

The 5-Year Survival Rate for Pancreatic Cancer Improves for All Stages

This week's release of the [American Cancer Society \(ACS\) Cancer Facts & Figures Report](#) shows an increase to 11% in the 5-year survival rate for all stages. Seeing this marked improvement in survival rates shows that we're headed in the right direction in making a difference for the pancreatic cancer community.

An increase in the overall 5-year survival rate* for pancreatic cancer means more time with loved ones, greater hope for patients, and shows that our work is truly moving the needle. "This is positive news and it's what we like to see. Statistics, however, can't be the only driving force in this fight," says Agi Hirshberg, the Foundation Founder. "Moms, dads, and loved ones who courageously fight to beat the odds – they are our inspiration to find a cure. Our community is funding the best research in the world, and we're doing it in honor of the people we love."

Our recent funding of [8 new Seed Grants](#) continues to drive research and advance our understanding of this disease, with over 105 grants to date. With projects focused on targeted therapy, early detection, and prevention for high-risk individuals, our teams are striving to improve patient outcomes. Learn more about these Seed Grant projects in the most recent edition of our [Momentum Newsletter](#).

The ACS report shares that 62,210 people in the US will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2022, a 2.8% increase from last year and a steadfast reminder of how important it is for each of us to [take action today](#). Make 2022 the year to establish

a personal cancer prevention plan for 2022 by learning the [risk factors](#) and [facts](#) about pancreatic cancer. If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, [contact us](#) today.

Resources for Patients, Preventions, and Education

One-on-One Support

Patient & Family Webinars

Genetic Testing

Clinical Trials

As this new data is reviewed, we encourage you to be proactive and utilize the many resources available to our community. “We empower our community with resources, support, and education to fight for a cancer-free life,” shares Executive Director, Lisa Manheim. The actions we take for our own health and the health of our loved ones will help us beat the statistics.

** The five-year survival rate, for the sake of this report, was determined by stage at diagnosis from 2011-2017 in the US.*

Momentum Newsletter: Winter

As this year comes to close, there is so much that we are thankful for, from reuniting in person at our Fall events, to our full roster of Seed Grants to a new year of possibility. It has been a busy and fulfilling year, and we are so grateful for our pancreatic cancer community.

The American Pancreatic Association (APA) Meeting

As a longtime supporter of the American Pancreatic Association (APA), we are honored to host the Hirshberg Opening Symposium each year, and especially grateful to return to Miami this November to attend in person. This annual meeting brings together an international group of clinicians and scientists to discuss the latest research results and the best standards for treatment of pancreatic diseases. Each year we award the best abstracts, which are then published in the journal *Pancreas*. This year's awardees are Marta Sans, PhD, for her work to understand the progression on pancreatic cysts, and Gregor Werba MD, for his research into chemotherapy and T-cells. We applaud these young researchers and know that their efforts are driving us towards better treatment options.

[Read more about the APA →](#)

Seed Grants

We have returned to a full roster of [Seed Grant](#) awardees for 2021 and these 8 projects are working to advance pancreatic cancer research and improve patient outcomes. This year's projects range from understanding the tumor stroma in order to better design targeted treatment options, to analyzing how obesity impacts the development of pancreatic cancer in acinar and ductal cell derived tumors. One award will connect research from Oregon and Israel to form a consortium, allowing institutions to share data, create multi-institutional clinical trials and collectively learn how best to treat this disease. Collaboration and cooperation is the key to helping us conquer this disease, and that is what we are funding.

It is thanks to [your support](#) that we are able to make these advancements.

An Amazing Events Season!

The Fall was filled with excitement, and two events back-to-back! We united generations across the nation to make a difference, raise awareness and fund pancreatic cancer research.

Halloween marked the 24th Annual LA Cancer Challenge Walk/Run at UCLA and across the nation. Thanks to our community of patients, families, friends, and sponsors, we have raised over \$522,000. We had participants from 33 states and 4 countries! Every dollar raised will advance research, and every step taken to cross the finish line is a step closer to a cure. We look forward to another extraordinary year as we celebrate 25 years of the LA Cancer Challenge in 2022!

The weekend after the LACC, our [Hirshberg Training Team](#) took to

the streets to run the LA Marathon. On Sunday, November 7th, after a year of delays, every single one of our 27 HTT members crossed the finish line and helped raise over \$125,000! We had 10 runners complete their very first marathon.

Want to cross the finish line yourself? Our Hirshberg Training Team is already gearing up for the 2022 LA Marathon and you can join them! Register today for personalized training from wherever you are, Put your sweat, your time and your dollars towards making a difference for all those facing pancreatic cancer.

Run the 2022 LA Marathon with the Hirshberg Training Team, Sunday, March 20, 2022

[Register Today →](#)

Our Patient & Family Education Symposium Returns in 2022

As we look toward the year to come, we are optimistic that we will be able to safely gather again for our Symposium at UCLA on April 23, 2022. Providing both an in-person and virtual opportunity to gather, learn from one another and create bonds through a shared experience, our Symposium is a keystone of the work we do. Connecting patients, families and researchers is an honor, we hope that you'll join us on April 23rd.

[Save the Date →](#)

Together we are driving research towards a cure while supporting all patients and families facing pancreatic cancer. The work we do is made possible thanks to [your support](#).

World Pancreatic Cancer Day

It's [World Pancreatic Cancer Day](#)! So, let's make a plan and take action to fight this disease today and in our everyday lives! This is a time to reflect on *all* of the lives impacted by this disease and answer a global call-to-action together. We all have a part to play, whether you join our annual [Celebrate, Participate & Dedicate](#) campaign through [November](#), share our [awareness video](#) with friends and family on social media or [make a donation](#) in honor of a loved one. There are countless ways to color your world purple and shine a light on this disease!

Here are some easy ways to learn and share facts about this disease, raise awareness and make sure no patient or caregiver fights this disease alone.



Celebrate

[Pampered Chef fundraising event](#) →
Make [purple purchase](#) in our e-store →
[Start Planning your Event](#) →



Participate

Join the [2022 Hirshberg Training Team](#) →
Start a [Facebook Fundraiser](#) →
[Create a Fund](#) in Honor of a Loved One →



Dedicate

[Write a Message of Hope for Survivors](#) →
[Share Your Story](#) →
[Read Never Give Up Stories!](#) →

Answering a Call-to-Action has Real-

Life Results

What is the real-life impact of sharing the facts with friends and family, wearing purple to work or posting our [November Awareness video](#) on social media? Each action is more important than you may realize. Too few people know [what the pancreas is](#), let alone the [facts](#), [symptoms](#) [risk factors](#) of pancreatic cancer. Far too many are diagnosed at a late stage, in part because of a lack of awareness and because there is not yet a standard for early detection. When you raise awareness you are empower others, when you fundraise you are advancing critical research and when you introduce your community to the Hirshberg Foundation, that message will spread far and wide [reaching a patients](#). Our actions change lives!

World Pancreatic Cancer Coalition Advocacy

The Hirshberg Foundation has been a member of the World Pancreatic Cancer Coalition since its inception and today it has 90 member organizations from more than 30 countries on 6 continents! Our unified message is simple, "It's About Time". On World Pancreatic Cancer Day, our goal is to work together and make time to get to know your pancreas and learn the risks and symptoms. Every moment matters. Advocate for a patient, [help the Hirshberg Foundation fund research](#) and [join us in our efforts year-round](#). We encourage you and your loved ones There is no early detection test, so listen to your body and talk to your doctor about any concerns. It's about time that we talk about this disease out in the open, that all of us raise our voices and fight this disease like never before. Watch the Coalition's ['It's About Time to Raise Awareness' Video](#) today!

Esther Lee Shares Her Pancreatic Cancer Journey

We are delighted to have Esther Lee, DPT, as our Honorary Starter for the 2021 LA Cancer Challenge Walk/Run. The LACC Honorary Starter is a special honor we bestow each year on a pancreatic cancer survivor who has shown great courage, strength and positivity throughout their cancer journey.

Diagnosed in July 2020 with stage IV [pancreatic neuroendocrine](#) tumor with metastasis, Esther faced a long and bumpy treatment journey that she is still on. Through it all she exemplifies grace and expresses gratitude every step of the way. In Esther's own words, "I've truly learned to take it one day at a time, the greatest challenge being fully present in each day, moment by moment... this is the amazing place of peace and gratitude."

Learn more about Esther in this short video

Esther is a source of joy and inspiration to everyone she meets, including her long-time client Serena Williams. The tennis icon and Esther's dear friend shared a heartfelt video rallying support for Esther and her team.

Watch Serena's video

Esther has the amazing support of her family, friends and her medical team at UCLA. On October 31, 2021, we rally for Esther and all those facing pancreatic cancer to walk for research,

race towards a cure and never give up!

Momentum Newsletter: Fall

Our calendars are packed with Fall events – great ways to get involved and make a difference for the pancreatic cancer community. We recently held the 9th Annual [Tour de Pier](#), our first in-person event since March 2020, and it was so great to see friendly faces in-person and come together as a community to make a difference for those facing cancer. We look forward to more warm embraces and catching up at the [LA Cancer Challenge](#) and our [Purple People Party](#) at the LA Marathon. With both in-person and virtual options for all our events, we're uniting across the nation to raise awareness, especially during [Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month in November](#). There are many opportunities to get involved, so let's finish the year strong as champions in the fight to cure pancreatic cancer!

Seed Grants

In August, we received our [Seed Grant](#) applications from Italy to Ohio, Yale to MD Anderson. Scientists and researchers around the world stand at the ready with brilliant ideas to help change the face of this disease, thus it is crucial that we fund as many of these projects as possible. We have spent the last 24 years funding the groundwork research to better understand this disease. Real progress is being made, and our research team at [UCLA](#) is hopeful that over the next 10 years there will be leaps and bounds in diagnostics and treatment options. New opportunities and scientific advancements are on the horizon,

and we look forward to funding them with your support.

[Donate to advance research today →](#)

Fall Events are Here!

Our mission to *unite generations, young and old, through physical fitness* is back to in-person activities! Our Foundation events help fund research, educate the public about pancreatic cancer and provide an opportunity to honor our loved ones as we unite as a community. Learn more about our upcoming events and join us in-person or virtually

Tour de Pier

The 9th Annual [Tour de Pier](#) returned to Manhattan Beach on Sunday, September 12th and it was a magical, emotional, and powerful reunion after so many months apart. Announcing that we surpassed our \$1 million dollar goal during the final hour made the day all the more impactful. You can relive the wonder of the day and ride again and again with our livestream.

[Watch Today →](#)

24th Annual LA Cancer Challenge 5K Walk/Run, Sunday, October 31, 2021

It's October which means the LA Cancer Challenge is around the corner! We are excited to reunite at UCLA and across the nation on October 31st. Whether you run, walk or stroll, your participation helps ensure we can provide crucial patient services and drive research towards a cure. Grab your costume, sneakers and recruit your friends – be a hero for the pancreatic cancer community this Halloween!

[Register Today →](#)

Hirshberg Training Team 2021 at the LA Marathon, Sunday, November 7, 2021

Join us as we cheer on our [Hirshberg Training Team](#) runners at the Purple People Party along the LA Marathon course on November 7th – during National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month! Sport your purple gear, come ready to cheer and get a 2nd hand runner's high. You might even decide to join the team as a runner for 2022!

Purple People Party at the LA Marathon, Sunday, November 7, 2021
[Volunteer →](#)

Run the 2022 LA Marathon with the Hirshberg Training Team, Sunday, March 20, 2022

[Register →](#)

Whether in-person or virtually, there are so many great ways to get involved and raise pancreatic cancer awareness.

Honoring our UCLA Researchers at the LA Cancer Challenge

The [LACC Honorary Medical Chair](#) position is awarded to a professional whose exemplary work in pancreatic cancer has benefited both medical and patient communities. We're excited to announce that [Dr. Zhaoping Li](#), Chief of the Division of Clinical Nutrition, has accepted our invitation to be LACC Honorary Medical Chair. Nutrition can be a contentious topic for many patients navigating a diagnosis and side effects, but Dr. Li's compassion, knowledge, and warm personality make each event outshine the last. Whether she's speaking at our [Symposium](#) or

hosting a [nutrition webinar](#), she always has patients' best interests at heart. We are thrilled to welcome her as LACC Honorary Medical Chair and grateful to have her [walk and fundraise](#) on the [UCLA Health Sciences Team](#)!

Patient & Family Webinar Series Finishes with Dr. Isacoff in advance of our 2022 Symposium

In July, we concluded our season of [Patient & Family Webinars](#) with an extraordinary discussion with Dr. William Isacoff. [Dr. Isacoff](#) spoke about low-dose chemotherapy and the work he is doing to develop more effective and less toxic treatments for patients with pancreatic cancer. While his approach is at times unconventional and goes against the current guidelines, Dr. Isacoff's webinar was filled with hope and the promise to provide patients with better outcomes.

Our webinar series, which began when COVID made holding our [Symposium](#) in-person untenable, has grown into a library of 19 video resources. With topics ranging from [pancreatic cysts](#) to [cannabis](#), [caregiving](#) to [genetic counseling](#), [clinical trials](#) to our [nurses guide](#) to navigating a diagnosis, these video are a valuable resource for our pancreatic cancer community. As we look toward the year to come, we are optimistic that we will be able to safely gather again for our Symposium at UCLA on April 23, 2022. Providing both an in-person and virtual opportunity to gather, learn from one another and create bonds through a shared experience, our Symposium is a keystone of the work we do. However you choose to join us, we hope to see you on April 23rd.

The work we accomplish is possible because of your support,

through donations, participation and raising awareness. Every donation helps drive research, provide patient programs, and ensure that no one feels alone with this disease.

Esther Lee to be Honorary Starter for the 24th Annual LA Cancer Challenge

The Hirshberg Foundation is thrilled to welcome Esther Lee, DPT, as our Honorary Starter for the 2021 LA Cancer Challenge Walk/Run! Esther exemplifies courage, hope and positivity in the face of her pancreatic cancer diagnosis. We first met Esther in January of 2021 when she joined our [Patient & Family Webinar](#) where we celebrated [10, 20 & 30 year pancreatic cancer survivors](#). Esther instantly made an impression on Zoom in her purple headband and within hours had ordered purple beanies and wristbands for her whole family; and from there she became part of the Hirshberg Family.

As a local cancer patient, we invited her to participate in our [Healing Bloom Zoom](#), a virtual flower arranging class for survivors. She and her sister created a beautiful floral arrangement. Esther shared that this floral class inspired her “new favorite hobby” of gardening in her back yard. Before we knew it she had registered [Team Esther](#) for the LA Cancer Challenge, 6 months in advance! She is all in with her support of the Foundation and we are some of her biggest cheerleaders – although she has many, a great community rallying around her.

She generously shared some details of what the last year has been like for her:

Prior to a year ago, I was zipping around my typical busy fast paced life. I was thoroughly enjoying my super busy life as a doctor of physical therapy, providing manual treatments for my private clients in LA and around the world. When I wasn't working, I was playing beach volleyball 3-4 times per week, playing tennis, snowboarding, riding my bike, jogging, and working out. I lived a "healthy," active life and was passionate about traveling and exploring the wonderful cultures and beautiful landscapes around the world. When home in LA, I loved hosting game nights with friends and loved building deeper connections with loved ones.

July 29th, 2020, my world flipped upside down and took a sharp turn. I was diagnosed with stage IV [pancreatic neuroendocrine](#) tumor with metastasis to my liver, spine and lymph nodes. Fortunately, on August 26th, 2020, I was able to undergo surgical removal of my 14cm tumor, spleen and part of my pancreas because I was having difficulty eating and had developed severe pain in my spine. Due to complications with fluid build-up around my right lung, I had to undergo several procedures to drain and resolve the accumulation that was resulting in my lung collapsing and making it extremely difficult to breathe for almost 4 months. I had the fluid around my lung drained every morning for 3 months until I was finally able to have my pleural catheter removed December 10, 2020. I underwent 3 rounds of chemotherapy and then 4 rounds of peptide receptor radionuclide therapy (PRRT, which I am about to complete July 27th, 2021), "the bazooka treatment for neuroendocrine tumors" according to my wonderful oncologist. I will be getting my first scan post-PRRT treatment, in late October, just prior to the LA Cancer Challenge. This scan will assess how my cancer cells have responded to treatment.

It has been a long bumpy road but I am so very thankful that I have come an extremely long way in (almost) 1 year. My family, friends, medical team of doctors, nurses, techs, and my chaplain at UCLA, the wonderful Hirshberg Foundation community and of course my adorable sidekick maltipoo pup, have been my greatest support, inspiration and gift along my journey. My sister and brother immediately stepped in from day 1 to be my personal 24/7 nurse, pharmacist, chef, driver, masseuse, tear wiper, dog walker, maid, secretary and entertainer to keep me smiling. My incredible community of loved ones have consistently blown my socks away with the love, prayers, encouragement, and thoughtful, generous gifts over the past year.

I am overflowing with gratitude that I am still here to appreciate each day, continue building each relationship in my life and create new wonderful memories. I am continuing to learn the incredible healing power of love, gratitude, and positive determination which come in all shapes and sizes. We all constantly cycle through different ups and downs of life, but we all have the powerful ability to help ourselves and others make our journeys enjoyable and fulfilling. I've truly learned to take it one day at a time, the greatest challenge being fully present in each day, moment by moment... this is the amazing place of peace and gratitude.

Esther exemplifies grace and expresses gratitude in every step of her treatment journey. She is a constant source of inspiration and joy, which is just a part of why she has been chosen to be our Honorary 5k Starter for 2021 [LA Cancer Challenge](#).