Your Support Makes Better Medicine Possible for Patients With Cancer

From diagnosis to treatment to recovery, Northwestern Medicine is there for patients so they are never alone when they have cancer. Every year, we treat more than 10,000 new patients using advanced treatments and breakthrough clinical trials.

This year, the Cancer program at Northwestern Memorial Hospital was ranked No. 6 in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

Generous donors like you make leading-edge care possible. You help us bring new discoveries and more innovative treatments to more patients across Chicagoland and around the world. Thank you for your continued support of Northwestern Medicine.

Maricela’s Cancer Journey

When Maricela Vázquez, a Telemundo meteorologist, got the phone call that she had breast cancer, she was on a commercial break. The first thing she asked her physician was, “Am I going to die?”

Her mammogram showed abnormal tissue that required a biopsy, which determined she had breast cancer. Thanks to that mammogram, Maricela’s care team was able to catch her breast cancer early, in stage 1.

“I was blown away that this preventive technology could catch my tumor so early in its progression,” Maricela says. “I was also blown away by how quickly my Northwestern Medicine teams worked to get me the care that I needed right away.”

Maricela went to Northwestern Memorial Hospital for a lumpectomy with Kevin P. Bethke, MD, breast surgeon at Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. Once the tumor was gone, she underwent 20 sessions of radiation therapy.

Maricela then got another memorable call during a Chicago Telemundo news broadcast commercial break — this time letting her know she was cancer-free.
Clinical Trials Lead to FDA Approvals

Maha H.A. Hussain, MD, FACP, FASCO, is the Genevieve Teuton Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, Department of Medicine; and deputy director at Lurie Cancer Center. She was one of two international principal investigators in two clinical trials that led to new medications getting Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. One trial that tested olaparib was a major landmark in the field as it is the first precision medicine that has impacted metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer. The other trial showed that the medication enzalutamide significantly delayed time to visible metastasis and prolonged survival in men with nonmetastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer.

Research Leads to New Treatments

Physician-scientists at Lurie Cancer Center seek to find breakthrough treatments and improve patient outcomes through clinical trials, with about 300 trials ongoing at any time. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 120 trials were opened in 2020. Clinical trials at Northwestern Medicine have led to development and FDA approval of 18 new cancer-treating medications in the last four years.

Ranked Among the Best

Due to the excellence achieved by Lurie Cancer Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, the hospital is ranked No. 6 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, 2021 – 2022, for Cancer. For the ninth year in a row, Northwestern Memorial Hospital has the top-ranked Cancer program in Illinois and the Chicago Metro Area.

A Gift in Honor of Mom and Dad

Brothers David (Buzz) and Roger (Biff) Ruttenberg first gave to Northwestern Medicine in honor of their parents, David C. and Sarajean Ruttenberg, who passed away in 2003 and 2007 respectively. Buzz and Biff wanted to make a gift that would be both meaningful and instrumental. They chose to support oncology research, education and clinical programs.

“We especially wanted to support research,” says Buzz. “When our donation is used to prove a research concept, then they can impact more people. That can only happen with philanthropy.”

“If our family can make a gift, it encourages others as well. Gifts of any amount are impactful. We are happy to see continued growth at Northwestern Medicine,” says Biff.