Medicare Drug Plans. Find out how and when to enroll and learn the risks and benefits you should know about your coverage. Get information on what you should know about the plans that are being offered and what costs you will pay out of Pocket.

## Special Guest:



**Patricia D'Andraia**

Senior Director of  
Credentialing Services

**Light Refreshments Served**

As Always Caregivers Are Welcome!

# NYCF + Unique Fitness

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Unique Fitness organized three fitness classes, Kickboxing, Zumba, and Spin, to support the New York Cancer Foundation (NYCF).

These events were truly special and made possible by a breast cancer patient named Renae. Renae teaches fitness classes and directs the group fitness program at Unique Health & Fitness. Earlier this year, she discovered a lump on her breast and came to New York Cancer & Blood Specialists! In her effort to give back, she provided us with the ability to offer these wonderful programs, all in support of the NYCF.

All proceeds will help relieve the financial stresses experienced by patients under care for cancer.









# Understanding Prediabetes

By Michelle Slowey, MS, RDN, CDCES, CDN



**Many people who have prediabetes are unaware of it. Risk factors include a sedentary lifestyle, being 40 years or older, being overweight or obese, having a strong family history of diabetes, and if a woman has a polycystic ovarian disease or has had gestational diabetes. Elevated blood pressure and triglycerides above 250 mg/dL with a low HDL (good cholesterol) can also contribute to developing pre-diabetes.**

The American Diabetes Association defines prediabetes as impaired fasting glucose (IFG) and/or impaired glucose tolerance (IGT). IFG is a fasting blood glucose of 100 mg/dL to 125 mg/dL, and IGT is a glucose level from 140 mg/dL to 199 mg/dL two hours after consuming a glucose-rich drink. In addition, hemoglobin A1C levels of 5.7% to 6.4% identify individuals with prediabetes.

Prediabetes is associated with abdominal obesity. This visceral fat is the fat that wraps around your organs inside the abdomen. Being overweight or obese (body mass index of 30 or above) contributes to prediabetes. Visceral fat increases inflammation in the body, which can interfere with normal hormonal functions such as hunger levels, weight, and brain function. Excess sugar intake is associated with inflammation which can cause a build-up of fat in the liver and make it difficult to manage blood glucose levels. When the body's cells don't respond well to the hormone insulin, glucose cannot enter the cells easily, so it builds up in the blood, which is called Insulin resistance.

If you are overweight, losing 5 – 7% of your weight through a healthy diet plan, such as the Mediterranean diet and moderate-intensity physical activity of at least 150 minutes per week, can help your insulin work better and lower your blood sugar. Brisk walking, biking, and swimming are a few examples of recommended aerobic activities.

The Mediterranean diet may help manage prediabetes and prevent the development of diabetes. An unprocessed high-fiber diet, rich in whole grains (with a goal of 25 grams of fiber per day) and heart-healthy fats like nuts, seeds, and avocados, is recommended. Limit refined, highly processed carbohydrates such as white rice, sugary cereals, cookies, candy, and soda. The Mediterranean diet also emphasizes lean protein sources such as fatty fish, i.e., salmon, skinless poultry, soy, beans, and nut butter.

Following these diet and exercise guidelines can lower your risk of developing prediabetes and type 2 diabetes.

**Prediabetes is associated with abdominal obesity.**





# Nutrition Management for Pancreatic Cancer

By Wendy Kaplan, MS, RDN, CSO, CDCES, CDN



## November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is essential for most cancer patients, but even more so for patients with high-risk cancers, such as pancreatic cancer. Maintaining your weight as much as possible can help improve nutritional status, physical functioning, help maintain muscle mass, and enhance the overall quality of life. Therefore, MNT should be incorporated as early as possible to optimize nutritional status.

The most common type of pancreatic cancer is adenocarcinoma—a cancer of the exocrine cells that can lead to pancreatic exocrine insufficiency. The pancreas produces enzymes that help break down the food we eat and therefore plays a major role in digestion, absorption, and overall nutritional status. When you don't absorb enough calories and nutrients, you lose weight, increasing the potential for malnutrition.

Most patients with pancreatic cancer lack the enzyme lipase, which is essential for the digestion of fat. As a result, patients may experience the following symptoms: cramping, foul-smelling gas and stools, frequent stools, floating stools, diarrhea, light or yellow-colored stools, and unexplained weight loss. Since these symptoms can show up before, during, and after treatment, it is very important for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist to continually monitor for these symptoms and address them as soon as possible, along with the interdisciplinary team.

In addition to experiencing fat malabsorption, patients also experience other NIS (nutrition impact symptoms) due to surgery, systemic treatment agents, and radiotherapy. Common symptoms include poor appetite, early satiety, nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, excessive gas, and diabetes.

There are other contributors to diarrhea beyond enzyme issues. For example, some patients develop new-onset lactose intolerance or *C. diff* (also known as *Clostridium difficile* or *C. difficile*) due to bacterial growth in a part of the intestine. Others may present with dumping syndrome (rapid gastric emptying) from Whipple surgery.

Communication is key. Registered Dietitian Nutritionists should always be aware of medications, and other possible contributing factors to symptoms patients are experiencing. For example, if a patient is on narcotics to control pain, this can lead to constipation which may mask diarrhea. I have noticed bowel habits and symptoms changes when coming on/off narcotic medication. Equally as important is for the patient to report any new symptoms and changes in symptoms.

Working with an oncology RDN throughout treatment and survivorship is imperative to help mitigate any nutrition implications of the disease. In addition to symptom management, Registered Dietitian Nutritionists actively help patients get situated with pancreatic enzymes concerning dosing and timing. Most importantly, MNT can help improve treatment outcomes and empower patients to play a role in their care.





# Healthy Eating For Lung Cancer Prevention

By Adeeba Peerzade, BS, RDN, CDN



**Lung cancer is one of the most common cancer forms worldwide and ranks as a top cause of cancer death. Cigarette smoking is the primary risk factor for lung cancer. It is responsible for approximately 80% to 90% of lung cancer deaths, but other factors, including advanced age, family history, air pollution, and radon and asbestos exposure, also increase the risk.**

Not all lung cancers can be prevented. But you can do things that might lower your risk, such as changing the risk factors you can control. The best way is not to smoke and to avoid breathing in secondhand smoke.

Exercising and eating a healthy, balanced diet also helps reduce cancer risk. When you stay fit and active, it's easier to maintain a healthy weight, which is important in preventing chronic diseases like cancer. A healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables may also help reduce your risk of lung cancer. Some evidence suggests that a diet high in fruits and vegetables may serve as another layer of protection for smokers and non-smokers. Some studies have shown that the risk of developing lung cancer may increase with consuming certain foods, such as processed meat, red meat, and alcohol. Replacing red meat and other foods high in saturated fat with unsaturated fat sources like olive oil, nuts, and avocados may also help lower lung cancer risk, especially in people who smoke. Vitamin D has received much attention recently, and a diet high in vitamin D may also benefit people with lung cancer. Vitamin D, found in fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, and herring, appears to have other health benefits. However, a deficiency in vitamin D can lead to many medical problems. Research has shown that glucosinolates and other compounds in cruciferous vegetables like broccoli help counter the effects of environmental carcinogens and can potentially reduce the risk of developing lung cancer. Among smokers with the highest risk of lung cancer, cruciferous vegetables may decrease the likelihood of lung cancer by 32% to 55%, depending on the amount regularly consumed.

Ideally, one should try to eat a reasonable amount of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, which are rich in antioxidants like berries, dark-green vegetables, oats, and fish. Choose a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables to get the greatest benefit. Eat a minimum of five servings of whole fruits and vegetables daily. In conclusion, for lung cancer prevention, one should aim for high intakes of vegetables, fruits, lean meats, and fish while decreasing the intake of red meat and processed meat which might increase its risk.





# 4th Annual Raising Hope Golf Classic

The 4th Annual Raising Hope Golf Classic at the Nissequogue Golf Club was a success! Thank you to our sponsors, volunteers, and guests for your support in this event!





## Social Work Update

Social Worker, Alyza Conway, passed her clinical exam and is now a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

## Feel Good Moment

**Diane Kearns distributed wonderful blankets made by Deborah McKee, Sarina Martin, Marni Wolin, and John Haffner-Henriques, along with goodie bags to our patients.**



## IT Update

### Congratulations on becoming A+ Certified!

CompTIA A+ certified professionals are proven problem-solvers. They support today's core technologies, from security to networking to virtualization and more. CompTIA A+ is the industry standard for launching IT careers into today's digital world. CompTIA A+ is the only industry-recognized credential with performance testing to prove pros can think on their feet to perform critical IT support tasks. It is trusted by employers around the world to identify the go-to person in end-point management and technical support roles. CompTIA A+ appears in more tech support job listings than any other IT credential. Unlike other certifications, many of which only require covering one domain, CompTIA A+ covers a broader diversity of knowledge required of technicians today, making A+ relevant to many more job roles.

**Alec Staszewski**  
Interface Manager

**Amadeusz Lipinski**  
IT Technician

**Mike Gangitano**  
Senior IT Technician

**Fall is in the air, and Thanksgiving will be here before we know it. A time to be thankful for family, friends...and password managers.**

- Recent studies have shown that the average person could have up to 100 passwords
- Most of those passwords are reused, and we already know we should never reuse passwords.
- So, how do we remember all these different logins?
- A good password manager such as Dashlane can make it easy to create and store secure passwords allowing you to only remember one master password to access them.
- The Dashlane service has free and paid versions depending on the services you are looking for, making it an inexpensive, convenient, and secure way to log in.

# Breast Cancer SUMMIT

On Wednesday, October 12th, the Long Island Plastic Surgical Group held its 10th Annual Breast Cancer Summit at The Royalton Mansion in Roslyn Heights. Medical leaders, survivors, and community members gathered to share information about breast cancer. There was an incredible lineup of speakers, including our Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Wendy Kaplan, newscaster, best-selling author, and breast cancer survivor Amy Robach.

Wendy presented *Surviving Cancer: Empowering Cancer Patients With Healthy Diet & Lifestyle*. She discussed the American Cancer Society's latest Nutrition & Physical Activity Guidelines for Cancer Survivors. She spoke from her heart of how healthcare practitioners have the "Power To Empower" survivors with knowledge, motivation, and resources to help them take steps toward making positive health changes. The day was filled with knowledgeable and inspiring medical leaders, survivors, and community members who came together to share information, offer insightful discussions, and provide support where it's needed most.





# What I'm Most Grateful For

*During the holidays, it's important to reflect on what is truly important. Whether it's friends, family, or wholesome Thanksgiving turkey, our patients and staff shared. See what they said!*

I am thankful I am able to be a mother and also grateful for the wonderful friends I have made in forest hills with NYCBS.

To be able to wake up everyday and provide for my family as much as I can.

I am most thankful for my loving family, my good health, and my ability to be able to care for my patients in way that brings peace, joy and reassurance to their lives during a difficult time.

For my two sweet little girls, this new home we live in, and my recent marriage to the most amazing man in this world to me.

For being able to provide the best patient care that we can offer as well as my family.

The social work team! I love everyone I work with and am proud of the work we do.

My family and for the blessing of enjoying good health.

How welcoming and nice everyone is. NYCBS is truly one big family.

I am thankful for NYCBS. My grandma was a PT and that is how I came across the job opportunity and found what I love. Thank you for my team and everyone being so welcoming! I have loved every second of this year that I spent with this company.

I am most thankful for my coworkers especially the IT department. Every time something doesn't work, there is always someone to fixity fix my problems.

For being able to help patient's and make them smile.

For my Family, Friends, Health & Happiness.

I always start my day with a little gratitude as soon as i open my eyes. But lately, I have been very grateful for my family who is constantly reminding me to stay on top of my health, be a good father, and that Rome wasn't built in a day. Despite how far apart we are, we make a point of calling/speaking every week. It makes me realize how lucky I truly am.

I am thankful for my amazing and supportive family and friends.

For having the privilege to complete my Master's in Health Administration while being a part of a health organization that supports my academic schedule. Amidst all the chaos going on around the world, it's important to appreciate all the opportunities you have that not many people are offered.

I am thankful for my job, my parents, and the friends I have made while working at NYCBS.

My loved ones, my dog, my work family and the super heroes we know as patient's that I get the pleasure of caring for each day.

For a great family and loyal friends who are always supportive and patient with me.

I am thankful for my mom and sisters. I am thankful to be able to live in a nice apartment with my boyfriend. I do not know what I would do without these people in my life. I thank them for everything they have done for me.

I am thankful for my health, my family and my job.

My family, my puppy and God.

My beautiful family, friends and health.

I'm thankful for my son and my family. I'm thankful for my job and the opportunities it offers.

My Husband, My Dog, My Family, My Friends, Good Health, and Good Food.

For my Childern, family and health "

Ivanna Novoa. She is the best friend I ever had and the best coworker. She is amazing at regulating regulatory. And she gets tacos with me.

For my whole family mom, dad, husband and kids.

For my family that has helped mold me into the determined, thoughtful, and caring person I am today. I am also thankful for being able to work within a company where we can make future changes for patients with cancer and at the same time build a family within our department that helps make coming to work a pleasant experience. Lastly a big shout out to my desk neighbor, Griffin Sigal, who brings laughter and joy everyday at work ( you will make a great doctor one day.

I am thankful for my amazing work family; both co-workers and patients who make the sun shine a little bit brighter.



# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

## LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES (LPN'S)

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## TRIAGE REGISTERED NURSE (HYBRID)

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[pkazemier@nycancer.com](mailto:pkazemier@nycancer.com)

## LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER -QUEENS/BRONX

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[Dyoungs@nycancer.com](mailto:Dyoungs@nycancer.com)

## REGISTERED NURSE

Smithtown Medical Oncology,  
Ronkonkoma Medical Oncology

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## RADIOLOGIST

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[rnicoletti@nycancer.com](mailto:rnicoletti@nycancer.com)

## CHEMOTHERAPY PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

Forest Hills Medical Oncology,  
The Brooklyn Cancer Center

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## FRONT DESK SUPERVISOR- BRONX

Eastchester Breast Center  
Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## MEDICAL FRONT DESK RECEPTIONIST

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## STAFF HEMATOLOGIST/MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST

Needed Brooklyn, NY at Brooklyn Hospital Location

Contact: Eric Jackson  
[eric.jackson@oneoncology.com](mailto:eric.jackson@oneoncology.com)

## HEMATOLOGIST/ONCOLOGISTS

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[eric.jackson@oneoncology.com](mailto:eric.jackson@oneoncology.com)

## NURSE PRACTITIONER (NP) / PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA)

Central Park Medical Oncology,  
Bayside Medical Oncology

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[apprecruitment@nycancer.com](mailto:apprecruitment@nycancer.com)

## POST DOC PSYCHOLOGIST

Smithtown Medical Oncology, Elmhurst, Queens, Bay  
Shore Medical Oncology

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[jschomber@nycancer.com](mailto:jschomber@nycancer.com)

## INFUSION LPN

Ronkonkoma Medical Oncology  
Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

# NEW HIRES

Aaron Farrell (Lab Technologist)  
Alexandra Marsella (Radiation Oncology Supervisor)  
Amena Islam (Clinical Support Runner)  
Andrea Steger (People Operations Manager)  
Arielle Radice (MA)  
Brenda Gebhart (Patient Communications Operator)  
Cassandra Oberhausen-Peskowitz (RN)  
Chaniqua Woodward (Receptionist)  
Christopher Herrmann (MRI Tech)  
Cinthia Torres (MA)  
Cynthia Ramos (MA)  
Diane Marino (Insurance Collector)  
Damaris Velazquez (Lab MA)  
Dariya Bobko (NP)  
Dorothy Halkas (Scanning Coordinator)  
Diana Molina (Research Coordinator, RN)  
Dominique Pimentel (Care Coordination LPN)  
Elizabeth Devico (Patient Communications Operator)  
Erica Shea (Scribe)  
Francis Ging (Lab Inventory associate)  
Giselle Leon (Intake LPN)  
Hassana Lawal (Receptionist)  
Hoi Cheung Danny Zhang (MRI Tech)  
Huiyang Zhang (Office Manager)  
Iris Tamaiev (Ultrasound Tech)  
Jake Polosino (RN)  
Jasmine Delva (Front Desk Supervisor)  
Jessica Lombardi (PA)  
Johan Joachim (IT Technician)  
Joseph Laniohan (Radiology Coordinator)  
Joseph Pirrotta (Operator)  
Julia Cohen (Intake LPN)  
Julianna Sorto (MA)  
Katherine Diaz (Intake LPN)  
Katherine Santiago (Front Desk Supervisor)  
Kayla Hasty (MA)  
Katia Mercier (LPN)  
Kayla King (Mammography Tech)  
Kayla Opal Johnson (LCSW)  
Kelli Proscia (RN)  
Kira Holtegaard (Medical Records Associate)

Kyle Drespel (Operator)  
Lamin Saidykhan (LPN)  
Lauren Barnes (NP)  
Leighann Benn (Receptionist)  
Leigh Quinn (Patient Communications Operator)  
Lesly Penafiel (Pharmacy Tech)  
Liliana Marcelli (RN)  
Lillian Ramos (Executive Assistant)  
Louis Monaco (Receptionist)  
Loretta Dejacquant (Billing Assistant)  
Lori Thoericht (RN)  
Lyndsay Emery (CCM LPN)  
Madison McGuire (Medical Records Associate)  
Madiliz Lopenz (RN)  
Margaret San Miguel (Lab MA)  
Mariah Papik (MA)  
Marisa Ciano (MA)  
Mayra Cabrera (Operator)  
Melissa Ann Martire (LPN)  
Michael Messina (MRI Supervisor)  
Nicole Maldonado (LPN)  
Nora DiRaimondo (NP)  
Olivia Quattrini (Lab MA)  
Rachelle Noel Jean (LPN)  
Robert Kaminski (MRI Tech)  
Rupinder Kaur (Mamm Tech)  
Samantha Cozzone (MA)  
Samantha Hill (Receptionist)  
Sophonie Joseph (Lab MA)  
Suja Gopalakrishna (MA)  
Timothy Murphy (LPN)  
Umma Islam (Receptionist)  
Taylor Sammis (RN)  
Thomas De Santis (New Patient Coordinator)  
TiAmber Johnson (Surgical Coordinator)  
Tosha Kharga (LPN)  
Trevor C.S.Burt (Receptionist)  
Tykerah Middleton (Lab Assistant)  
Victoria Cruz (Receptionist)  
Yuri Shin (RN)





# OUR PATIENTS & THEIR FAMILIES

Our patients and their families tell the story of conquering cancer like no other. They help us connect, inspire, and empower. If you know a patient or have a family member who would like to make an impact and share their experience with us, please have them contact [marketing@nycancer.com](mailto:marketing@nycancer.com).