



Support Groups and Wellness Programs

January - April 2012



All services are **FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL**. For a complete month-by-month calendar visit www.supportconnection.org.
Registration required for all groups and programs - 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290.

Support Groups

Support Groups are led by trained facilitators who are cancer survivors and are offered in Westchester, Putnam & Dutchess Counties.

<p>Breast Cancer Support Groups: Join a group of women who have also heard the words “you have breast cancer” as we discuss issues pertaining to all stages of diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment.</p>	<p>Northern Westchester Hospital, Mt. Kisco, NY 1st Thursday of each month - 7:00 pm Mahopac Public Library, Mahopac, NY 3rd Monday of each month - 10:15 am Putnam Hospital, Carmel, NY 3rd Thursday of each month - 7:00 pm Support Connection office, Yorktown Heights, NY 4th Tuesday of each month - 7:00 pm</p>
<p>Young Women’s Breast Cancer Support Group: Join this group of women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer at a young age as we discuss issues pertaining to all stages of diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment.</p>	<p>Support Connection office, Yorktown Heights, NY 2nd Wednesday of each month - 7:00 pm</p>
<p>Breast Cancer National Toll-Free Telephone Support Group - For Women Recently Diagnosed or In Treatment: Speak with other women who are also beginning their journey through the maze of a breast cancer diagnosis. This national teleconference group is open to women across the country.</p>	<p>3rd Tuesday of each month, 8:00 pm (NY time) For instructions to register for this national toll-free teleconference, please call Support Connection IN ADVANCE at 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290</p>
<p>Ovarian Cancer National Toll-Free Telephone Support Group: Speak with other women who have ovarian or gynecological cancer as we discuss issues pertaining to all stages of diagnosis, treatment, and post-treatment. This national teleconference group is open to women across the country.</p>	<p>2nd Wednesday of each month, 8:00 pm (NY time) For instructions to register for this national toll-free teleconference, please call Support Connection IN ADVANCE at 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290.</p>
<p>Breast and Ovarian Cancer Support Groups: Open to women with breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer. We all know there are many common factors to any cancer diagnosis. Join other women who have also been diagnosed as we discuss all stages of diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment.</p>	<p>Support Connection office, Yorktown Heights, NY 1st Thursday of each month - 10:00 am Putnam Hospital, Carmel, NY 2nd Monday of each month - 10:00 am East Fishkill Community Library, Hopewell Junction, NY 2nd Tuesday of each month - 10:15 am Putnam Hospital, Carmel, NY 3rd Wednesday of each month - 7:00 pm</p>
<p>Advanced Stage Cancer Support Group: Open to women with breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer. Join a group of other women who are also living with a recurrent, advanced stage or metastatic cancer.</p>	<p>Support Connection office, Yorktown Heights, NY 3rd Friday of each month - 12:30 pm</p>

Ongoing Wellness Programs

Open to people with breast, ovarian & gynecological cancer. Please obtain your doctor’s approval before participating in any Wellness Program.

<p>Yoga - A Path Toward Wellness: Appropriate for beginners or more advanced students. Emphasis is placed on movement with breath awareness as a way to achieve a more tranquil mind. Experience the benefits of yoga, which include a stronger, healthier body and a calmer, more focused mind.</p>	<p>Club Fit, Jefferson Valley, NY Saturdays - Noon - 1:30 pm (No classes Jan. 14th and April 7th)</p>
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THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM IS OFFERED BY CLUB FIT - Call Support Connection for information - 914-962-6402:

H₂O Water Walking - Designed to increase joint flexibility with the aid of water resistance. This class is taught by Arthritis Association certified instructors. M, W & F, 10:15 - 11:00 am

Upcoming Programs

Toll-Free Teleconference: Intimacy and Sexuality after Cancer

Please join us from the comfort of your home for this Toll-Free Educational Teleconference: "Intimacy and Sexuality After Cancer." In addition to offering educational information, the teleconference format enables women to make connections with and gain support from other women, regardless of where they live.

Guest speaker will be **Mindy R. Schiffman, PhD**, a senior staff psychologist at the NYU Fertility Center. Dr Schiffman is a clinical instructor in NYU's obstetrics and gynecology department, and has a private practice in individual and couple counseling, and sex therapy. She completed a post-doctoral fellowship in Psycho-oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and held a joint appointment in the Human Sexuality Program at New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center.

Topics to be covered include:

- Removing the stigma: Normalizing the impact of cancer on sexuality and intimacy.
- Body image, sexuality, intimacy, and your relationship after cancer.
- Explicit discussion of sexual difficulties after cancer: Has anyone seen my libido?
- Recommendations and resources for improving one's experience

In addition, there will be an open discussion where participants can ask questions, share their concerns, offer support and information to one another, and learn ways to cope with the impact of cancer. **Robin Perlmutter**, Support Connection Clinical Director, will help facilitate the discussion.

To participate, please call **IN ADVANCE** to register and receive instructions. On the night of the teleconference, participants will call a special toll-free number and be connected with the group. To learn more or to register, call Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or 1-800-532-4290.

Open to Women Living with breast, ovarian and gynecological cancers. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 25, 2012, 7:00-8:30pm
Presenter: Mindy Schiffman, PhD
To Register: Advance Registration Required. Call Support Connection at 914-962-6402 or 1-800-532-4290.

Meditation

Meditation includes a wide range of techniques you can practice any time, in any way, and anywhere. In this six session workshop, instructor **Chun Kim-Levin** will gently guide you to experience many different ways to practice meditation so that you can reap its benefits. Some of these benefits include slowing and deepening breath, relaxing the nervous system, muscles and tendons, increasing the efficiency of the immune system, aiding in blood flow and heart efficiency, and increasing digestive system functioning.

Chun Kim-Levin, MPA, RN, HN-BC, CYT has been a healthcare professional for over 35 years, with 15 years of healthcare management experience. In 1997 Chun made a major career change, founding Life-Spring Holistic Services.

Open to people living with breast, ovarian and gynecological cancers. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Thursday evenings, January 19 & 26, and February 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2012, 6:30-7:30pm
Instructor: Chun Kim-Levin
Location: Mahopac Public Library, Mahopac, NY
To register, please call Support Connection at 914-962-6402.

Knitting Circle

Whether your New Years resolution was to learn something new or finish a project, our Knitting Circle is for you.

Join the Knitting Circle and add a little color to those short winter days. We have yarn and knitting needles to share with those of you willing to try something new. For our more seasoned knitters there is always shared information and ideas.

Every year, in June, some very lucky guests leave our Celebrate Life Day luncheon with a handmade item from our knitters. This could be the year you warm up the life of another survivor.

Open to people living with breast, ovarian and gynecological cancer. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Thursdays - January 26, February 23, March 22, & April 26, 2012, 6:30-8:00 pm
Presenter: Marge Weiner
Location: Support Connection, Yorktown Heights, NY
To register, please call Support Connection, 914-962-6402.

Drumming Circle

Join us for an exciting workshop of rhythms, songs, and instruments from around the world. This workshop, facilitated by **Maya Benattar**, will provide an opportunity to connect with our own personal internal rhythms, and create powerful group rhythms together. Drumming is a great way to release stress, increase energy, and have fun! All are welcome- absolutely no previous music experience is needed.

Maya Benattar MA, MT-BC, LCAT is a board-certified music therapist and NYS licensed creative arts therapist. She holds an MA in Music Therapy from New York University, and a BS in Music Therapy from SUNY New Paltz. She is a trained Health Rhythms facilitator, having completed training with Remo, an international drum company. Maya enjoys helping people explore music to access their creativity and release stress.

Open to people living with breast, ovarian and gynecological cancers. Pre registration is required.

Drumming Circle continued on page 3

Upcoming Programs

Drumming Circle *continued from page 2*

Date & Time: Wednesday, March 14, 2012, 6:30-8:00 pm
Instructor: Maya Benattar
Location: St. Marks Episcopal Church, Mt. Kisco, NY
To register, please call Support Connection at 914-962-6402.

Lymphedema After Breast Cancer

When a person has lymph nodes removed and/or undergoes radiation therapy, they are at risk to develop lymphedema. This workshop will focus on the following:

- What is Lymphedema and who is at risk?
- How to prevent Lymphedema (including skin care precautions) and how to avoid causing a tourniquet effect (cutting off circulation in the affected limb)
- Current treatment methods - Manual Lymphatic Drainage, options for Compression Therapy (multiple-layered bandaging vs a compression sleeve), Compression Pumps and Exercise
- Common myths associated with Lymphedema, e.g. whether or not to travel by plane with a compression sleeve, etc)

Presenter **Michele Berliner** is a physical therapist specializing in Breast Cancer Rehabilitation and a Certified Lymphedema Therapist. Currently practicing at Access Physical Therapy and Wellness in Armonk, Ms. Berliner began her career at the RUSK Institute, later working at a private practice in New York City where she assisted in launching a Breast Cancer and Lymphedema Rehabilitation Program. She has lectured to physicians and the community on this topic and also presented a research study on breast cancer patients and the effects of lymphedema therapy on their quality of life.

Open to women living with breast cancer. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 7:00-8:30 pm
Presenter: Michele Berliner
Location: United Methodist Church, Mt. Kisco, NY
To register, please call Support Connection, 914-962-6402.

Nutrition

Dr. Barry Boyd will speak about the role of integrative care in cancer, focusing attention on the impact of nutrition and lifestyle on cancer survival and overall well-being. He will address seemingly conflicting research findings, bringing them together with a broader, more comprehensive view. Some highlights will include:

- Common misperceptions about cancer and nutrition.
- The role of “energy balance” (nutrition + activity) on cancer risk and survival.
- The possible influence of blood glucose, insulin and individual metabolism.
- Recent research on exercise and cancer survival.
- Potential benefits of dietary supplements.

D. Barry Boyd, M.D., M.S. has 23 years experience as a board-certified medical oncologist/hematologist and a Master's degree in nutritional biochemistry, with a recognized specialization in cancer treatment and recovery. He is a pioneer in the field of integrative cancer care with a focus on nutritional support for cancer patients and the healing process.

Dr. Boyd attended the Institute for Human Nutrition at Columbia University and received his medical degree from Cornell University Medical College. He completed a fellowship in Hematology-Oncology at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center in New York and is presently an attending physician at Greenwich Hospital – Yale Medical Center. Dr. Boyd is an assistant clinical professor at the Yale University School of Medicine and has been appointed Director of the Nutrition and Integrative Medicine Curriculum at Yale University School of Medicine.

Dr. Boyd is founding president of The Integrative Cancer Care Research Foundation and has also recently published a book entitled, *The Cancer Recovery Plan*.

Open to people living with breast, ovarian cancer and gynecological cancers. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 7:00-8:30 pm
Presenter: D. Barry Boyd, M.D., M.S.
Location: Somers Public Library, Somers, NY
To register, please call Support Connection, 914-962-6402.

Connecting Through Loss Men's Open Discussion Group

Support Connection is opening its doors to support those of you who have lost your wives. Connect with each other and see firsthand, as your wives did while they battled their disease, that you are not alone.

We understand that what your wives received from attending a support group or speaking with a peer counselor was, at times, mystifying. Join us for a better understanding of how Support Connection helped your wives, as well as an open exchange of personal experiences, concerns and support. The discussion will be facilitated by **Mike Murphy**, a member of our Board of Directors who lost his wife to breast cancer, and **Andrea Karl**, Peer Counselor.

This program is open to widowers whose wives have utilized our services. Pre registration is required.

Date & Time: Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 7:00 - 9:00 pm
Facilitators: Mike Murphy and Andrea Karl
Location: Support Connection, Yorktown Heights, NY
To register, please call Support Connection, 914-962-6402.

Music Reduces Anxiety in People with Cancer

People with cancer may benefit from sessions with trained music therapists or from listening to music. A new Cochrane systematic review* shows using music can reduce anxiety in people with cancer, and it may also have positive effects on mood, pain, and quality of life.

Music and music therapy are used in a wide range of clinical settings. Treatments range from people listening to pre-recorded music, to music therapists engaging people in music experiences to improve psychological and physical well-being. In the review, researchers focused on trials with people with any kind of cancer who were offered music or music therapy sessions.

“The evidence suggests that music interventions may be useful as a complementary treatment to people with cancer.”

The researchers analyzed evidence from nearly 2,000 people taking part in 30 trials. Thirteen trials used trained music therapists, while in the remaining 17 trials, participants listened to pre-recorded music. The results show that compared to standard treatments, music reduced anxiety considerably, based on clinical anxiety scores. Some trials reported much larger beneficial effects than others did. The results also suggest that music therapy may increase a person’s quality of life. There was some benefit in music for mood and pain, but not depression. Smaller beneficial effects were seen for heart rate, respiratory rate, and blood pressure.

“The evidence suggests that music interventions may be useful as a complementary treatment to people with cancer,” says lead researcher Joke Bradt of the department of Creative Arts Therapies at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. “Music interventions provided by trained music therapists as well as listening to pre-recorded music both have shown positive outcomes in this review, but at this time there is not enough evidence to determine if one intervention is more effective than the other.”

This article was originally published in Coping® with Cancer magazine, September/October 2011.

**Cochrane Reviews are systematic reviews of primary research in human health care and health policy, and are internationally recognised as the highest standard in evidence-based health care. They investigate the effects of interventions for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. They are published online in The Cochrane Library.*

Healing Journey

Yoga proves to be an ideal approach to self-care for cancer survivors

Yoga can be a valuable part of the process of healing and recovery from [cancer], and classes for cancer patients and survivors are readily available. “Yoga can help women who have cancer find solace and learn to deeply care for themselves,” says Linda Sparrowe, a yoga teacher who co-leads yoga and meditation retreats for women touched by cancer.

New academic research backs this up. Several studies published this year show that yoga offers effective relief from the physical and mental effects of the disease and the side effects of treatment. These effects include symptoms such as fatigue, pain, swelling, stiffness, stress and depression.

Yoga can also help survivors regain trust in their bodies. In a study at Indiana University, Bloomington, women who participated in an eight week hatha yoga program were stronger and more flexible, felt less self-conscious about scars from surgeries, and were more accepting of their changed bodies.

Excerpted from an article that was published in YogaJournal.com, October 2011.

The Benefits of Meditation

MIT and Harvard neuroscientists explain why the practice helps tune out distractions and relieve pain.

Studies have shown that meditating regularly can help relieve symptoms in people who suffer from chronic pain, but the neural mechanisms underlying the relief were unclear. Now, MIT and Harvard researchers have found a possible explanation for this phenomenon.

In a study published online April 21 in the journal *Brain Research Bulletin*, the researchers found that people trained to meditate over an eight-week period were better able to control a specific type of brain waves called alpha rhythms.

According to Christopher Moore, an MIT neuroscientist and senior author of the paper, “Our data indicate that meditation training makes you better at focusing, in part by allowing you to better regulate how things that arise will impact you.”

For this study, the researchers recruited 12 subjects who had never meditated before. Half of the participants were trained in a technique called mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) over an eight-week period, while the other half were told not to meditate.

The researchers did brain scans of the subjects before the study began, three weeks into it, and at the end of eight weeks. At eight weeks, the subjects who had been trained in meditation showed larger changes in the size (amplitude) of their alpha waves when asked to pay attention to a certain body part — for example, “left foot.” These changes in wave size also occurred more rapidly in the meditators.

The study is a “beautiful demonstration” of the effects of meditation training, and of the ability to cultivate an internal awareness of one’s own bodily sensations, says Clifford Saron, associate research scientist at the Center for Mind and Brain at the University of California at Davis, who was not involved in the research.

The findings suggest that in pain sufferers who meditate, the beneficial effects may come from an ability to essentially turn down the volume on pain signals.

The subjects trained in meditation also reported that they felt less stress than the non-meditators. “Their objective condition might not have changed, but they’re not as reactive to their situation,” Kerr says. “They’re more able to handle stress.”

Excerpted from The Benefits of Meditation, MIT News, <http://web.mit.edu/news/office/2011/meditation-0505.html>