

Coping Skills for the Pancreatic Cancer Community: Tools and Tips During COVID-19

We are dedicated to supporting our pancreatic cancer community, particularly as we all try to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. We have launched a series of free webinars to provide virtual patient support and resources for our community. We are pleased to share information about the second in our series which took place on Friday, April 17th.

During this time of uncertainty, stress levels can sky rocket. It is critical, especially for pancreatic cancer patients and their caregivers, to find tools to manage stress and find balance. Emotional well-being is a critical piece of the healing process, so now, more than ever, it is essential to have coping skills. We turned to [Elizabeth Cleary](#), PhD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist at the Simms/Mann UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology, to lead an interactive webinar, **Coping Skills for the Pancreatic Cancer Community: Tools and Tips During COVID-19**.

Watch Webinar

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A very special thanks to our Sponsors & Supporters for helping ensure that these vital patient resources can be offered free-of-charge in place of our Annual Symposium.

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California Community Foundation, Caroline Dockrell, Fineberg Foundation, Dr. Robert Richter Foundation Fund, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Joanne & Ken Weinman in memory of Sylvia R. Weiner

How to Eat and Live Well During Coronavirus: Vital Tips for our Pancreatic Cancer

Community

On March 19, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom ordered a statewide order to stay at home. The Hirshberg Foundation is dedicated to supporting our pancreatic cancer community while we observe California's 'shelter in place' rules to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19. We are committed to providing virtual patient support and resources to our patients and their caregivers.

We know that cancer patients currently receiving treatments or recovering from surgery are considered at a higher risk for having a weakened immune system. Amid the COVID-19 crisis, patient well-being is more important than ever. We have asked our resident expert, Zhaoping Li, MD, PhD, Director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition, to provide our pancreatic cancer community with tools to eat well and live well during the coronavirus.

This is a video recording of the Zoom webinar that took place on Friday, April 3rd at 1:00 (PST). Entitled "How to Eat and Live Well During Coronavirus: Vital Tips for our Pancreatic Cancer Community," patients, caregivers, family and friends joined Dr. Li for an interactive conversation as she provides important information to boost the immune system. Beyond nutrition she discusses stress eating, sleeping, cooking and best practices for food delivered to your home.

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April is National Minority Health Month

April is National Minority Health Month – an incredibly important time to discuss the facts and raise awareness for the highest risk communities facing pancreatic cancer. Studies have pointed to increased risk of pancreatic cancer in [Latinos](#),

perhaps due to higher rates of [obesity](#) and diabetes, and among Ashkenazi Jews, possibly due to mutations of the [BRCA genes](#). However, pancreatic cancer disproportionately affects and has the [poorest prognosis](#) for Black Americans. Join us throughout April as we share survivor stories, discuss why these communities are at-risk, how to fight the statistics and what educational resources on pancreatic cancer are available. **National Minority Health Month is a call-to-action for all of us to help raise awareness throughout April!**

Pancreatic cancer does not discriminate. In fact, Black Americans have an approximate [20% higher incidence rate](#) of pancreatic cancer according to the National Cancer Institute. As pancreatic cancer numbers continue to grow, people of color are disproportionately affected and more vulnerable to the 3rd leading cause of cancer-related death. We must remember that pancreatic cancer doesn't take a time out and neither will we.

There are several factors, including socioeconomic, that make Black Americans disproportionately more likely to face pancreatic cancer. Black Americans are at high-risk of developing chronic conditions and "modifiable risks" including obesity, smoking and diabetes, which may lead to pancreatic cancer. According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services – Office of Minority Health, Black American adults are 60% more likely than white adults to be [diagnosed with diabetes](#).

The 2019-2021 American Cancer Society's Facts & Figures Report for African Americans shares that the probability of developing pancreatic cancer was approximately [1 in 64 for black males and 1 in 59 for females](#) (from 2013-2015). These numbers represent fathers and mothers, they represent grandparents in Black American and blended families, they represent our friends, co-workers and neighbors. **When pancreatic cancer impacts one group, it impacts us all.**

The Journey to Complete 52 Races for 52 Faces

In March of 2019, Julie Weiss, the “Marathon Goddess,” embarked on a new campaign, 52 Races for 52 Faces, in partnership with the Hirshberg Foundation, to shine a light on pancreatic cancer. On March 8, 2020, a year of races wrapped up with Julie’s incredible finish at the LA Marathon. Running for the [Hirshberg Training Team](#), she ran her 109th marathon to date. That evening, at our team’s celebration dinner, we reflected on the incredible dedications made over the past year and Julie’s incredible journey.

Participating in full and half marathons, 10K’s and 5K’s, Julie has run for pancreatic cancer survivors of all ages and backgrounds. She’s run for 10+ year survivors, for fathers and mothers, for a Congressman and Supreme Court Justice, for a veteran and female triathlete, for loved ones lost too soon and for a community fighting to cure this devastating disease. The past year has included both triumphs and trying moments for Julie as she’s pounded the pavement across the United States, all in the name of pancreatic cancer. By the end of this journey, Julie had raced in 8 different states (California, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, Washington DC, Illinois, Hawaii, and Washington) and collectively helped fundraise over \$275,000 for the Hirshberg Foundation!

She’s crossed the final finish line for the 52 Races for 52 Faces campaign but the stories shared will never be forgotten. Thanks to all who of you who have helped make [52 Races for 52 Faces](#) possible, by making runner dedications or giving

[donations](#), by cheering for Julie in person or following her journey online. Together, we will continue to fund research for a cure, to shine a light on survivors and will never give up.

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Our first webinar will be held on Friday, April 3, 2020 at 1:00 PM (PST). Entitled "How to Eat and Live Well During Coronavirus:

Vital Tips for our Pancreatic Cancer Community,” participants will join Dr. Li for an interactive conversation as she provides important information to boost your immune system. Beyond nutrition she’ll discuss stress eating, sleeping, cooking and best practices for food delivered to your home.

The public is asked to [register online](#) for this Zoom meeting where they will be able to listen, learn and ask questions from the comfort of your home. To learn about Zoom, visit zoom.us/support.

Keeping Patients Safe & Never Giving Up on a Cure!

Dear Hirshberg Foundation Family,

I can imagine by now your inbox, like mine, has been flooded with coronavirus and COVID-19 updates and announcements from every organization you’ve ever encountered. We know this is not an easy time, especially for our beloved patients at high risk, so I’ll keep my message short and sweet: we are here for you!

The Hirshberg Foundation is determined to provide the support and resources our patients need at this critical time. Pancreatic cancer patients, newly diagnosed or in treatment, are extremely vulnerable right now due to compromised immune systems. We encourage our patients and loved ones interacting with them, to [take precautions](#). Contact your doctor or oncologist for guidance and we too will provide information to help during these challenging times. While we can’t meet in person, we are available to help patients and families by [email](#)

or [phone](#). Although our [symposium at UCLA scheduled for April](#) has been postponed, we are working to confirm a new date in the future. In the meantime, we have launched a [webinar series](#) to provide the pancreatic cancer community with the support & resources during this uncertain time.

Make no mistake, research will continue to advance, the UCLA Agi Hirshberg Center will not miss a beat and although a couple events have been postponed, we will come together again. We are honored to keep working for you and will never give up curing pancreatic cancer, a disease that has impacted lives for decades.

We hold in our thoughts all those affected by the coronavirus and I wish you safety, meaningful times with your family and good health.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Agi". The signature is cursive and stylized, with the first letter 'A' being particularly large and prominent.

Agi Hirshberg
Founder

P.s. Our office hours are currently irregular but we are all still hard at work – we appreciate your patience.

Please find additional resources below:

- [What Pancreatic Cancer Patients Should Know About COVID-19](#)
- [Pancreatic Cancer Treatment During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Staying Healthy During Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information](#)

- [World Health Organization COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Hirshberg Symposium Video Library](#)