

Finding Emotional Support

Young adult melanoma survivor thanks CancerCare

Three years ago, Jonah, 31, was enjoying life in Brooklyn when he was diagnosed with stage III melanoma. The diagnosis came as a shock. Jonah began a course of chemotherapy, and experienced difficult side effects from his treatment, including dramatic weight loss. Jonah had insurance, but the doctor's bills were very expensive. The emotional effects of his diagnosis also started to take a toll. He was anxious, depressed, and felt totally unprepared for the life changes that can come with cancer.

Jonah had a wonderful support system through friends and family both local and around the country. His friends in the neighborhood organized meals, and hosted a benefit at a local bar to raise money for his medical expenses. Still, Jonah was finding that cancer was "an incredible rollercoaster." His stage III melanoma quickly became stage IV, and coping with his cancer changed from a "part-time job to a full-time job."

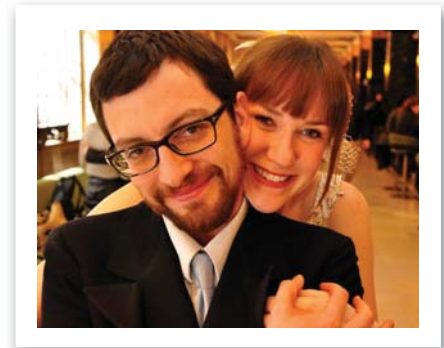
Then a friend told Jonah about CancerCare, and he gave us a call. CancerCare was there to provide emotional support services

to him and his wife, Kathryn. Kathryn joined a caregiver support group, and Jonah took part in a support group for young adult survivors. Jonah also meets regularly with one of our oncology social workers, Sarah Kelly. "I get so much out of my sessions with Sarah," he says. "It's a gift to be able to meet regularly, for free, with someone who understands so intimately the challenges of a cancer diagnosis."

"The first thing I say is go to CancerCare right now."


Through his support group, Jonah also learned about First Descents, an organization that allows young adult cancer survivors to participate in whitewater kayaking and other adventure sports, free of charge. Jonah went kayaking in Colorado, where he had an amazing time connecting with other young adult survivors, and getting some fresh air outside of New York City.

After chemotherapy, Jonah's treatment transitioned to participation in clinical trials of new melanoma drugs. His current treatment is going very well, and he's



Jonah and his wife, Kathryn

had three cancer-free CT scans. He is still dealing with side effects, such as joint pain and lymphedema, but he is coping well thanks to the support of family, friends and CancerCare. He's managing a new store in his neighborhood specializing in locally made products, and looking forward to having a formal wedding ceremony with his wife this summer.

Jonah is grateful for the support of CancerCare. "I didn't know the scope, or how dramatic and invasive the process [of cancer treatment] would be. The emotional support really made a big difference." Now, if someone Jonah knows is diagnosed with cancer, "The first thing I say is go to CancerCare right now." 



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The Right Information



A cancer diagnosis comes with a lot of questions. A newly diagnosed individual needs information about his or her cancer,

the treatment options, and where he or she can turn for help. And the questions don't stop once treatment begins. People undergoing treatment may wonder about side effects, new therapies, and how to cope.

CancerCare is here to help people with cancer find answers to their questions, through our toll-free Helpline, wide range of publications, and Connect® Education Workshops. We strive to connect people to the resources they need that will help make their cancer experience a little easier.

Our cover story features Jonah, a young adult diagnosed with melanoma. Jonah had no idea what to expect when he began his treatment, but CancerCare was there to provide emotional support and guidance along his cancer journey.

I am so proud of our programs, and the people that make help like this possible. On page 3 you'll read about oncology social worker Sarah Kelly, who in addition to helping clients like Jonah in person, answers the CancerCare Helpline and connects callers to the resources they need.

You'll also meet Dr. Susan Slovin, an oncologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York, who volunteers her time as a presenter for our Connect Education Workshops, answering people's questions about prostate cancer.

Thanks to friends like you, we are able to provide our services free of charge, to anyone who needs them. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Helen H. Miller, LCSW
CEO

Volunteer Spotlight



CancerCare is grateful to the medical professionals who volunteer their time and expertise as presenters in our Connect Education Workshop Series. In this edition, we'd like you to meet **Susan Slovin, MD, PhD**.

Dr. Slovin is a longtime Connect Education Workshop presenter, and has many times offered her medical expertise to listeners about the latest prostate cancer research and treatments. She appreciates the opportunity to keep patients up-to-date on their treatment options and working with other physicians in her field. She particularly enjoys the Q&A portion of the workshops, where patients' questions are often challenging and thought-provoking.



Dr. Slovin

"CancerCare is a magnificent organization that really makes a difference."

"The questions are a lot of fun for me," she says. "Sometimes you have the ability to right a misconception, give patients hope, and help them redirect concerns to their doctors, leading to a better doctor-patient relationship."

It is this relationship between the patient and his or her health care team that Dr. Slovin strives to facilitate. In her experience, participants in the workshops are very knowledgeable about their diagnoses, but are sometimes hesitant to ask their health care team important questions.

She hopes that the workshops help people affected by cancer to communicate more effectively with their physicians, and not be afraid to ask questions about their diagnosis or ask for a second opinion. "Knowledge is empowerment," she says.

Visit www.cancercare.org/connect to listen to Dr. Slovin on our podcast, "**What's New in Metastatic Prostate Cancer.**"

Susan Slovin, MD, PhD is Associate Attending Physician, Genitourinary Oncology Service, Sidney Kimmel Center for the Treatment of Prostate & Urologic Cancers, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Associate Professor of Medicine, Department of Medicine, Weill College of Cornell University.

Upcoming Connect Education Workshops

Connect Workshops can be listened to live over the telephone and on the internet. The workshops can also be replayed as podcasts on the web or via telephone.

- **June 28: Progress in the Treatment of Multiple Myeloma**
- **June 29: Cancer and the Workplace**
- **June 30: Current Trends in Oral and Head and Neck Cancer**

Visit www.cancercare.org/connect for more information or to register for these free workshops.

Event Spotlight

Partnerships in Hope

Nearly 300 people attended the Partnerships in Hope dinner, held on February 24 in New York City. The dinner honored three health care luminaries dedicated to supporting people affected by cancer: **The Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research, Eli Lilly and Company, and Morphotek, Inc.**

William R. Reader, a CancerCare client, shared his story of how CancerCare helped him to cope with the loss of his partner Lester to pancreatic cancer.



William Reader with dinner host, actress S. Epatha Merkerson

“There was a lifeline available...with an anguished call for help, the people of CancerCare not only threw Lester and me a rope but drew us into their caring and professional world. I still struggle to find the words to describe the feeling that we were no longer alone, that there were people who would help us.”

Girls Night Out

The 9th Annual Girls Night Out: Babes, Baubles and Bubbles in Norwalk, Conn. raised over \$30,000 in support of CancerCare's services. Guests enjoyed shopping, dancing and refreshments. Thank you to everyone who donated and attended!



Guests enjoyed a night of shopping in support of CancerCare.

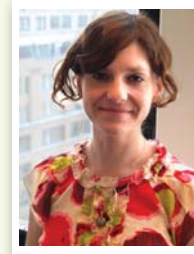
Walk for Hope



Participation in our Pennsylvania walk doubled over last year!

On Saturday, April 9 CancerCare hosted the Walk for Hope in Milford, Penn. Over 200 number of people walked in support of CancerCare's free professional services.

The People Behind Our Mission



Sarah Kelly,
LMSW,
Oncology Social
Worker

“I have always been involved in service in one form or another, volunteering with various non-profit organizations throughout my life including after-school programs, senior centers and hospitals. What really drew me to CancerCare was how its services affected clients I was working with. I was in my second year of a social work internship at a senior center and was looking for services for my clients diagnosed with cancer. I remember calling CancerCare and afterwards thinking, ‘This organization is amazing.’ The literature, support and overall quality of care my clients received was incredible.

“Every individual’s reaction to a cancer diagnosis is different, but the one thing we do know is that no one is emotionally unaffected. Clients and their loved ones bring with them their physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and practical needs, as well as their own personal histories. Each person experiences cancer in his or her own way. It is important to me as a social worker to validate the experience for them, taking their individual needs into account. I try to help clients and their loved ones know that they are not alone in the feelings that come up for them and the struggles they face, and to provide guidance to help them cope. I’d like clients to think of CancerCare as a place they can come to find solace and support, as well as information and financial help.

“I have been working here as a social worker for over three years and feel honored to be a part of this organization. The most rewarding part of my job is being with clients on their journey and knowing, even if it is only through a brief conversation on the CancerCare Helpline, that I have been able to provide some assistance and hope to someone affected by cancer.”

Bulletin Board

Melanoma Resources

Have you or a loved one been diagnosed with melanoma?

Toll-Free Helpline:

Call the Melanoma Research Foundation's (MRF) toll-free helpline at **1-877-MRF-6460 (673-6460)** for reliable information, emotional support, and helpful resources. The helpline is a partnership of CancerCare and the MRF.

Publications:

- *Advances in the Treatment of Melanoma*
- "Melanoma: Causes and Prevention"
- "Risk Factors and Screening for Melanoma"

Visit our website www.cancercare.org/reading_room to read, download or order these free publications. You can also call us at **1-800-813-HOPE (4673)**.

In their Words

The Korea Blood Cancer Association visits CancerCare



"It was a great pleasure and honor to host Lee, Park and Huang. It is an extraordinary opportunity to offer our expertise internationally to better help oncology patients and their caregivers globally."

Dr. Carolyn Messner, DSW, MSW, LCSW-R
Director of Education and Training
CancerCare

J.S. Park and J.H. Lee of the Korea Blood Cancer Association (and their translator Huang) visited our Education Department this past March for tips on how to replicate CancerCare's Connect Education Workshops in Korea.



CANCERCARE®

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Connect with CancerCare Online

Learn about upcoming programs, events, and services:

-  Become a fan on Facebook
-  Follow us on Twitter
-  Read our blog, *CopeLink*, at www.copelink.org

Support Groups

CancerCare offers online, telephone and face-to-face support groups that connect you with other people who are in a similar situation. All support groups are free and led by professional oncology social workers who are experienced with cancer-related issues and concerns.

To learn more, call us at 1-800-813-4673 or email info@cancercare.org.

New Fact Sheets

- "Caring for Your Bones When You Have Prostate Cancer"
- "Prostate Cancer: What you Should Know About Screening and Diagnosis"
- "Coping with Side Effects of Breast Cancer Treatment" (in English and Spanish)
- "Multiple Myeloma: Coping with Side Effects of Targeted Treatments"

Visit our website www.cancercare.org/reading_room or call 1-800-813-4673.