

Finding HOPE in the New Year



As the New Year begins, we find ourselves seeking inspiration to start on a positive note. Look no further than Henry Williams. A native of Dallas, Henry is an active member of his family and a devoted husband to Alma, his wife of over 55 years.

Both Henry and his wife Alma had overcome medical issues in the past but were doing well when Henry began experiencing bouts of lightheadedness. He brushed them off initially, attributing them to low blood sugar. After a more severe reaction on May 3, 2018, he decided it was time to go to the emergency room. The team there ran tests and diagnosed him that day with lung cancer. "It came as a shock," he remembers.

After a two-week hospital stay, Henry began standard of care treatments at Baylor. Chemotherapy and radiation had him at the hospital nearly every day and, while the original tumor was

shrinking, there were two additional lesions that had his doctor's attention.

Henry's oncologist, Dr. Konduri, knew of a trial at Mary Crowley that he thought would suit him and the referral process moved swiftly. "Within about two weeks, I was on a trial." Henry has since been on trial 17-37 which is a combination of 2 drugs. One is an immunotherapy approved by the FDA, and the other is an investigational drug targeting CD73 on the tumor.

Within just three months, **his tumor had shrunk by 15%!** Henry's wife Alma recalls the news, "I cried. We're just so thankful and so grateful for Mary Crowley!" Henry and Alma are now looking forward to the future and a return to the active lifestyle he treasures, including spending time with their many nieces and nephews, working on home projects, and playing dominoes and pool.

When asked about his experience at Mary Crowley, Henry is effusive. "Everyone here is so nice. This was a real blow to me, but they are giving me **HOPE!**"



Patient *Henry Williams*

Approaching Active Resolutions

by Ashley E. Ross, MD PhD

As we start the new year, many of us will have made New Year's resolutions. Among the most common is to exercise more and adherence to this can improve both the quality and quantity of our lives. Currently, 25% of the adult population is physically inactive, and these men and women are at increased risk for the development of multiple health conditions, including cancer. Moreover, only 30-50% of cancer survivors meet physical activity guidelines and roughly 30% are completely inactive and are thus not capitalizing on the survival and quality of life benefits offered by exercise for cancer patients.

The development and growth of cancers is enabled by multiple factors including genomic instability, the presence of cellular growth factors and tumor promoting inflammation. These factors and others may be modulated by exercise. In pre-clinical, animal models of cancer, physical activity has been shown to slow tumor growth by between 30 and 60%. Other pre-clinical research demonstrates that exercise combined with chemotherapy is more efficacious than chemotherapy alone. In humans, obesity has been linked to 13 cancer types and regular exercise has been shown to decrease the risk of developing malignancy.

In 2018, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) held its second roundtable on exercise and cancer prevention and control. The panel found strong evidence that physical activity can lower the risk of developing breast, colon, endometrial, kidney, bladder, esophageal and stomach cancer. The panel additionally found moderate evidence that exercise could decrease the risk of developing lung and liver cancers. The impact of exercise on reducing the risk for developing these cancers was between 10 and 24%. The effects of exercise on cancer specific survival appear greater after diagnosis. In this setting, exercise appears to improve survival by up to 30% in patients with prostate, breast or colorectal cancer. Further, strong evidence suggests that exercise in cancer patients reduces



anxiety, depression, and fatigue, and improves quality of life. Moderate evidence points to exercise induced improvements in sleep and bone health. Indeed, research over the last two decades has debunked the notion that cancer patients should rest and avoid physical activity. On the contrary, it is now recommended that all cancer patients should avoid physical inactivity. Importantly, no study has shown adverse effects of exercise in cancer patients and resistance training appears safe even among those with upper extremity lymphedema.

How much activity is enough? And what resources are available, particularly for cancer patients? The ACSM suggests that the effective "dose" of exercise is 30 minutes of aerobic activity three times a week and 20 minutes of resistance training two times a week. For those needing support when undertaking physical activity, there are multiple community and health care provider supervised exercise programs (more details of the ACSM exercise recommendations and a list of programs can be found at www.exercisemedicine.org/movingthroughcancer). Patients with cancer related co-morbidities and physical impairments are likely best directed to health care provider supervised programs (i.e. FitSTEPS for LIFE, more on that below) while other cancer patients can participate in self directed or community based supervised programs (i.e. Livestrong at the YMCA).

Complementary and Integrative Medicine

by Phyllis Yount, LCSW

You may have heard someone say, "I am going to try a complementary treatment," and wondered what these words meant. Complementary or integrative medicine can be any range of services that can be used alongside scientific treatments to treat disease. These treatments do not replace your standard medical treatment for your disease, but can give you energy and increase your feeling of wellbeing while receiving standard treatment. To answer some of your questions please see below:

- **What types of treatments fall under complementary or integrative medicine?** Biofeedback, acupuncture, aromatherapy and massage fall in this category along with tai chi, reiki, diet therapies, relaxation techniques as well as many more.



- **How do I go about getting someone to help me with a program specifically for me?** Always start the search by talking to your oncologist about your interest and see if they have a practitioner they recommend. You can also look for a clinician that is trained to provide these services by using a website from The Institute for Functional Medicine: <https://www.ifm.org/findapractitioner>.
- **Will this service be covered by insurance?** It is best to talk to the practitioner you are seeing about whether the service can be covered. Some services can be filed with insurance, so it is wise to ask.
- **Can I try complementary practices on my own?** You can start treatments that are interesting to you but should always start by asking your physician if it is safe for you to try these activities. Once you are cleared by your physician, you can participate in a number of great programs available in the Dallas area:

FIT STEPS for LIFE: www.fitstepsforlife.org This organization has many individual programs in East Texas, Dallas Metroplex, Abilene, Arlington, Greenville, and Waco. These programs will provide an exercise regimen that works for you. FIT STEPS program is free with a note from your physician stating you can begin their services.

Cancer Support Community: www.cancersupportcommunity.org This organization is a national organization with multiple locations. They provide a range of complementary programs from relaxation exercises, reiki, chi, and many other great programs depending on the location. The services in this organization are free.

Mary Crowley receives generous grants!

Wilson Foundation

The Jasper L. and Jack Denton Wilson Foundation granted Mary Crowley Cancer Research with \$300,000 to open more innovative clinical trials.

This generous grant will allow Mary Crowley to open more clinical trials for waiting patients and continue to fulfill our charitable mission of bringing hope to cancer patients. A longtime supporter of Mary Crowley, the Wilson Foundation has been instrumental to our ability to serve cancer patients and advance much-needed therapies closer to FDA approval.

Hillcrest Foundation

In October, Mary Crowley Cancer Research received a \$50,000 grant from the Hillcrest Foundation to support renovations to our pharmacy. Mary Crowley Cancer Research's pharmacy is the only facility of its kind in North Texas area dedicated solely to cancer research activities. It is a critical component of our cancer trials program.

The work started in November and should be completed by the end of the year. When completed the pharmacy will have a new HVAC system, and improved air filtration system. This will improve air quality for our patients, their families and the pharmacy staff. It will also allow for better control over the temperature and humidity within the pharmacy providing an even greater degree of safety than before.

Having an on-site pharmacy allows Mary Crowley Cancer Research to provide the best possible care to our patients. We are grateful to Hillcrest Foundation and donors like you for supporting our patients and giving them the best possible facilities.

The Young Texans Against Cancer Present:

STRUT



Development team members Eunice Na and William Bogie accepting the check from YTAC Board Members



Dr. Pamela Waters with her husband, Dr. Patrick Waters

Young Texans Against Cancer (YTAC) Dallas presented Mary Crowley Cancer Research with a check for \$30,000 at its 4th Annual STRUT Fashion Show and Holiday Party. The event was held at Tootsie's and featured models representing each of YTAC's 2019 beneficiaries. Dr. Pamela Waters represented Mary Crowley on the runway, showcasing an outfit from Tootsie's. Attendees closed out the year by honoring the beneficiaries, admiring latest fashions, enjoying holiday cocktails & light bites, and celebrating YTAC Dallas's check presentation.

MARY CROWLEY CANCER RESEARCH *Gives Back!*



Representatives from Mary Crowley volunteered at the Medical City Dallas Children's Fall Carnival on October 31st. The booth featured a Pin the Grin on the Cheshire Cat game and plenty of prizes!

Did you know that donating to Mary Crowley is as easy as buying your groceries and ordering on Amazon? There's no better time to make sure you're giving hope while getting your staples than the beginning of the year!

- Link your Kroger Plus Card at www.kroger.com/account/enrollcommunityrewardsnow.
- To link your Tom Thumb Reward Card, visit the Customer Service counter at your local store to complete a program form and fill in Mary Crowley's charity number, 13757.
- Select Mary Crowley Cancer Research when shopping on AmazonSmile and 0.5% of your purchase price will be donated.



Administrative Offices
12222 Merit Drive
Suite 1500
Dallas, TX 75251

Patient Research Center at Medical City
7777 Forest Lane
Building C | Suite 707
Dallas, TX 75230

1.866.90.CANCER | info@marycrowley.org

www.marycrowley.org

Mary Crowley depends on donors like you.
Your gift directly impacts cancer patients in need
of innovative clinical trials.

Give today at www.marycrowley.org



5 Questions with *Jackeline Castillo*

Jackie has joined the Mary Crowley team as our new Licensed Clinical Social worker - get to know her better!

Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in the Dallas area. I have seen this city change so much over the years. I remember everything always being a "30-minute drive to get anywhere in the DFW area."

How did you first hear about Mary Crowley and what inspired you to work here?

My last job was working at Cancer Support Community North Texas as a resource specialist. I met Phyllis (Mary Crowley's former Social Worker) while working with CSCNT and heard about Mary Crowley through her. I have a passion for learning new things I don't understand. While I have worked with cancer patients, clinical trials were an unknown to me. I love that it's in the DFW area and wanted to better understand how this helped patients.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE getting to know patients and their families. Everyone always has a story to tell and I want to hear about their stories. In many situations, while sharing their story I am able to identify barriers or needs. I can share with them resources that they may not have known have existed.

What is the biggest benefit for patients for having a social worker in the cancer research process?

As a social worker we work hard at trying to minimize the barriers

and looking at ways to avoid future issues to ensure that the patient can continue to be treated as intended. Social workers are a great resource to be able to connect a patient and family to community resources such as transportation, connecting to financial resources, helping patients understand their rights if they work through treatment, finding resources to educate patients on insurance, and of course providing psychosocial support for the whole family. In all the jobs I have had as a social worker, I work on a goal that I believe is important to educate the population. In this field, my focus has been to provide better education on health insurance. I have seen so many pitfalls and situations where a patient, for lack of an understanding, might pick the wrong plan, might overpay because they don't know they can appeal or have to match up bills with explanation of benefits. My hope is that, by educating patients and families, they can make an informed decision about which plans are best for them and potentially lessen their stress.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I love to travel and explore different cultures. I have been fortunate enough to be able to travel to parts of Europe and South America.

