



HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY ASSOCIATES  
OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

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Our  
Connection  
to You

Fall—Winter 2007  
Newsletter

***Our Mission*** is to provide the highest level of quality care in a healing environment for the mind, body and spirit of patients dealing with cancer and blood disorders.



Advancing Tumor and Cancer Treatments—  
The **ONLY** option of its kind in Central NY!

# CyberKnife®

CyberKnife® is the only FDA approved completely Robotic Stereotactic Radiosurgery System available in the world that targets and destroys previously inaccessible tumors or lesions anywhere in the body.

As a non-invasive "operation", CyberKnife has proven to be an effective alternative to surgery or conventional radiation for treating vascular abnormalities, tumors, functional disorders, and cancers with sub-millimeter accuracy. **ONLY** at Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY's Brittonfield office!  
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## Quote for the Quarters

*"Light tomorrow with today"*

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

# Introducing— The CyberKnife®

Construction of a 1,000 square foot addition to the Brittonfield Cancer Center commenced in early May. This addition houses a vault that is home to our new CyberKnife®. Made by Accuray, the CyberKnife® is the only FDA approved, completely robotic, stereotactic radiosurgery system available in the world that targets and destroys small and previously inaccessible tumors or lesions anywhere in the body. Hematology-Oncology Associates is the ONLY provider of CyberKnife® treatments and services in Central New York.

Image guidance coupled with computer controlled robotics allows the CyberKnife® system to continuously track and correct for patient movement throughout a treatment. The CyberKnife® system analyzes these images and compares them in real time with reference images that indicate the correct treatment position of the patient. Based on this analysis, the CyberKnife® Robotic Manipulator, with its synchrony tracking system, repositions itself to account for any deviation from this optimum position. Because of this precision, the CyberKnife® system does not require invasive head or body frames to stabilize the patient.

A 6-MV linear accelerator is attached to the CyberKnife® Robotic Manipulator allowing the radiation oncology team to attack tumors from many more positions than conventional radiotherapy. As a result, the radiation can be more precisely focused on the tumor while sparing healthy tissue and sensitive organs. The flexibility of the CyberKnife® system allows for treatment of both intracranial and extracranial tumors, such as those of the spine, lung, prostate, liver and pancreas.

The CyberKnife® is an evolving treatment modality which provides the highest level of conformality and thereby limits toxicity. The process is intricate as the physicist and physician work in tandem to contour out critical organs from radiation while providing enhanced accuracy. Referring physicians are encouraged to consider this new treatment option for their patients, as it can provide dramatic responses in only a few treatment sessions.

Patient treatments are typically completed in 2-5 sessions over one to two weeks. Cumulative doses can be escalated due to the ability to better spare nearby normal structures. Another benefit is that patients with previous radiation therapy can be retreated effectively. Collaboration with physicians of other specialties, such as neurosurgery, thoracic surgery, urology, GI, ENT, and general surgery continues. Specialists maintain their relationship with their patients by being involved in the planning of this procedure. (Continued on page 3)

## CyberKnife® (continued from page 2)

For deeper, non-bony tissues, specialist physicians may insert fiducials (markers that are currently gold “seeds”) through a minor procedure to pinpoint a tumor. These are permanent and are compatible with both MRI and CT scans that aid in the planning, treatment and follow-up of care. It often takes several months to see tumors regress or resolve but the pain response is much more rapid than with conventional treatments.

Unlike Gammaknife radiosurgery, no frame is attached to the skull and instead of applying one treatment, 3-5 treatments are given which is less likely to cause damage to critical structures. Benign lesions in the brain can also be treated with the CyberKnife®. Arteriovenous malformations (AVM) and other blood vessel abnormalities are treated to avoid hemorrhage and provide a better prognosis for surrounding tissues. Acoustic neuromas, benign tumors in the area of auditory nerves, can also be treated with less chance of damage to hearing and adjacent cranial nerves.

Preliminary findings indicate promising results in the next five years on the application of CyberKnife® for patients with prostate cancer. Studies are continuing from groups in Florida and Long Island. While a typical course of treatment for prostate cancer is about nine weeks of daily radiation, the CyberKnife® technology can be delivered in 1-1½ weeks. Early results show profiles on sparing healthy tissues, namely rectum and bladder, to be better than IMRT.

Hematology Oncology Associates is privileged to provide this cutting-edge treatment option to patients. It provides new opportunities in cancer care that do not exist at any other facility in Central New York!

### **For the Mind and Spirit**

**Support for our Patients \* Free to All !!**



A free educational program for patients, their families and friends. Sponsored by Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY, The American Cancer Society and OrthoBiotec.

Tuesday Evenings in April and October of Each Year  
Light refreshments served—Call 472-7504 x 1701

*Brittonfield Office \* Third Floor Lounge*

*Please inquire at the Education Desk*

## For the Mind and Spirit

**More Support for our Patients \* Free to All !!**

### Patient Support Group

This group is facilitated by Gussie Sorensen, LCSW-R and Pricilla Nicotra, RN, OCN, FNP. You do not need to be a patient of the practice to attend. Support groups meet the fourth Tuesday of each month, from 4–5:30 pm in the Brittonfield 3rd floor conference room. This venue provides an excellent opportunity to share your journey while receiving love and support from other patients, survivors and highly skilled and experienced staff.

### Look Good... Feel Better

*Cosmetology professionals will help you with make-up application, dry skin, discolored nails, choice and care of a wig, scarves, turbans and hats.*

**Held every 2nd Monday 5:30—7:00 pm at our Brittonfield Office**

Call Leigh Knapp 437-7026 ext. 112

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, The Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association and the National Cosmetology Association.

### Art as Therapy

**Classes held:**

Every 4th Monday of the month from 5–7 pm

Art in all its forms is good for the soul and body! A truly therapeutic adventure—join Art Therapist Lisa Kiefer at our Brittonfield Office

### Canton Woods Group

A support group that takes place the 3rd Monday of each month from 1 pm—2:30 pm at the Canton Woods Senior Center in Baldwinsville. This support group is facilitated by Belinda Tamoutselis, LMSW.

### Patient Support Group Community General Office

Facilitated by Belinda Tamoutselis, LMSW and Kathy Bennett, RN, OCN, CHPN this support group meets the 1st Thursday of each month from 2:30—4pm.

### Support Group for Recurrent Disease

This support group is dedicated to providing guidance to those cancer patients with recurrent disease. The unique aspects of this journey are explored with patients who are experiencing similar challenges. This group meets the 3rd Monday of each month from 4–5:30 pm at Brittonfield in the 3rd floor conference room and is facilitated by Gussie Sorensen, LCSW-R.

### Young Survivors Group

Please call Tara Jones at 472-7504 x1701 to inquire as to dates, times and location.

### Bereavement Group

Please call Tara Jones at 472-7504 x1701 to inquire as to dates, times and location.



KATS is a heartwarming program for children and their families to help cope with a serious illness by intervening with group support and an educational process. This program is provided in conjunction with Camp Good Days and Special Times. Please call Tara at x 1701 to inquire as to dates.



## **Anticoagulation Therapy Clinic**

A special "Thank You" and congratulations to Tom Dardis, LPN for orchestrating and maintaining responsibility for our new Anticoagulation Therapy Clinic. Working in conjunction with our Physicians and Nurse Practitioner, Terry Crowley, Tom is partnering with our patients who take Coumadin or Lovenox to assist them in the education and management of their care. PT/INR fingerstick testing provides results in minutes and fosters a higher level of attention and service to those patients. This service was started at our Brittonfield office and will expand to our CGH office very soon.

# CLINICAL TRIALS

## What is a CCOP?

Hematology-Oncology Associates is the only **Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP)** in the United States not affiliated with a Hospital, Medical School or University. This 22-year affiliation with the National Cancer Institute provides opportunities for clinical cancer research because the CCOP is a large network that enables patients and physicians to participate in clinical trials across the United States and Puerto Rico. The program allows Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY to access investigational drugs and treatments for patients in our community. There is no need to leave home to obtain cutting edge cancer trials. HOA is the **ONLY CCOP** in Central New York!



## YOGA for Persistent Sleep Disorders

### In Cancer Survivors

Doctors don't know why as many as 66% of cancer survivors experience sleep problems in the year following cancer treatment. Despite the use of sleep aids and antidepressants, survivors continue to report fatigue and depression.

**We are currently looking for eligible participants who may qualify for this new study.**

*Participants must have completed all scheduled adjuvant cancer treatment between 2-12 months prior to enrollment (any form of cancer) and have no further treatment scheduled, with the exception of hormone therapies.*

**Registered participants will participate in 4 weeks of Hatha Yoga sessions at no charge.**

**If you are interested call the research department**

**315-472-7504 ext 2493**



**Need Help to**

**Quit Smoking??**

**Call our Research Department  
at 472-7504 x 2493**





## Reaching For the Stars ... Striving for Excellence



### Prevention and Wellness Center

Our suite at Medical Center West in Camillus is undergoing a wonderful transformation! Hematology-Oncology Associates is developing an Integrative Medicine Program that will augment the many conventional services we provide. There will be a large area for Yoga and other forms of mind/body exercise, treatment rooms for massage, integrative therapy/energy work and other wonderful opportunities for the mind, body and spirit! Stay tuned for updates!



unique connections

#### Guidance

Would you like the support of a cancer survivor?

Do you want a mentor to contact you?

#### Do you Want to Be a Mentor?

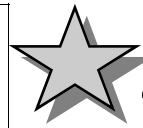
Cancer survivors pass on guidance, assistance, and support to our patients who are newly diagnosed and undergoing treatment.

Do you remember what it felt like to travel that journey? Do you want to help a newly diagnosed cancer patient?

Do you want to be a mentor?

**Unique Connections, Inc.**, a tax-exempt corporation founded by HOACNY.

[www.unique-connections.org](http://www.unique-connections.org)  
315.634.5004



*We're not miles away  
... Just miles ahead*



#### **Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment and Support Services**

- ◇ Chemotherapy and Radiation
- ◇ Clinical Research
- ◇ CyberKnife®
- ◇ Clinical Laboratory
- ◇ Pharmacy
- ◇ CT and Other Diagnostic Testing
- ◇ Patient and Family Counseling and Support Group Services
- ◇ Nutritional Counseling
- ◇ Complementary and Art Therapy
- ◇ Community Educational Programs

#### ***Amenities***

- ◇ State of the Art Facility    ◇ Imaging Services
- ◇ Boutique at Brittonfield    ◇ Flat Screen TV's in Infusion
- ◇ Patient Internet Access in Infusion    ◇ Free Parking
- ◇ Patient Education Area    ◇ Electronic Medical Record

## Integrative Medicine—Wellness Programs

**Integrative or Complementary Therapies** are services that support your current medical treatment and are never intended to replace it. They are for patients who are seeking wellness or well being of not only the physical body, but of the mind, body and spirit.

Massage

Reiki

Healing Touch

Acupuncture

Yoga

Lymphatic Drainage

Foot Reflexology

*Please call Tara at 472-7504 x 1701 to set up an appointment or speak to someone at our education desk.*

*Please refer to our brochure for appointment times and pricing*



### Our Featured Modality

## Yoga

### *How Can It Help You To Feel Better?*

Most of the aches and pains that we have in our bodies are from over or under use, or from doing repetitive physical activity for an extended period of time— excessive doing, over extending, over working, etc.

Our minds are over worked, constantly bombarded with sensory input and stimulation. So what's the relationship between our day to day activities, and our mind/body connection? Usually it's not a very good one. For most of us, we really don't have time for a healthy relationship with our bodies, or for that matter with ourselves. Our wellness is a reflection of that relationship. Practicing yoga and its related techniques helps to change that relationship.

The postures help to keep the body young, strong and flexible. They also help to stimulate and regulate the hormonal and immune systems; they improve digestion, circulation, respiration, and balance energy systems.

The relaxation techniques help to reduce stress, release tension, and lower blood pressure.

The breathing techniques relax the body and calm the mind, as well as increase oxygen absorption resulting in better overall health.

The meditation techniques help to reduce anxiety and mental fatigue leading to more manageable thinking, clarity and piece of mind. Practicing meditation, you will begin to understand your true nature and discover the wisdom and tranquility that lie within.

Through practicing yoga, the relationship you have with yourself changes—your overall health is enhanced and you come to know the true meaning of the words “wellness” and “wellbeing.” A qualified yoga teacher can help you to learn the proven health enhancing techniques of yoga so that you can incorporate them into your daily life. When you practice yoga, you feel better, physically and mentally. And when you feel good overall, this is wellness.

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# Medicare and the Payor Circuit

## Medicare Alert!!

## Red Blood Cell Growth Factors

On July 30, 2007, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued a final Medicare National Coverage Determination on the Use of Erythropoiesis Stimulating Agents (ESA) in Cancer and Related Neoplastic Conditions (CAG-000383N).

Please note that all Medicare patients are affected by this new ruling. Hematology-Oncology Associates **must** conform to the new coverage decisions. Basically, the new law mandates when our practice can administer drugs like Procrit and Aranesp to our patients. As you know, these drugs are red blood cell growth factors and the administration of these drugs reduces fatigue and fosters an improved sense of better health and wellbeing.

The new rules that we have no choice but to follow, are as such: Red blood cell levels measured in our laboratory as Hemoglobin levels must be less than 10 and the rise from the baseline level must be greater than 1 for our government to allow us to continue ESA treatment at the same dose. If Hemoglobin levels are greater than or equal to 10, Medicare will no longer allow the administration of this drug and will therefore not pay for it. Should Hemoglobin levels be less than 10 and the rise from the baseline level is less than 1, Medicare allows an increase of the ESA dose by 25%. If after 8 weeks, the Hemoglobin levels increase by 1 or more, the ESA can be continued at the same dose. If the rise in the Hemoglobin level is less than 1 after 8 weeks, Medicare no longer covers the drug. There are also rules for drug administration within any 2-week period that you can discuss with your doctor or our pharmacist. The standard for administration of these drugs is a Hemoglobin level equal to or less than 12. Reference ranges for normal patients is 12-14 for females and 13-18 for males.

On September 4, 2007, the Senate returned from its August recess and put forth a Senate Resolution (305), introduced during the recess by Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA), Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), expressing the sense of the Senate regarding this determination. Significant concerns were expressed to the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid regarding this new law and the **restriction** of these drugs. They acknowledged that these new mandates have significant potential to increase blood transfusions, negatively impact the blood supply of our nation, and compromise the high quality of cancer care delivered by physicians in the United States. The resolution was agreed to without objection but there has been no further correspondence or directives given by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

We strongly urge our patients to call their representative and express their concerns and distaste for this new mandate. The decision to give these beneficial drugs should be determined by our physicians using the parameters set forth by the research that was submitted when FDA approval was granted and dosages were defined. We are in this together – as the well being of our patients is paramount.

Please be a voice and contact our members of Congress—we can't walk the walk without you!

Congressman Walsh 423-5657   Senator Clinton 448-0470   Senator Schumer 423-5471

