

Supportive Services Update

January 2024

Welcome

Happy New Year! This phrase can bring up many feelings for patients, families and staff. Some are relieved that the last year is over. Others are anxious about the new one ahead. Many are hopeful; some are distressed. When dealing with cancer, sometimes it's easier to take it day by day or week by week versus thinking about a whole new year.

Here at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, we support you no matter how you are feeling about the new year. We wish you peace, warmth and cherished moments ahead.

We always love to hear from you so don't hesitate to connect with us at any time:

Laura O'Brien at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre
306-766-2512

Lindsay Kostyniuk at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre
306-655-2672



What's Inside

- Upcoming Groups
- New Year's Resolutions
- Stress Relief: Mazes
- Accelerated Resolution Therapy
- Finding Reliable Nutrition Information Online
- Recipe: Citrus Quinoa Avocado Salad
- Community Spotlight: Melanoma Canada

Upcoming Groups

One Breath

An Anticipatory Grief Group
Available at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre

One Breath is a 5 week anticipatory grief group offered to patients and/or loved ones. The group will allow participants to discuss and share their thoughts and feelings surrounding a terminal illness. We will reflect on topics such as coping strategies, legacy work, self-care, forgiveness, and creating moments of connection.

The next group is being offered in Regina starting February 28 - March 27 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Facilitators are LaRae Beebe and Monica Filipchuk.

To learn more or to register, call 306- 766-2973.



Facilitator LaRae Beebe, RSW, BSW

Androgen Deprivation Therapy Class

For prostate cancer patients starting on ADT and their partners
Available in Regina, Saskatoon and virtually



Regina ADT Group Facilitator
Stacey Burkhart

Participants will receive:

- An overview of what to expect from ADT
- Learn specific ways to manage side effects
- Get strategies to help them succeed in making lifestyle changes



Saskatoon ADT Facilitator
Rachelle Kosokowsky

Participants receive a free copy of the book, "Androgen Deprivation Therapy: An Essential Guide for Prostate Cancer Patients and their Loved Ones" by Richard J. Wassersug PhD, Lauren Walker PhD and John Robinson

Classes are held once a month in Regina and Saskatoon. Virtual options are also available at lifeonadt.com.

To register, call (306) 766-2973 (Regina) or (306) 655-7484 (Saskatoon)

Did you know that the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has social workers to support you during your cancer diagnosis.? Social workers can assist with personal and relational concerns, emotional support, coping strategies, practical matters, and make referrals to community resources. Ask your healthcare team to refer you to a social worker for support.

New Year's Resolutions

New Years Resolutions. People tend to love them or hate them. On one hand, making resolutions promote self-reflection and are a great way to start good habits. On the other hand, they can be unrealistic, unattainable and create stress and a sense of failure if you don't follow through with them.

Whether choosing to make a New Year's resolution this year or simply looking for ways to improve your lifestyle and help you better cope with cancer and its treatment, here are five ideas for maximizing your physical and emotional strength this year.

1. Regular Exercise

For many cancer patients, the idea of following an exercise program while you're going through cancer treatment is overwhelming. But even small amounts of exercise – such as walking around the block or 15 minutes of yoga – will provide long-term benefits, including reducing fatigue, maintaining physical ability and strength, improved sleep, and reducing anxiety and depression.

If you regularly exercised before cancer treatment, try not to compare your current pace and workout intensity to what you used to do. Listen to your body and be as consistent as you can. And don't forget to consult your doctor before beginning a new exercise routine.

2. Engage in Meditation

Meditation is a therapy based on the connection between the mind and the body and how the health of one affects the health of the other. It involves focusing on the present moment and becoming aware of sensations in the body and your feelings and thoughts. Meditation can help with anxiety, depression, stress, sleep problems and pain. You can choose from several methods of meditation – a few examples are: mindfulness meditation, focused meditation, or prayerful meditation.

Your social worker may be able to help you find a meditation technique that is right for you. Or, try one of the many examples found at <https://www.cancercare.org/meditation-exercises>.

3. Follow a Nutritious Diet

Food may not always sound good, or side effects of treatment can make it hard to eat. But taking in the right amount of calories is still really important for keeping up your strength and maintaining a healthy weight. What you eat while going through cancer treatment may be a little different from your typical diet, Talk to a dietitian at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre or Saskatoon Cancer Centre for personalized nutrition advice for how to eat well while undergoing cancer treatment.

4. Cultivate an "Attitude of Gratitude"

Hearing the phrase "stay positive" can be unhelpful, especially when you have cancer. However, keeping a grateful attitude can make a difference in how you feel. Thankfulness helps people deal with adversity and is consistently linked to greater happiness. Try to find three things each day for which you are grateful. Write them down so you can revisit them when times are hard. This habit will grow stronger the more you engage in it.

5. Let Others Help You

You don't often hear of resolutions that include "allowing others to help me." But as someone with cancer, this is something that you can commit to trying. It's not only good for you but gives your family members and friends a way to feel like they are helping as well. It can also help you avoid feelings of loneliness and isolation.

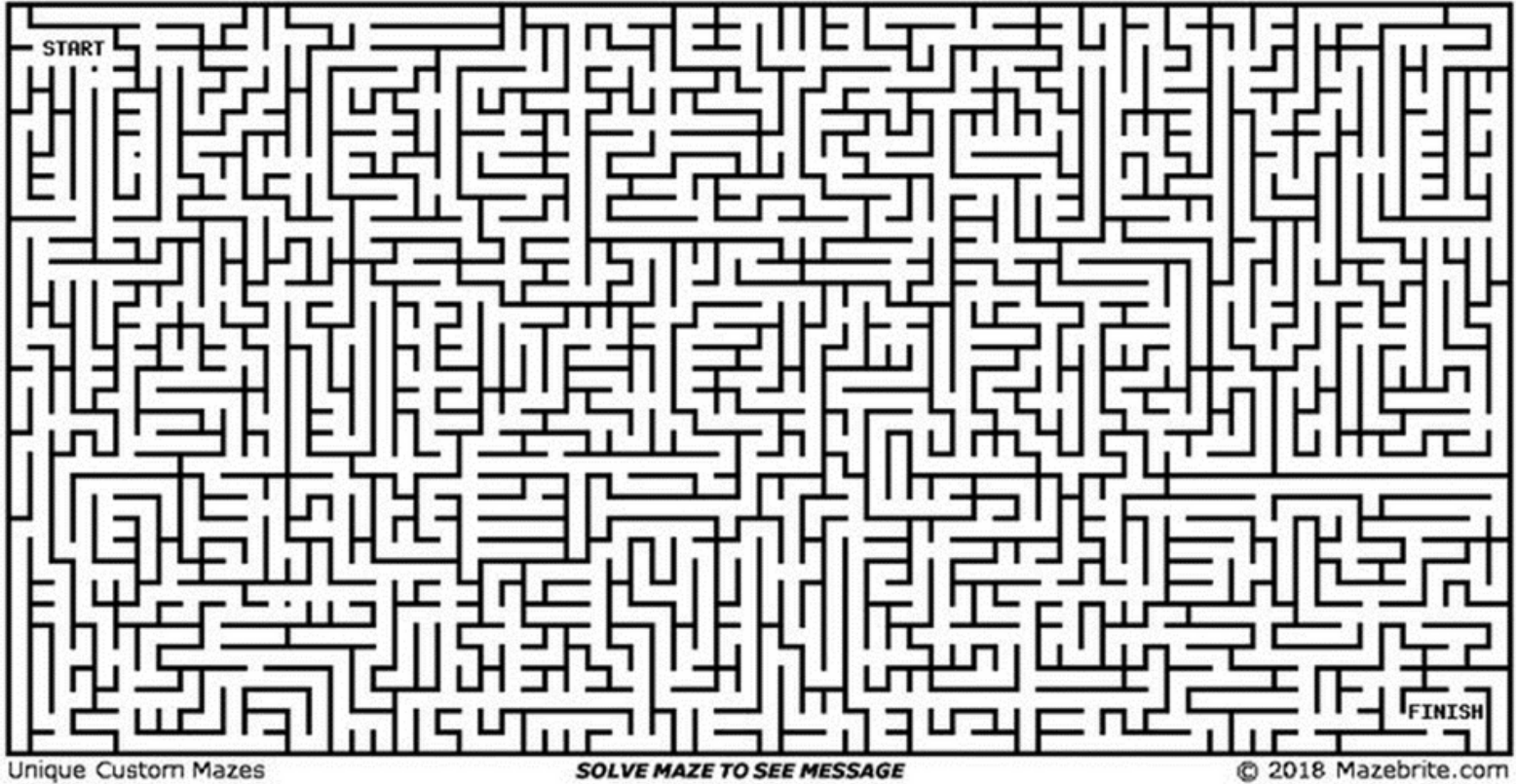
Allow loved ones to bring you a meal or stop by, even if your house isn't in perfect order. Joining a cancer support group may also be helpful as they offer the opportunity to share feelings with people who can understand and relate to your situation, and you can do the same for them. Studies show belonging to such groups makes cancer patients feel more hopeful and less anxious. Both the Allan Blair Cancer Centre and Saskatoon Cancer Centre have support groups available in-person and on-line.

Source: <https://www.compassoncology.com/blog/5-new-years-resolutions-for-cancer-patients>



Mazes for Stress Relief

Have you ever tried completing a maze to alleviate stress and anxiety? Mazes are not just for kids. Engaging in maze puzzles can help alleviate stress and anxiety, promote relaxation and a sense of well-being. They are easy to do anywhere, including in waiting rooms, doctor's offices and while taking cancer treatment. Moreover, the sense of accomplishment that comes from completing a challenging maze can boost self-esteem and improve your mood. Give the maze below a try. You might just discover a new activity to enjoy.



Accelerated Resolution Therapy - Available at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre

Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART) is a unique approach to psychotherapy. It combines smooth pursuit eye movement with guided imagery to allow an individual to replace the negative images in the mind that cause the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress with positive images of the client's choosing. Eye movements have been shown to produce theta waves in the brain. Theta waves have been connected to creativity, intuition, daydreaming, and memory formation. To clarify, ART does not replace or change memories, but replaces the negative feelings attached to a memory with positive imagery of the individual's choosing. ART is done quickly, most often within one session! ART is recognized as evidenced-based by the Society of Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association (APA). It has been used to treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, panic attacks, eating disorders, generalized anxiety, generalized depressive disorders, and other conditions. In relation to cancer care, ART can be utilized to address grief and loss, medical anxiety/trauma, and pain management. Currently, the relationship between ART and the treatment of cancer distress is being evaluated at the Mayo Clinic.

Further information about ART can be found at The Rosenzweig Centre for Rapid Recovery Accelerated Resolution Therapy: <https://acceleratedresolutiontherapy.com/>

Should you wish to book an ART session for healing with your cancer journey, please contact Clinical Oncology Social Worker at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, Rachelle Kosokowsky, MSW, RSW at 306-655-7484.

Nutrition Topic: How to Find Reliable Nutrition Information Online

Does your New Year's resolution include eating healthier? Are you overwhelmed with the amount of nutrition information available online? You are not alone! Health Link BC (www.healthlinkbc.ca) has outlined a few "red flags" to watch for when searching for reliable nutrition information online:

- Are you being promised a "quick fix"?
- Are you being asked to purchase specialty products or supplements?
- Is the information based off of individual stories or testimonials?
- Does the evidence provided only include one research article?
- Does the advice focus on a single food or nutrient?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, the article or website you are reading may not be providing you with the most reliable, science-based nutrition recommendations. For cancer-related nutrition advice, we recommend searching reliable websites including Canadian Cancer Society (www.cancer.ca) or the American Institute for Cancer Research (www.aicr.org).

A nutrition-related New Years' resolution does not need to be complicated. Small changes that can be maintained are more beneficial than a complete overhaul of your entire diet. Simply aiming to eat one more vegetable a day can be helpful – get started by trying out the recipe below!

Recipe

Citrus Quinoa Avocado Salad

(Makes 4 Servings)

Ingredients:

Salad:

- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup red onion, chopped
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 2 cups spinach, thinly sliced
- 1 can (398 mL) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup quinoa, cooked and cooled
- 2 medium avocados, diced

Dressing:

- Juice of 2 lemons, with zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. honey
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions: Place all salad ingredients in a bowl. Whisk all dressing ingredients together in a separate bowl. Drizzle dressing over salad mixture and gently toss ingredients together until mixed thoroughly.

Each serving provides 390 calories and 11 grams of protein.



Recipe and photo sourced from: <https://www.aicr.org/cancer-prevention/recipes/citrus-quinoa-avocado-salad/>

Have you been unintentionally losing weight or eating less than usual? Do you have specific questions about food and nutrition during or after cancer treatments? Ask your health care team to refer you to a cancer centre dietitian for personalized nutrition advice.