

New Podcast from Pancreatic Cancer Survivor Offers Hope

Since her diagnosis with an inoperable pancreatic tumor in 2002, [Roberta Luna](#) has embarked on many new adventures. From her first half-marathon, to her first tattoo to her first of many sky diving trips, Roberta has embraced living life to its fullest. As she said, “we tend to put off doing things we want to... because we think there’s plenty of time down the road.” So when the opportunity to host a podcast radio show on OC Talk Radio presented itself, Roberta, along with her husband and caregiver, Vic, began yet another first.

“Vic and I recently had the opportunity to take another leap of faith and embark on a new journey with OC Talk Radio. We have created the podcast and radio show, [Living Hope; Your Journey with Pancreatic Cancer](#).”

Through their podcast, Roberta and Vic hope to provide information and [resources](#), share [inspirational stories](#), give hope to those affected by pancreatic cancer. With new episodes available on Thursdays, Roberta is not only sharing her story, but stories from across the pancreatic cancer community. As she shared, “through my experience with this horrific disease, I believe I am here to help those who have also been affected by pancreatic cancer, to hopefully inspire them and give them much needed hope.”

Roberta is a wife, mother, self-proclaimed thrill-seeker, tireless advocate and volunteer, and as of April 1, 2021, a 19-year pancreatic cancer survivor, with an inoperable tumor due to artery & vein involvement.

Vic and Roberta hope to share the journeys of various patients,

caregivers and advocates, including the good, bad and ugly of facing this disease. They aim educate, raise awareness, provide hope and spark inspiration in their audience. Together, the pancreatic cancer community can weather the storm with the support of loved ones, family, “the purple family” and the many people encountered along this often-difficult journey. We are happy to support Roberta and Vic on their latest endeavor!

Learn more and listen to their show → <https://livinghopepc.com/>
Follow along on their Facebook page → <https://www.facebook.com/LivingHope2055>

The Financial Costs of Cancer

Cancer can be a very expensive illness. Even those with excellent insurance can face an array of new costs associated with their treatment. From transportation to hospital stays, prescriptions to medical devices, daily living expenses to holistic care, there are a multitude of expenses to consider. Being organized and understanding your rights can give you a sense of control while helping prioritize.

Through our longstanding partnership with [Cancer Care](#), patients are able to apply for a one-time grant to help cover the costs associated with cancer treatment. Cancer Care also provides an array of [financial assistance resources](#) to help cancer patients and their families better cope with financial concerns.

Below are some of the resources Cancer Care offers to help manage the financial costs of cancer.

- [Managing The Cost of Cancer](#) booklet. This guide will help

you navigate what is covered by health insurance and what is not, as well as tools to help handle the cost of cancer.

- [Tips for Managing the Cost of Cancer](#) is a great overview of things to consider as you begin navigating a cancer diagnosis.
- [Co-payment assistance](#) is a program to help cancer patients overcome the financial barriers to prescribed treatment through co-payment aid.
- [Understanding the Costs of Care and Your Health Care Coverage](#) is a workshop that addresses the medical and indirect costs of treatment, benefits and limitations to health care plans, as well as advanced health care directives, led by a panel of experts.
- In addition to finances, there are legal considerations when facing cancer and Cancer Care offers [legal assistance](#) as well.
- [A Helping Hand](#) is a resource guide to help cancer patients and their families take control of their finances. This booklet can help you understand your options, know your rights and know where to turn for help. It will introduce issues to consider such as government assistance, nonprofit hospitals and community programs near you that may help defer some of the costs.

>We are here to help, contact [Patient Support](#) today to receive additional information and resources.

Clinical Trial Awareness

[Clinical trials](#) are a crucial tool for advancing medical knowledge and patients who participate can benefit from these new and emerging treatments. Understanding the clinical trial process and how to find a trial can empower patients to make informed treatment choices from day one. Today, the NIH website lists more than [280 pancreatic cancer clinical trials](#) actively recruiting in the United States. Whether the trial is for adenocarcinoma (PDAC) or neuroendocrine tumors (NETs), the goal of a pancreatic cancer clinical trial is to improve patient outcomes and save lives.

The Clinical Trial Process

The complex nature of pancreatic cancer requires attacking the disease from all directions. Clinical trial research is designed to analyze and question the benefits and risks of a promising new treatment before it can be approved for patients. Emerging cancer treatments include, but are not limited to, new drugs, drug combinations, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, radiation and chemotherapy. Over the course of months or years, a promising pre-clinical study advances into a human clinical trial that builds from [phase I to phase IV](#). Trials are developed for all stages of pancreatic cancer and may recruit participants in phases I-IV. If each phase demonstrates success, the therapy is approved by the FDA and made available to public.

Clearing Up Misconceptions

Experimental treatments developed in clinical trials can offer a lifeline for patients and families. That is why it is critical that patients' concerns and questions are addressed. One common

misconception is that clinical trials are a last resort. New drugs and treatments can actually be beneficial early-on in a treatment plan rather than waiting until options are exhausted.

Another common roadblock for patients is an initial apprehension as to how safe a clinical trial is because of its experimental nature. Clinical trials have some risk, however, from start-to-finish specific practices are put in motion to ensure patient safety. Patients must give [informed consent](#) and researchers develop [clinical trial protocols](#), follow [FDA regulations](#), are monitored and scrutinized by an [Institutional Review Board](#) and [Data & Safety Monitoring Board](#). World-class scientists are committed to unlocking the answers to pancreatic cancer through clinical trials and accomplishing the task safely. <

Finally, it is important that the people who are eligible and will benefit from the research are represented in clinical trials. In 2018, an [FDA Clinical Trial Snapshot](#) disclosed that 48% of all adult clinical trials missed their target recruitment goal for minorities. Balanced representation can only be achieved if patients, doctors and clinical trial recruiting processes share this goal.

Finding a Clinical Trial

Clinical trials are helping to transform medicine, personalize treatment and expand our medical knowledge for generations to come. If you are interested in exploring a clinical trial, discuss this option with your oncologist or physician. The following resources can help you or a loved one find a clinical trial that is right for you.

We are here to help, contact [Patient Support](#) today to speak with our Patient & Family Coordinator.

- Hirshberg Foundation video [A-B-C's of Clinical Trials](#)
 - National Institutes of Health (NIH) [clinical trial database](#)
 - National Cancer Institute [\(NCI\) search tool](#)
 - MassiveBio's [SYNERGY search platform](#)
 - EmergingMed's [clinical trial navigator service](#)
 - Let's Win PC video on [How to Find a Clinical Trial](#)
 - UCLA [clinical trial search tool](#)
-

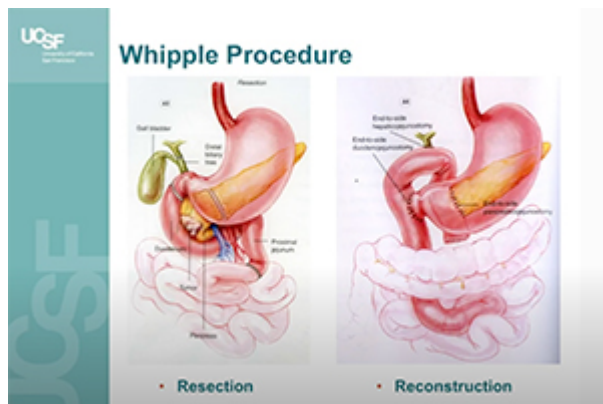
Resources for Newly Diagnosed Patients

The Hirshberg Foundation is dedicated to serving our pancreatic cancer patients every step of the way. Most commonly, we receive requests from newly diagnosed patients and their families who find themselves thrust into a brand-new world filled with important health care decisions, new terminology and more. Learning of a pancreatic cancer diagnosis can start a whirlwind of questions and we are here to provide answers.

We've collected some of our best resources for those who have recently been diagnosed, including a nurses guide to diagnosis, helpful resources for how to [communicate with caregivers](#), a symptom tracking app and additional tools to navigate this disease. We are here to help; reach out for one-on-one [Patient Support](#) today.

Navigating from Diagnosis to

Treatment



Navigating from Diagnosis to Treatment presented by Margaret Tempero, MD, shares important information for patients that have just received a pancreatic cancer diagnosis. She stresses that statistics should only be considered a guidepost and each individual experience can be beyond any set of statistics.

Dr. Tempero is Director, UCSF Pancreas Center and Leader of the UCSF Pancreas Program. She oversees a full portfolio of projects from risk assessment to early detection, biology, and therapeutics in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma.

[Watch Dr. Tempero's Presentation](#)
[Communicate your diagnosis with loved ones](#)

A Nurses Guide to Pancreatic Cancer From Diagnosis to Treatment



A Nurses Guide to Pancreatic Cancer From Diagnosis to Treatment presented by nurse practitioners Lauren Damato and Megan Price, is a great resource for understanding the process and determining a course of treatment. There are a multitude of concerns and emotions that arise when diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; this presentation offers a road map to help.

Lauren and Megan discuss how pancreatic cancer is diagnosed, surgical resection and chemotherapy options including immunotherapy, with resources to help navigate the side effects of treatment.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

Cancer of the Pancreas Booklet



The Hirshberg Foundation's ***Cancer of the Pancreas*** booklet was created to help guide patients and families through their experience with pancreatic cancer. It enables patients to

actively participate in their own care and make informed decisions with a medical team. Read about diagnosis, staging, treatment, and supportive care all in one easy to understand booklet. Our Cancer of the Pancreas booklet is available as a digital download.

[Request your Booklet](#)

chemoWave Mobile App



The ***chemoWave Mobile App*** allows patients to take control of their chemotherapy journey. Many patients find it difficult to understand the symptoms associated with their treatment, and this app helps track and manage these symptoms & side effects. As you track your overall health, you'll discover insights and have actionable data to help you and your healthcare team optimize your treatment experience.

[Learn more about chemoWave](#)

Paving the Way to Better

Outcomes

The Hirshberg Foundation's pioneering research efforts in pancreatic cancer is driven by the countless families and faces in need of services and support everyday. When we evaluate the needs of our community from a scientific perspective or simply a place of compassion, one thing is evident: one group is disproportionately affected by this disease. April, [National Minority Health Month](#), is an opportunity to continue a dialogue on how we can better support Black Americans at highest risk for pancreatic cancer.

Although Black Americans account for [13.4%](#) of the U.S., the third largest population, it is still a community facing the greatest obstacles to prevent, detect, treat and survive pancreatic cancer. [Risk factors from smoking, diabetes and weight](#) are difficult hurdles for many Americans. However, socioeconomic factors can also impact a pancreatic cancer diagnosis and the reality that many Black Americans [report racial discrimination](#) at health provider visits makes those hurdles even higher.

Too often Black Americans are diagnosed at later stages, are underrepresented in clinical trials and even when pancreatic cancer is discovered early, patients are less likely to receive surgery than any other racial group in the U.S.

We strive to improve outcomes for these fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, cousins and grandparents, generations of families at high risk for this disease. The community has a [20% higher incidence](#) of pancreatic cancer and faces a higher burden for overcoming chronic conditions that can lead to this disease. Communication and community are key to elevate awareness and reach families unaware of the risks. Talking about [risks & symptoms](#), sharing [patient & family resources](#) for medical

interventions and [uniting](#) our community are some of the steps we can take together.

To prevent this disease from rooting itself deeper, we must remain dedicated to increasing awareness across the country and the globe; share research progress and current medical treatments available; further diversify clinical trials through representation; educate patients and caregivers; and address the urgency for equity in the healthcare system.

The following are resources that could help save the lives of family members, friends, neighbors and co-workers in the Black American community:

- Hirshberg Foundation – [Patient & Family Educational Webinars](#)
- American Cancer Society – [Health Disparities Research](#)
- FDA – [Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Clinical Trials](#)
- National Institutes of Health – [Clinical Trial List](#)

The United States is comprised of a blend of unique ancestry, ethnicities and cultures diverse in every way. Our approach to healthcare, prevention and community outreach is not one-size-fits-all. We will continue to advocate for all families, patients and high-risk communities so no one fights pancreatic cancer alone.

Healing Blooms, A New

Partnership Grows with Viola Floral

The Hirshberg Foundation is honored to partner with [Viola Flora](#) for *Healing Bloom Zooms*, a no-cost flower arranging classes for cancer patients and survivors. The class aims to support patients on their healing journey, while raising awareness for pancreatic cancer.

The *Healing Bloom Zoom* was developed by Jelena Trifunovic, M.A., owner of Viola Floral, to help lower anxiety, reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance overall emotional wellness. Mayesh, the top national flower vendor, will be donating the florals and all classes will take place virtually via Zoom. Classes are taught by Trifunovic, a floral designer and seasoned K-12 science educator. Jelena brings her years of experience as an educator to provide informative classes that teach the fundamentals of floral design while providing a safe space for patients to relax, have fun and connect.

As a child growing up, Jelena was surrounded by the beauty of the natural world. In Serbia, later Southern California, holidays and family gatherings were spent in her family's kitchen arranging flowers with her mom, Luby, sharing stories, and laughing. When Luby was being treated for pancreatic cancer, Jelena remembers taking floral arranging classes and how much joy it brought them both. It is in Luby's memory that Jelena continues to give back and provide healing through floral therapy.

We are excited to partner with Jelena, [Viola Flora](#), and [Mayesh](#) to bring our pancreatic cancer community these complimentary flower arranging classes! Our aim is to provide resource and support for all, and we hope the *Healing Bloom Zooms* will help

patients on their healing journey and support positive mental health, while we raise awareness of pancreatic cancer.

[Learn more and sign up for a *Healing Bloom Zoom* »](#)