

# August is National Wellness Month

It's National Wellness Month – a perfect time to re-introduce self-care into our daily lives. As we all face extraordinary challenges in 2020, the Hirshberg Foundation is offering resources, webinars, fitness activities and tools to support your mind and body health. In August, we'll share several topics that will inspire and motivate – here's to a healthy August!

## Resources for the Mind:

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### CANNABIS AND ONCOLOGY: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

*Patient & Family Webinar Series*

[Join us on August 28th with Dr. Noah Federman](#) to learn more about cannabis and oncology. In Dr. Federman's clinical oncology practice, he uses cannabis and cannabinoid compounds as adjunctive therapies and has a keen interest in how they can help patients. He will share the science behind the many anecdotal stories in this ever-emerging field.

### BREAKING UP WITH PANCREATIC

# CANCER: SURVIVOR STORIES

## *Patient & Family Webinar Series*

Two incredible long-term survivors share their stories and tips for taking a wellness approach with pancreatic cancer. Wendy Hammers, an actress, speaker, and 5-year survivor leads a discussion alongside Marisa Harris, a life coach and 21-year, stage-4 pancreatic cancer survivor. [Learn about setting your own healthy path](#) and how to get yourself in the right mental space to tackle any life change during diagnosis and beyond.

# COPING SKILLS FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

## *Tools and Tips During COVID-19*

During this time of uncertainty, stress levels can skyrocket, especially for cancer patients. 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](#).

# MANAGING THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

## *Symposium on Pancreatic Cancer*

Dr. Annette Stanton, PhD, has significantly contributed to the Hirshberg Foundation's Symposium for Pancreatic Cancer as a guest speaker. In her ["Managing the Emotional Journey"](#) Symposium video, she discusses how important it is to

understand the emotional journey that cancer patients and loved ones experience once diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. As a Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry/ Biobehavioral Sciences, Stanton has researched factors that promote or impede psychological and physical health in adults and couples undergoing chronically stressful experiences. She then translates her findings into action by developing and testing approaches to enhance psychological and physical health over the course of the cancer trajectory.

## Resources for the Body:

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### COOKING HEALTHY WITH DR. LI

*Cooking Class Video & Recipes*

[Symposium speaker Dr. Zhaoping Li](#), the Director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition, and Chef Claire Hansen of Sur la Table gathered with survivors, caregivers and instructors cook up [healthy recipes](#) including Lemon-Barley Pilaf with Chicken and Thyme, Oven-Roasted Cod and Strawberry Smoothies. Before you start cooking these delicious recipes, check out our newest Purple E-Store item, a [Never Give Up](#) apron benefiting pancreatic cancer research!

### TOUR DE PIER

*Join Us for a Virtual Tour de Pier on September 13, 2020*

Tour de Pier is back, in a whole new way! On September 13,

2020, we're going virtual. Your [registration](#) will help ensure that our three charities can continue to provide crucial resources to those facing cancer. Plus, since we're virtual, we have options to ensure that everyone can get involved.

## 23rd ANNUAL VIRTUAL LA CANCER CHALLENGE

*Walk/Run Any Time, Place, or Pace you Choose*

The 23rd Annual [Virtual LA Cancer Challenge Walk/Run](#) on Sunday, October 25th will now take place nationwide at any time, place or pace you choose! We've got plenty of resources & ideas to customize your participation, a Purple Spirit Kit to get festively purple, a [Virtual FB Group](#) to share ideas and Ambassadors to inspire and lead the way. Your commitment and passion to find a cure burns bright and our LACC walk/run is when we shine the brightest. Learn More about our virtual event resources and register today!

## LEARN THE RISKS & SYMPTOMS OF PANCREATIC CANCER

People with certain risk factors may be more likely than others to develop cancer of the pancreas. Pancreatic cancer symptoms are often barely noticeable or could be associated with other medical conditions. It is crucial that we all have a better understanding of [how the pancreas functions](#), what puts [those at higher risk](#), what all of the [known risk factors](#) include and the [symptoms](#) that could indicate cancer. We share these resources and tools in an effort to prevent and detect pancreatic cancer early.

# HIRSHBERG TRAINING TEAM

*Train for the LA Marathon, honor a loved one and cross the finish line*

The iconic LA Marathon is a rewarding and memorable race experience as you run from Dodger Stadium to Century City's Avenue of the Stars! Training is a commitment to your mental and physical health, a great reason to get active, and a priceless opportunity to honor a loved one and raise funds research and patient programs. Plus, we've got great fundraising prizes and HTT gear to help motivate you. With training options that fit even the busiest of schedules, there's nothing stopping you from making the commitment to cross the finish line on Sunday, March 21, 2021. [Register today!](#)

At the Hirshberg Foundation we are committed to supporting the health and wellness of our patients. This National Wellness Month, help **support these services benefitting the pancreatic cancer community by making a [much-needed donation](#) today!**

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## **An Inherited Predisposition to Pancreatic Cancer**

This month, as part of [National Minority Health Month](#), we are highlighting those communities at high-risk for pancreatic cancer. The Ashkenazi Jewish community, like African Americans, have been disproportionately impacted by pancreatic cancer. Increasing awareness in these communities includes sharing

information and providing resources. These tools empower not only high-risk communities but the pancreatic cancer community as a whole. **When pancreatic cancer impacts one group, it impacts us all.**

For decades scientists have investigated the BRCA1 & BRCA2 gene mutations and their connection to cancer. The Johns Hopkins [National Familial Pancreas Tumor Registry](#) (NFPTR) has gained a better understanding of how [BRCA1 & BRCA2](#) gene mutations account for a *portion* of the increased risk for pancreatic cancer for Ashkenazi Jews. According to their research, *“The increased risk of pancreatic cancer associated with inherited BRCA1 mutations is estimated to be about two-fold (about the same increased risk associated with cigarette smoking)”*. In addition, carriers of the BRCA2 gene mutations also have a ten-fold increased risk of developing pancreatic cancer.

The [National Comprehensive Cancer Network](#) (NCCN) recommends genetic counselling for all individuals diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. The Hirshberg Foundation provides resources to encourage families, especially those with a high-risk ancestry, to learn more about how genetics play a role. Watch this Hirshberg Symposium video [“Why Should I See A Genetic Counselor?”](#), presented by Wendy Conlon, MS, a genetic counselor at UCLA. Whether you are of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry or not, genetic testing unlocks some answers to pancreatic cancer and is a resource worth exploring.

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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.**

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

*On March 19, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsome 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.

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](https://zoom.us/support).

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## February is National Cancer Prevention Month

Pancreatic cancer symptoms often go undetected or might be mistakenly associated with other medical conditions. It’s important to know the common [symptoms](#), as anyone experiencing one or more should speak with their doctor.

While the exact cause of pancreatic cancer is not known, certain [risk factors](#) are strongly linked to the disease, including tobacco smoking and obesity. People with specific genetic mutations have a greater risk of developing this disease as well as individuals who have two or more first-degree relatives who have had pancreatic cancer. The risk also increases if there is a history of familial breast, ovarian or colon cancer, familial

melanoma or hereditary pancreatitis.

Take a moment to find out more about the symptoms and risk factors. If you or someone you love is experiencing one or more symptoms, or think there is an increased risk of pancreatic cancer, consult with your doctor today.

[Share this graphic](#) with your community to help raise pancreatic cancer awareness.

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## **Study on Feasibility of Nursing Intervention to Reduce Pain, Depression & Fatigue for Pancreatic Cancer Patients Seeks Volunteers**

The UCLA School of Nursing seeks volunteers to participate in a study that aims to improve the lives of pancreatic cancer patients and caregivers through innovative technology – not additional medicine. This study is the first of its kind to focus on the issues that surround pancreatic cancer, including depression and fatigue.

This project, funded through a 2017 Seed Grant, will look for a link between nurse contact and patient well-being, with online nursing touch-points to help improve depression. The study consists of 5, 10-15 minute long questionnaires over the course of 12 weeks. If you are a pancreatic cancer patient or

caregiver, you may be eligible to participate in this study!

### **Am I Eligible?**

You are eligible if you have been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer or you are a caregiver for someone with pancreatic cancer, and you have no history of dementia, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia.

### **What Do I Have to Do During the Study?**

- You will be asked to complete an initial questionnaire that will ask you about your mood, symptoms, medication management, sleep, social support, quality of life, and satisfaction with care. This will take about 10-15 minutes to complete.
- You will be asked to complete additional questionnaires during the 2, 4, 6, and 12 weeks after enrollment.
- If you and your caregiver do not have depressive symptoms, we will ask you to use the [chemoWave](#) app to track your symptoms for 12 weeks.
- If you or your caregiver have depressive symptoms, you will both receive 6-weeks of online cognitive behavioral therapy (iCBT) at no cost.

### **What happens during iCBT?**

- You will have access to MoodGym, an online cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) program.
- You will have weekly online sessions with the nurse therapist to talk about depressive thoughts and how to cope with them.

### **What Do I Get From the Study?**

- Free symptom management tools, including chemoWave and iCBT

- Greater insights into your treatment via symptom tracking
- Knowledge that you're helping researchers learn about interventions to improve quality of life and depressive symptoms for pancreatic cancer patients and caregivers
- Chance to be entered into a raffle for a \$150 Amazon gift card

For more information and to sign up for this study, contact Belinda Chen.

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<https://www.nursing.ucla.edu/node/511>