

Caring Connections is a cooperative health program of the Bangor Y and Eastern Maine Medical Center, and is supported by the fund-raising activities of Healthcare Charities.

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Bangor Y Spring Fair, 2011

Finally! Spring is coming! And we hope you will come celebrate at the annual Bangor Y Spring Fair, March 25th to 27th, 2011. In addition to the rides and fair food especially offered for families in the community, the Spring fair is a major fund raiser for Caring Connections.

This year there will be some of the familiar aspects of the Caring Connections area of the fair, as well as some new features. Visit us in the Bangor Auditorium Lobby and see our exciting offerings:

Gently Used Book Sale. A large assortment of books for adults and children. **A Silent Auction.** Fabulous offerings! Restaurant certificates to handcrafted jewelry to fabulous cheesecake to beautiful art. Something for everyone. **Quilt Raffle.** Buy tickets for a chance to win the beautiful Queen sized quilt

Got Books?

We need them! For the Bangor Y - Spring Fair ,March 25th – March 27th, 2011 Book Sale.

PLEASE Only books in very good and excellent condition; also NO text books, instruction manuals, magazines or encyclopedias.

Also accepting DVDs, CD's & audio books for all ages.

Call Caring Connections at the Bangor Y at 941-2808, or e-mail us at care-conn@bangory.org to make arrangements for drop off or pick up.

pictured at right. Also, purchase a ticket for the opportunity to come the closest to guessing the number of jelly beans in a jar and **win your choice of a week of residential camp at the Y's Camp Jordan or a one year adult membership to the Bangor Y.**

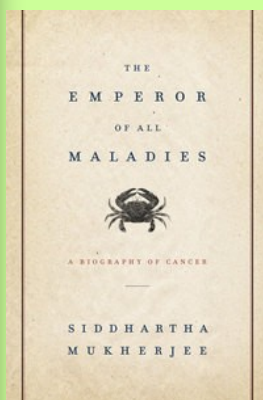
If you are interested in volunteering to help staff the Caring Connections offerings at the Fair, call Robin Long at 941-2808 X 338.

Come and join in the fun!



A small section of the quilt being raffled at the Bangor y Spring Fair for the benefit of Caring Connections.





Book Review

The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer

By Siddhartha Mukherjee
Hardcover, 592 pages
Scribner
List price: \$30.00

Oncologist Siddhartha Mukherjee was treating one of his patients, a woman with advanced abdominal cancer who had relapsed multiple times, when she asked him what seemed like a simple question. "She said, 'I'm willing to go on, but before I go on, I need to know what it is I'm battling.' "

But, as Mukherjee explains, describing his patient's illness wasn't so simple. Defining cancer, he says, is something doctors and scientists have been struggling to do since the disease's first documented appearance thousands of years ago.

"Cancer is not just a dividing cell," he says. "It's a complex disease: It invades, it metastasizes, it evades the immune system. So there are many, many other stages of [defining] cancer which are still in their infancy."

Mukherjee's new book, *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer*, grew out of his desire to better understand the disease he treats, through examining the way cancer has been described and treated throughout history. He chronicles the ways therapies evolved, particularly in the 20th century, as more treatment options became available and scientists worked to understand the underlying genetic mutations that caused the disease.

"If there's [one influential] discovery in oncology in the last 20 years, it's that idea that cancer genes are often mutated versions of normal genes," he says. "And the arrival of that moment really sent a chill down the spine of cancer biologists. Because here we were hoping that cancer would turn out to be some kind of [external] event — a virus or something that could then be removed from our environment and our bodies and we could be rid of it — but [it turns out] that cancer genes are sitting inside of each and every one of our chromosomes, waiting to be

corrupted or activated."

As the genetic understanding of cancer evolves, Mukherjee says, oncologists will be able to integrate that knowledge to develop more targeted treatment options — particularly as they find commonalities between different types of cancer.

"A breast cancer might turn out to have a close resemblance to a gastric cancer," he says. "And this kind of reorganization of cancer in terms of its internal genetic anatomy has really changed the way we treat and approach cancer in general."

Dr. Siddhartha Mukherjee is an assistant professor of medicine at Columbia University and a staff cancer oncologist at Columbia University Medical Center. His articles have been published in *Nature*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, and *The New York Times*.

A major purpose of this series is to empower people to know that **they** have the power to make decisions.



Taking Care of Life's Business:

Cancer Care of Maine will once again be offering the successful series "Taking Care of Life's Business". The series is intended to assist those with cancer and other chronic illnesses to take care of the business side of life.

The three sessions are as follows:

Wills and Estate Planning: Dotting the "i's" and crossing the "t's". Thursday, April 28th, 3:00 to 4:30 pm. The presenter will be Leigh McCarthy, Attorney, Rudman & Winchell, Bangor, Maine

Facing Financial Challenges: Making Good "Cents". Thursday, May 12, 3:00 to 5:00 pm. This panel presentation will include:

- David Mahoney, District Manager, Bangor, Social Security Administration
- Linda Gascoyne, Patient Services Representative, Cancer Care of Maine, and
- John Nale, Attorney, Nale & Nale, Waterville, Maine

Completing Advance Directives—Health Care Decisions: What

You Want and Who Should Know. Thursday, May 26, 3:00 to 4:30 pm. The presenter will be Jan Pilotte, FNP, Medical Oncology Nurse Practitioner, Cancer Care of Maine

All sessions will be held in the second floor Conference Room at Cancer Care of Maine -The Lafayette Cancer Center. CCOM is located off Interstate 395 on Whiting Hill Road in Brewer at the Brewer Professional Center. Call 973-8202 for more information.

The Benefits of Exercise During and after Cancer Treatment

The therapeutic properties of endurance and resistance exercise have been recognized since antiquity. In 1995, the American College of Sports Medicine, together with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published the first exercise guidelines to encourage increased exercise in Americans of all ages for health promotion and disease prevention. These guidelines were based on remarkable data from epidemiological studies showing that regular moderate-to-vigorous exercise reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease by one-third, whereas high levels of cardio-respiratory fitness may reduce these risks by up to 60 to 70 percent.

Unfortunately, investigation of the role of exercise following a diagnosis of cancer has received comparably less attention. In the past decade, however, examination of the role of exercise following a cancer diagnosis, a field researchers have termed "exercise oncology," is

becoming increasingly recognized as a legitimate and important field of research in cancer management.

A major point of interest in exercise-oncology research is establishing whether the benefits of exercise extend beyond symptom control to improving longevity in cancer survivors. Several landmark observational studies have provided the first evidence that regular exercise (such as brisk walking for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week) is associated with 15 to 61 percent reductions in the risk of mortality following diagnosis of early-stage breast or colorectal cancer, relative to survivors who were inactive.

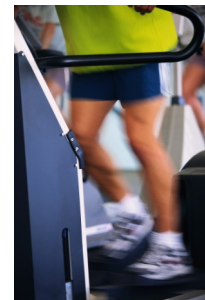
It is becoming increasingly evident that sedentary behavior and decreased exercise levels following a cancer diagnosis can increase treatment-related toxicities, whereas engaging in regular exercise can significantly reduce the incidence and extent of such toxicities. Current guidelines recommend that cancer

survivors participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise (such as brisk walking or light swimming) or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (such as jogging, running, or hard swimming) per week. However, this is considered the minimal amount of exercise required to derive health benefits. Increases in exercise beyond these levels are associated with greater health benefits.

The field of exercise oncology is rapidly evolving with many unanswered questions; nevertheless, the current evidence base provides a clear indication that exercise is an additional powerful weapon in the fight against, and recovery from, cancer.

NOTE! Speak with your doctor before beginning any exercise plan. Your doctor can help you decide what types of exercise will be beneficial for you.

Article adapted from Coping, January/February 2011



"Several ongoing trials are being conducted to identify the optimal type, intensity, duration, and frequency of exercise needed to mitigate treatment late effects in cancer survivors."

Recipe Corner

Vegetable Bean Soup

Use no-salt added tomatoes, beans and broth for a healthful alternative to high-sodium soups. Another healthful option: Omit the bacon and sauté the vegetable in 2 Tablespoons of olive oil.

3 slices bacon, chopped
1 onion, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
2 small carrots, diced
2 zucchini, diced
1 garlic clove, finely diced
1 (14 oz) can no-salt added chopped tomatoes, un-drained

2 (15 oz) can no-salt-added Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed

3 cups low-sodium chicken broth

Freshly ground black pepper

6 cups fresh spinach, chopped

½ C. grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese

Place bacon in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook 5 minute or until almost crisp. Add onion, celery and carrots; cook 5 minutes. Add zucchini and garlic; cook 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, beans, broth and pepper. Bring to a

boil, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in spinach.

Ladle into soup bowls and top with grated cheese. Makes 10 cups.

Serves 6

Nutritional facts per (1 2/3 cup) serving: 230 calories, 7 g. fat, 11 g. protein, 30 g carbohydrates, 10 g. fiber, 320 mg. sodium



Vegetable Bean Soup
Serves 6



“Soon after my surgery I joined the support group ... at the YWCA. Probably one of the smartest things I ever did for myself.”

Survivor Spotlight: Carmen Darkis

Robin Long, Assistant Director of Caring Connections interviews this month's Survivor in the Spotlight: Carmen Darkis

Tell me a little about yourself. Where are you from? What are your hobbies and interest?

I am 68 years old, born and raised in Westbrook, Maine. When I was 19 my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. It devastated me. After her radical mastectomy she had cobalt treatments. She died four years later at the age of 62. That was the first time that cancer changed my life.

In 1964 I moved from Maine as a military wife. We moved back to Maine after he was discharged and I have lived in the Bangor area since 1970. We divorced after seventeen years of marriage and I lived alone for 13 years until I met Ed. We were together for 16 years until he passed away in 2006 from cancer.

In my younger years I did a lot of knitting, needlework, sewing and quilting. I am on Facebook with family and friends. I enjoy dancing and most of all bowling. I bowl twice a week on and we have a great time. I also enjoy traveling.

When were you first diagnosed with Breast Cancer? On June 1st 1988 I had a mastectomy. My nodes were clean and I had no follow up treatments. Soon after my surgery I joined the support group at the YWCA. It was probably one of the smartest things I ever did for myself. The support group helped me cope and educated me about my cancer. It was a learning experience for me and I was no longer afraid to talk about breast cancer. It also helped me cope with life at my workplace.

Can you tell us about your course of treatment? In 1993 I was diagnosed with metastatic

breast cancer and went to Dana Farber for a second opinion. I had 32 radiation treatments. Two years later I took Tamoxifen 5 1/2 years, and then Femera for 5 years. I tried two other adjuvant therapies with no results. In March of 2008, I began eight months of treatment with Taxotere. This treatment was very effective but was very hard on my body, so I had a rest without treatments for about a year and a half. In July 2010 my next course of treatment was Xeloda. I take 1500 mg. orally every day for a week and the next week off. I have had good results with very few side effects. We came to this schedule after some manipulations of doses and timing to see what I would tolerate. I have had the same oncologist for 18 years. He knows me and my cancer quite well. We have a partnership that allows me to have a say about my course of treatment. How lucky can I be??!!

What is your source of strength going through treatment?

Sometimes I don't know. But once I know that there is another treatment available for me it helps me deal with my cancer. Not knowing is what stresses me out. I find strength deep within. I always have a positive attitude. I keep my life busy with things that I love to do and with people that I love to be with. For the last fourteen years I have been an active member of the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition (MBCC). When I was diagnosed with metastatic disease I had to do something to help people and to be an advocate for others with breast cancer. Instead of sitting back and talking about it I had to join in the crusade for a cure. I have been looking for a cure since I was 19 years old. I made three

trips to Washington D.C. to rally and lobby in support of finding a cure. Being on Capitol Hill advocating for myself and others gave me a positive feeling about myself. And what a learning experience!

What changes have you made in your life since diagnosis?

It has been almost 23 years since I was diagnosed so it might be a little hard for me to remember. I don't let the cancer live my life, I live my life because I love being alive. About 15 years ago I changed my diet by eating and cooking more fish, chicken, fruits, vegetables, low fat foods, foods high in antioxidants, omega 3's and high fiber with little processed food in my diet. Life is so short that we have to make the best of it!

Do you think more resources and information should be made available for women who are stage 4?

Early detection is very important. That is why I am still here today. It doesn't matter if you've never been diagnosed with breast cancer or you have stage 4. Never ignore a lump. I am very fortunate to have the treatments I have had be so effective and much may be attributed to it being caught early.

What do you want women who have stage IV breast cancer to know?

Because there are so many different kinds of breast cancer everyone is different. What is right for one woman might not be right for another. Communicate with your oncologist. Be your own advocate; if you can't, have someone be one for you. Live your life one day at a time. Always live life to the fullest, and remember that quality of life means more than quantity.

Thank you Carmen! You are an inspiration to all of us!

Resource Reminders

Look Good ... Feel Better

For Women having chemotherapy or radiation treatments for cancer. Cosmetology professionals help you with: make-up application, dry skin, discolored nails, choice & care of wigs/scarves/hats. This is a quiet, relaxing time to care for yourself and be with other women who have concerns similar to your own.

Look Good. . . Feel Better is a partnership between the American Cancer Society, the Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association Foundation, and the National Cosmetology Association.

When: April 4th, 6 to 8 p.m.

Where: Lafayette Family Cancer Center in Brewer - Auxiliary Conference Room.

Contact: Call [Nadine Bullion at 973-7476](mailto:Nadine.Bullion@lafayettecancer.org) to register (leave a message), or let either nursing staff or Caring Connections know. We'll email Nadine with your reservation information.

Reservations are needed. Sessions are limited to 10 women, so register early



Poetry Corner

Cancer Faith

Cancer may come unexpectedly into your life, Bringing fear, hard times, and great strife.

Families suffer and the end clearly unknown.

Families are stronger than ever and not alone.

Our personalities must stay optimistic, Feeling better and free will be realistic.

The experience could be a long, hard ride, Twists and turns in which you

Cancer Care of Maine Support Groups

The group meets on Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Cancer Care of Maine at the LaFayette Family Cancer Center in Brewer on level 2— Medical Oncology. Contact Linda Murphy at 973-7486 for more information about this resource.



Maine Breast Cancer Coalition (MBCC)

The *Support Service Fund of MBCC* provides Maine residents with financial assistance for services or items related to breast health or breast cancer. More than 300 people statewide will receive financial assistance from the MBCC this year. For more information, to request an application, or to become a member/volunteer of MBCC, call 1-800-928-2644, visit the website at www.mainebreastcancer.org or write to:

**MBCC, 499 Broadway, PMB 362, Bangor, ME 04401
Phone/Fax: 1-800-928-2644**



CancerCare (NOT Cancer Care of Maine—but a National Organization) offers frequent **FREE “Connect Workshops”**.

have cried.

When you fight and beat it and go on to live,
Don't forget the people who are here to give.

Love and care will forever and always stay.
Cancer will be knocked out of the way.

Your soul is and will be stronger than this;
It can conquer cancer, destroy and dismiss.

Courage and memories are very much needed,
As tiring treatments have faithfully succeeded.

that are a way for people to learn about cancer-related issues from the convenience of their home or office. Leading experts in oncology provide the most up-to-date information on the telephone. You can listen to the workshops on the telephone or via live streaming through the internet. You can register by calling 1-800-813-4673 or online at www.cancercare.org/connect.

The Ninth Annual Cancer Survivorship Series: Living With, Through, and Beyond Cancer will be offered Tuesdays 1:30 to 2:30 PM; **April 12 Chemobrain: The Impact of Cancer Treatments on Memory, Thinking, and Attention; May 10 Weight Changes After Cancer Treatments; June 14 Stress Management for Caregivers, and July 12 Fear of Recurrence and late Effects: Living With Uncertainty.** Register online at www.cancercare.org/connect



“If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant.”

~Anne Bradstreet



Silver Pipe, 2002 Sculpture from the Bust Project by Toby Hilden. The project was a tribute to his mother who died of metastatic breast cancer in 2001.

Friendship, family, and faith cannot be suppressed;
They are the loving souls that make you blessed.

When my love-filled Mom became a cancer survivor, I soon realized that I was an underwater diver.

You dive in but you never know what is there for you, It could be your worst experience or the very best view.

Michaela Fournier
<http://gloriagemma.org/inspirations.html>

Caring Connections

Caring Connections
Bangor Y
17 Second Street
Bangor, Maine 04401-6198

Phone: 207-941-2808 X 337 or 338

Fax: 207-941-2812

E-mail: careconn@BangorY.org



·If you are uninsured.

·If you have insurance that does not fully cover your mammogram or Pap test
·If you have insurance with a high deductible.

You may qualify for no-cost breast or cervical health exams .

Women 40 to 64 may qualify for breast & cervical health screening at no cost at Caring Connections. Screening services are provided through Eastern Maine Medical Center and the Center for Family Medicine. This screening program is part of the Maine Breast & Cervical Health Program (MBCHP). You can call MBCHP directly at 1-800-350-5180 or call Caring Connections to see if you can receive no-cost health services.

If you are between the age of 20 and 39 you may qualify for no-cost breast health services from Bridging The Gap. Bridging The Gap is a grant program of Susan G. Komen for the Cure—Maine which provides assistance to young women who have a breast symptom or who are considered high risk for breast cancer due to family history.

If your social, church, professional, or education group would like to know more about breast health, we can provide that information in a comfortable and relaxed format. Call Caring Connections for more information about this free community service.

We're on the web!

www.bangory.org/content/4029/caring_connections

Breast Cancer Support Groups

Bangor:

Daytime Meetings

Wednesdays 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Isaac Farrar Mansion of the Bangor Y. The Means Pool (warm water) is open to group members EVERY WEDNESDAY from 2 to 3 p.m.)

Evening Meeting

2nd Tuesday, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.

Isaac Farrar Mansion, Bangor Y at Second Street. This meeting is open to breast cancer survivors as well as their adult family members, relatives and friends.

Young Survivors

1st Thursday

12:30 to 1:45 p.m.

Isaac Farrar Mansion

Please call Caring Connections at 941-2808 X 337 or 338 if

possible, prior to attending your first Bangor meeting.

Calais:

2nd Thursday, 3:00 p.m.,

Calais Regional Hospital. Call

Mona VanWart at 454.3906

or Eva Beckett at 454.2006

for more information.

Dover-Foxcroft:

Call **Robyn Simmons at 564-**

7071 for information about

this activities in the Dover-Foxcroft area.

Ellsworth:

4th Thursday of the month

from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Beth C. Wright Cancer

Resource Center, 3 High

Street Ellsworth. Call

Francine Frank at 565-

0984 or 941-2808 for more

information.

Houlton:

Call Janet Vose at 532-5969

or email her at

jvose@houltonregional.org

Millinocket:

Second Thursday of the

month at 9 a.m. Millinocket

Regional Hospital in the Multi-

purpose Room.

Robin Stevens (723-5465)

and Terrylyn Bradbury (723-

5644) are the Katahdin area

contact persons for women

diagnosed with breast

cancer.

Pittsfield:

4th Wednesday of the month

at 5:30 p.m. Contact **Beth**

Bacon at 487-4079 at

Sebasticook Valley Hospital

to learn about the support

group.

Presque Isle:

Meetings are discontinued for now, but we hope a new group will develop in the future. If you would like to develop and manage a support group in the Presque Isle area, please call us at 941-2808.

