



A New Take on Life with Leukemia

“I thought it was just the flu. It ended up being something far more serious.”

During the 2014 holiday season, Pat Mostacci of Hamilton started feeling exhausted. By December 27, he was experiencing fever, chills and sweats.

Pat visited Hamilton Health Sciences' Urgent Care Centre, where blood work indicated that he had zero neutrophils, which are white blood cells that fight infections in the body. He was referred to Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre, where he was diagnosed with leukemia.

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 Juravinski Hospital
and Cancer Centre
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SPRING/SUMMER 2019

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(Continued from page 1) “I was in denial at first,” recalls Pat. “Accepting that diagnosis was one of the most difficult experiences of my life.”

Pat’s treatment included 28 days of chemotherapy, as well as a surgical procedure at Hamilton General Hospital to have an ommaya reservoir inserted into his brain. It is a catheter system that allows medication to be delivered directly into the brain, as well as spinal fluid to be extracted for testing.

“After my initial chemotherapy protocol ended, I felt anxious about being discharged home,” says Pat. “Although I was excited to spend more time with my family, I was hesitant to leave such a safe place with the best of the best looking after me.”

Even though Pat was back home, the cancer journey was far from over. He underwent radiation treatment for 20 days as an outpatient, followed by two years of additional chemotherapy.

In February 2017, he underwent a bone marrow test to check for signs of cancer. He was relieved to learn that the cancer was remission.

“I am alive today because of the amazing people at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre,” he says. “I’ve gained a new perspective on the important things in life. I’ll never be able to thank them enough for the gift they’ve given me.”



To watch a video about Pat’s story or to make a donation, visit hamiltonhealth.ca/patm

Food for Thought about Cancer and Nutrition



Food is fuel for the body. For cancer patients, having the right fuel is more important than ever.

“People with cancer have a higher risk of malnutrition for a number of reasons,” explains Astrid Quenneville, a Registered Dietitian at Juravinski Hospital and

Cancer Centre. “For example, it’s like they’re running a constant marathon in terms of the energy demands imposed on them by the cancer.”

As a member of the multi-disciplinary care team, Astrid works with patients to evaluate their individual requirements and tailor a specific nutrition care plan to meet their needs.

“I help people prevent weight loss, particularly the loss of lean body mass,” she says. “I also help people navigate the side effects of treatment that can impact their ability to eat.”

Some patients may experience nausea, difficulty swallowing or loss of appetite. Chemotherapy and radiation treatment may also cause some foods to taste bland or unpleasant.

“I find it gratifying to work directly with patients and families, journeying with them during a difficult time and helping them develop effective strategies as their relationship with food changes.”

Unraveling Cancer Genes

Every patient's cancer is unique in terms of its genetic makeup and how it responds to various forms of treatment. Dr. Rosalyn Juergens and her research team are evaluating new genetic-testing procedures that provide insight into the genes that form various types of cancer.

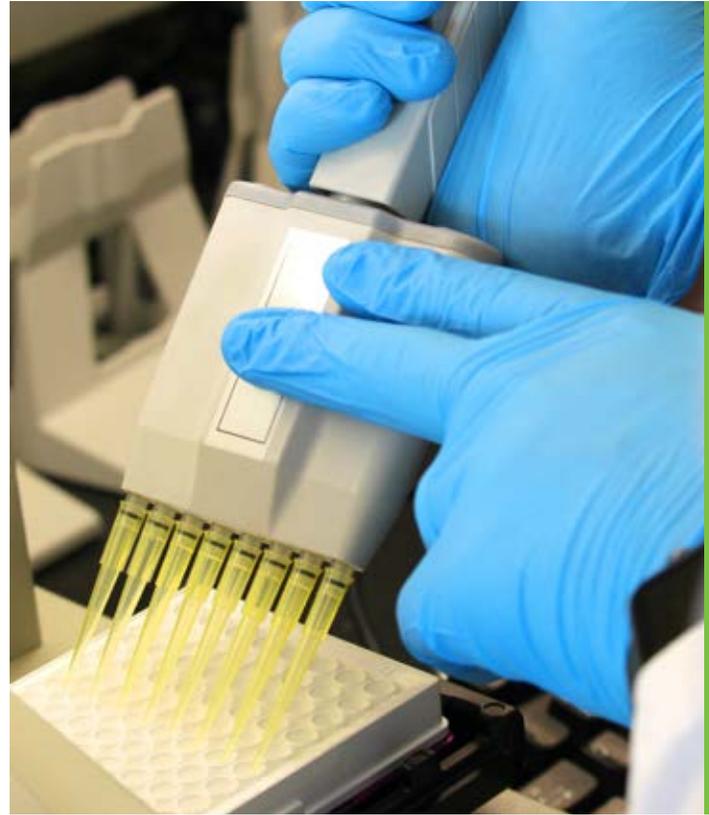
"My team was fortunate to receive seed funding from the Foundation for this research initiative," says Dr. Juergens. "This funding was made possible by the generosity of donors and is helping us revolutionize how we test tumours."

In the past, tissue samples were sent to the lab for

a single genetic test. With "next-generation sequencing" of cancer genes, a number of different tests are conducted with a single tissue sample, increasing efficiency and shortening the turnaround time for receiving test results.

Clinicians are then able to initiate the appropriate therapy sooner. This can have a significant impact on patient outcomes.

"As we continue to gain a greater understanding of how different cancers work at a genetic level, we continue to take cancer research and treatment to the next level."



Mental Health Support for Cancer Patients

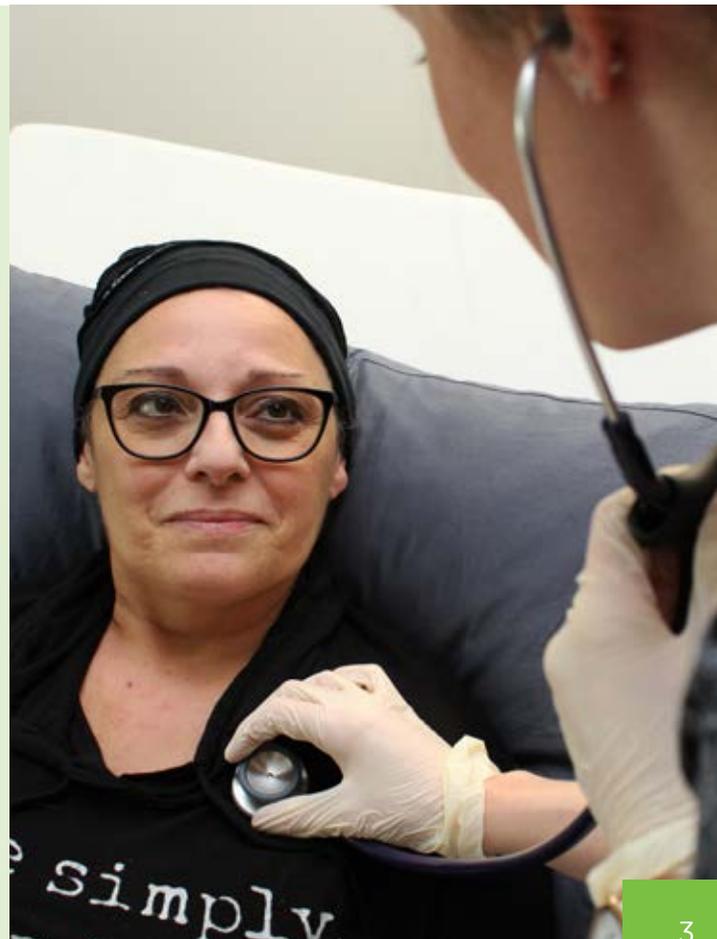
Mental health matters in cancer care. In an effort to better meet the needs of cancer patients and their families, proceeds from The Foundation's inaugural *Illuminight* fundraising event will enable the addition of a mental health program at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre.

"Mental health is such an important part of cancer care because cancer affects the whole person – physically, emotionally and socially," says Georgia Georgiou, Director of the Integrated Cancer Treatment Services Program. "Taking care of a

patient's mental health is as important as taking care of their physical health."

The redevelopment of clinical spaces to ensure the appropriate therapeutic environment for these services is vital to the program's operation. These spaces will support private and family counselling, as well as group therapy.

"Having in-house access to psychosocial experts will allow us to better address the full scope and severity of our patients' mental health needs during such a difficult time in their lives," says Georgia.





A walk to shine a light on cancer
Friday, October 4
hamiltonhealth.ca/illuminight



NEW LOCATION:
Dyment's Farm
- 416 Fallsview Rd E, Dundas

Register and fundraise in support of the Cancer Program at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre!

A Legacy of Care

Elizabeth Wensley lost her husband Steve to cancer in 2017. A former health care professional herself, Elizabeth appreciated the outstanding care provided by the hematology team during Steve's journey.

To honour her husband's memory, Elizabeth established a \$10,000 bursary called *The Steve Hopkins Bursary for Hematology Care*. The bursary supports ongoing education and professional development for hematology staff at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre, enhancing their ability to provide comprehensive and holistic care to patients and families.

Hematology (the study of blood cancers and disorders) is a rapidly evolving field. This bursary will help staff remain at the forefront of hematological care and enrich the patient experience at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre.



Sandy McLean, Clinical Leader, Hematology Inpatient Unit, was the spring 2018 bursary recipient.

2018 Donor Report Now Available

Our donors and partners make a vital difference for patients and families across south-central Ontario. The *2018 Donor Report* features stories about how donors have helped purchase leading-edge equipment, enhance clinical spaces, support innovative research and enable continuing education for staff.

Visit hamiltonhealth.ca/2018report to view the report online, or request a print copy by contacting our office at 905-522-3863 or info@hamiltonhealth.ca.



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