

***The Mission of Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY 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.***

## Welcome!



**Please welcome our  
newest physicians to  
the HOA Family!**

Dr. Kavitha Prezzano  
(top left)

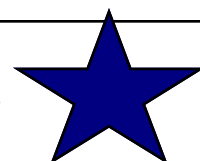
Dr. Lauren Panebianco  
(left)

Dr. Vinod Varki  
(top right)

**More on Page 3**

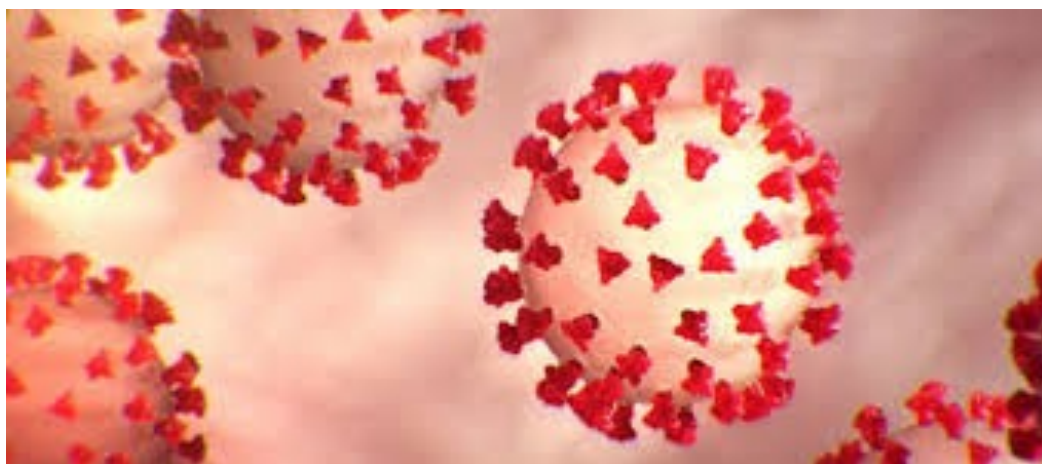
- **Meet our newest physicians**
- **COVID!**
- **For the Mind, Body & Spirit - Services for our patients**
- **Breast Care Partners**
- **CancerConnects**
- **Breast Radiation Techniques**
- **We're not miles away ... Just miles ahead!**
- **Wellness Programs**
- **Happy Retirement and Congratulations!**
- **Medicare Insurance Update and Information for 2020!**

**Quote for  
the Quarter**



"Where there is love, there is life!"

Mahatma Gandhi



## Planet Earth vs COVID—19

### The Virus that tipped the world upside-down!

This is the first HOA Patient Newsletter that is not eligible for printing and distribution. Due to COVID-19 and the potential risk of infection to our patients, we share this solely via electronic transmission. It's just one more example of how very different our lives have become because of an enemy that is invisible to the naked eye.

HOA has put forth great effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment for our staff and patients. We are grateful for the understanding that everyone has gifted us. We have mandated masks for all employees, in addition to goggles/face shields for those employees with direct patient contact. We continue to screen all our patients, taking temperatures, mandating masks and disallowing visitors. Sadly, we have maintained a no visitor policy for months and that's likely to continue until the threat of infection is minimal to zero. We know how difficult that has been for our patients. We acknowledge that our patients are among the most vulnerable in our community due to their immunocompromised nature... but still... we are grateful for everyone's support and understanding during these challenging times.

We appreciate the patients who have allowed telemedicine visits and we are grateful to the patients who took advantage of our "drive-thru blood drawing" program, during the height of the pandemic.

A heartfelt thank you to our patients and their families for their incredible understanding and unwavering support of HOA. Our patients mean the world to us and it's a privilege for us to walk with them in their journey.

## Meet our Newest Physicians!



### **Kavitha Prezzano, MD**

Dr. Kavitha Prezzano is our newest Radiation Oncologist. She will take her Radiation Oncology Boards this year. Dr. Prezzano received her Medical Degree from Upstate Medical University and her undergraduate degree from Williams College in Massachusetts where she graduated cum laude. She completed her residency in Radiation Oncology at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, where she was the Chief Resident. We are thrilled that Dr. Prezzano, given so many choices, selected Hematology-Oncology Associates to call home!



### **Lauren Panebianco, MD**

Dr. Lauren Panebianco is board certified in Internal Medicine and will take her Hematology-Oncology Boards this year. She received her Medical Degree from Upstate Medical University and her undergraduate degree from Cornell University. She completed her Fellowship at Upstate Medical University and she was the Chief Resident at Upstate Medical University from June 2016—June 2017. We are so fortunate that Dr. Panebianco has always called Syracuse her home and we are thrilled she selected Hematology-Oncology Associates.



### **Vinod (Vinny) Varki, MD**

Dr. Vinod (Vinny) Varki is board certified in Internal Medicine, Medical Oncology and Hematology. He comes to us with several years of experience from Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, MD. He received his Medical Degree and his undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. He completed his residency at the University of Rochester Medical Center and his Fellowship at the University of Maryland Medical Center, in Baltimore. We are thrilled that Dr. Varki decided to come back to Central New York and he selected Hematology-Oncology Associates to call home!



## For the Mind and Spirit

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

### Support Group for Recurrent & Metastatic Disease

This support group is dedicated to providing guidance to those cancer patients with recurrent and metastatic disease. The unique aspects of this journey are explored with patients who are experiencing similar challenges. This group meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month from 4-5:30 pm at Brittonfield in the 3rd floor board room and is facilitated by Gussie Sorensen, LCSW-R and Shannon Walkup, PA.

### 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.*

[lookgoodfeelbetter.org](http://lookgoodfeelbetter.org)

(800)-395-5665



- ♦ **Brain Tumor Family Retreat**
- ♦ **Women & Men's Oncology Programs**

**315-434-9477**

**[www.campgooddays.org](http://www.campgooddays.org)**



**Breast Care Partners**

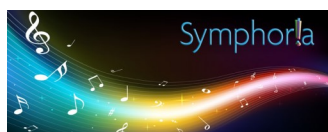
Your Care. Our Priority.

*Activities cancelled due to COVID-19*

*For more information*

*Call 315-559-6803 or email*

**[breastcarepartners@gmail.com](mailto:breastcarepartners@gmail.com)**



**Healing Harmonies**

The mission of Healing Harmonies is to create partnerships between the musicians and local healthcare and wellness providers, with the intent to bring live music with therapeutic benefits to patients, their families, and healthcare staff in CNY. Music has been recognized to have immense benefits for patients through stress and anxiety reduction, lessening the side effects of chemotherapy, and reducing the amount of pain medication needed before and after surgical procedures. We are pleased to offer this to our patients.

### Auburn / Cayuga County Support Group

*This support group, facilitated by Kathy Bennett, RN meets the last week of each month from 7-9 pm. All patients & caregivers are welcome. For exact dates and location please contact Kathy Bennett, RN at (315) 246-1931*



When a patient enters the program, a certified breast care nurse navigator is assigned to help guide them through their individual evaluation and treatment course.

[www.BreastCarePartners.com](http://www.BreastCarePartners.com)



Like us on Facebook @breastcarepartners



- ♦ Mentoring Program
- ♦ Financial Assistance for Cancer Patients
- ♦ Vouchers for free Complementary/ Integrative Wellness services
- ♦ Connections to facilitate the cancer journey

[www.cancerconnects.org](http://www.cancerconnects.org) or (315) 634-5004

## Breast Radiation Techniques

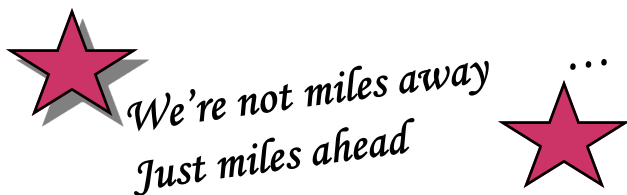
By Tracy Alpert, MD



As treatment of breast cancer advances, there are additional techniques to allow radiation to be accurately delivered while minimizing dose to underlying heart and lung.

Respiratory gating (guiding the delivery of radiation as a patient breathes) is now an option to track the patient's normal respiratory cycle with an infrared camera and marker block on the upper abdomen. This system only delivers radiation when the patient's breathing is in the setting that was specified on the initial four (4) dimensional CT scan. Treatment can be timed with specific phases of the respiratory cycle or specific amplitude peaks of the breathing. This is selected based on the positions that maximally displace the heart and lung from the breast or reconstructed chest wall.

In addition we have begun using **DIBH** (Deep Inspiration Breath Hold) for selected cases. Patients are asked to take a deep breath in and hold their breath during delivery of a radiation beam which typically takes 20 seconds on the new linear accelerators. The breath-hold is verified based on the respiratory gating software. Using DIBH maximizes lung volumes and displaces the heart posterior and inferior to gain more separation from the radiation field and the anterior edge of the heart.



# The Wellness Center

A beautiful and healing atmosphere is provided as a haven of opportunity for the mind, body and spirit. Check out the Wellness Center's schedule of classes and services on the web!

[www.hoacny.com](http://www.hoacny.com)

Wellness Center

(315) 234- HOPE

## Hematology-Oncology Associates Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment and Support Services

- ◇ Chemotherapy and Radiation
- ◇ Clinical Research
- ◇ CyberKnife®
- ◇ Clinical Laboratory
- ◇ Pharmacy & Patient Rx Center
- ◇ Non-Oncology Infusions
- ◇ CT and Other Diagnostic Testing
- ◇ Patient and Family Counseling and Support Group Services
- ◇ Nutritional Counseling
- ◇ Integrative/Complementary Therapy
- ◇ Cancer Rehabilitation / Survivorship
- ◇ Cancer Genetics
- ◇ Supportive Oncology
- ◇ Palliative Care
- ◇ Community Educational Programs

### ***Amenities***

- ◇ State of the Art Facilities    ◇ Imaging Services
- ◇ Boutique at Brittonfield    ◇ Flat Screen TVs
- ◇ Patient Internet Access    ◇ Free Parking
- ◇ Patient Education Area    ◇ Electronic Medical Record

## Integrative Medicine &

## Wellness Programs 315-234-HOPE

**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 \* Yoga \* CranioSacral Therapy \*  
Foot Reflexology \* Meditation \* Acupuncture \* Tai-Chi \* Zumba \*  
and more**

*Offered at our Brittonfield Office &/or The Wellness Center at Medical Center West*

*Please call Anne, 315-234-4673 or check out our website for more information*

# Happy Retirement!



August 31, 2020 marked the retirement of an outstanding physician and wonderful person, Benjamin S. Himpler, MD. Dr. Himpler joined HOA in August of 2008. Prior to joining our family of physicians, he owned and practiced at Syracuse Hematology/Oncology, PC. It's a bittersweet good-bye as COVID has prevented any kind of real celebration to show our immense gratitude for his years of dedication to our medical community and especially our HOA patients. We are happy for Dr. Himpler as we know he loves fishing, among other hobbies, and will keep busy with his wife Laura, who was his staff nurse at Syracuse Hem/Onc for many years. We know you will join us in wishing Ben all of life's finest! We will miss you Dr.

# Congratulations!



In June of 2020, Jeffrey J. Kirshner, MD received the prominent distinction of Fellow of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) at their annual meeting. ASCO is the premier professional organization for clinical oncologists with over 40,000 members worldwide. Over 300 Fellowships have been awarded, but Dr. Kirshner is the first from Central New York. Dr. Kirshner serves on ASCO Expert Panels and Committees to provide guidelines for the management of cancer patients used by oncologists around the world! The Fellow of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (FASCO) distinction recognizes members for their extraordinary volunteer service, dedication, and commitment to ASCO. Recipients have carried out efforts that benefit ASCO, the specialty of oncology, and most importantly, the patients whom they serve. Congratulations Dr. Kirshner on this great honor!

## IMPORTANT Information for Medicare Patients

It's almost here....

### 2020 Medicare Open Enrollment

Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15, 2020 and extends through December 7, 2020. This is the time of year Medicare allows for changes that will become effective January 1, 2021.

You can choose to remain enrolled with your current Medicare Advantage plan, change to a different Medicare Advantage plan, or enroll with Medicare and Supplemental coverage.

Please do not forget your Part D (pharmacy) coverage. Penalties could apply if there is a lack in coverage.

Please remember to verify that your plan is participating with your providers office. Changes for the New Year could be possible!

For assistance, please feel free to contact one of our Patient Advocates

Amy 315-472-7504 x1076

Paulette 315-472-7504 x1077

We are here to help you with any questions you have.

Thank you for your continued trust and cooperation.