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NEWSLETTER

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Editor's Note

THE FIRST STEP
TO TAKE IS TO
LIKE US ON 



We have made it to the halfway mark of 2015. This issue we will focus on cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is the 10th most common cancer in Singaporean women. About 190 cases are diagnosed every year. The good news is that cervical cancer can almost be totally preventable unlike many other cancers. The best protection against cervical cancer is via a pap smear.



Go for regular
Pap smear once
every three years.

We'd love to hear from you! Do you have any interesting stories or any ideas to share with us? Please email us at enquiry@pcc.sg

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CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical cancer is malignant cancer that forms in tissues of the cervix (the organ connecting the uterus and vagina). Cancer of the cervix is the 10th most common cancer affecting women in Singapore.



Symptoms

Cervical in the early stages has no symptoms; by the time you observe any – they include abnormal vaginal bleeding, foul smell or bloody discharge and pain during sexual intercourse.

Risk Factors

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) infection is a necessary “ingredient” in the development of this cancer. The HPV is usually spread through skin-to-skin contact. The risk increases for those with multiple sexual partners, and those who have sexual activity with partners who have had multiple sex partners.

Women between the ages of 17 and 20 have the highest chance of HPV infection. This is the age when they tend to have their sexual debut, are less likely to use condoms, and more likely to have multiple sexual partners. The risk of HPV infection can also increase for those who smoke, use long-term oral contraceptives, or have a weakened immune system.

Prevention

There is a reason why cervical cancer has dropped from fifth place to last on the top 10 cancer chart in Singapore: it is the one cancer that is almost completely preventable.

Two of the most common HPV vaccines available in Singapore are Cervarix and Gardasil, which are considered safe by the World Health Organization. They are believed to be able to prevent 70 to 80 per cent of cervical cancer, and are approved for use for girls and women between the age of 9 and 26. They are administered in three doses over six months.

What is important is when these vaccines are given: HPV vaccinations have maximum benefits when given before the start of sexual activity, where there is greater exposure to HPV. It is important to vaccinate young women early, preferably before they start sexual activity. Women should also get screened every year for three years from the age of 18, or from when they start sexual intercourse. Subsequently, it can be reduced to once every three years.

Screening for cervical cancer is via Pap smear, a relatively painless procedure in which your doctor obtains cells from your cervix to test for abnormality. Screening once every three years would reduce the overall incidence of cervical cancer by 91.2 per cent.



8 STEPS COPING WITH CANCER TREATMENT

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Receiving a cancer diagnosis is overwhelming and difficult. You may feel a myriad of emotions ranging from fear, anxiety to anger. Here are some suggestions to help you manage and cope with cancer.



1. GET ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Try to gather as much practical and relevant information as possible about your cancer diagnosis by speaking with your doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. You may be inundated with information from the internet or friends, and feel overwhelmed; always turn to your trusted medical team for information and advice.

2. MAINTAIN CULTURE OF OPEN COMMUNICATION

Be committed to honest dialogue with your loved ones, doctors and caregivers after your cancer diagnosis. It is normal to feel vulnerable, but do be open to receiving and giving support to each other.



YANG JUAN

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Yang Juan graduated from Singapore's Nanyang Polytechnic with a Diploma in Health Science (Nursing) in 2007. She started her nursing career in TTSH's medical-surgical ward.

After gathering a few years of clinical experience, she furthered her studies, obtaining a Bachelor of Nursing from Curtin University, Australia.

Yang Juan also has a Bachelor of Media Art from the University of South Australia. Combining both her areas of interest, she has produced some video clips for nursing education. She strongly believes that the media is a useful tool for health education, not only for healthcare professionals, but also for patients, caregivers, and the general public.

During her last 7 years of service in TTSH as a staff nurse and senior staff nurse, she has experienced caring for multi-disciplinary patients, including oncology and palliative patients. She was greatly inspired by the palliative team who provided holistic and supportive care for patients. She embarked on upgrading her knowledge on palliative care by attending training for pain management and end-of life care.

In her free time, Yang Juan volunteers in Tzuchi Free Clinic and conducts medical home visits for the needy families. In witnessing human suffering, her desire to be a comforting and supportive presence to the sick is strengthened. She hope to make a positive difference to their lives.

Yang Juan is proud to have achieved the 2012 Singapore Healthcare Humanity Award. She brings her passion and knowledge gained from her past experiences, to serve as a palliative care nurse in Parkway Cancer Centre, providing holistic care and supporting patients and their loved ones.

SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

3 JUN WED	10.00am – 12.00pm Ask The Dietitian: Nutrition In Cancer Care Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital Seminar Room, Level 2
5 JUN FRI	10.00am – 12.00pm Expat Cancer Support Group The British Club, Singapore Windsor Terrace
6 JUN SAT	10.00am – 12.00pm Zumba Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital Seminar Room, Level 2
11 JUN THU	2.00pm – 5.00pm Look Good Feel Better Gleneagles Hospital Board Room, Level 3
12 JUN FRI	3.00pm – 5.00pm Art Therapy: Safety Net Gleneagles Hospital CanHOPE Activity Room, Level 3
13 JUN SAT	10.00am – 12.00pm Line Dance Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital Seminar Room, Level 2
18 JUN THU	2.00pm – 4.00pm Healing with Massage Gleneagles Hospital CanHOPE Activity Room, Level 3
19 JUN FRI	10.00am – 12.00pm Expat Cancer Support Group The British Club, Singapore Windsor Terrace
20 JUN SAT	10.00am – 11.30am A Doctor's Perspective: TCM in Cancer Treatment Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital Seminar Room, Level 2

1 JUL WED	2.30pm – 4.30pm Ask The Dietitian: Nutrition In Cancer Care Gleneagles Hospital Board Room, Level 3
3 JUL FRI	10.00am – 12.00pm Expat Cancer Support Group The British Club, Singapore Windsor Terrace
4 JUL SAT	10.00am – 12.00pm Zumba Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital, Seminar Room Level 2
11 JUL SAT	10.00am – 12.00pm Line Dance Mount Elizabeth Orchard Hospital Seminar Room, Level 2
23 JUL THU	2.00pm – 4.00pm Guided Imagery Gleneagles Hospital CanHOPE Activity Room, Level 3
24 JUL FRI	3.00pm – 5.00pm Art Therapy: Changes Gleneagles Hospital CanHOPE Activity Room, Level 3

3. PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE PHYSICAL CHANGES

Speak with your doctor about the changes you should anticipate. For example, if hair-loss is a known side-effect, seek practical advice from your doctors or medical team on shaving, getting wigs and hairpieces, and overall skin-care. There are also support groups and websites where information, support and even wig banks are readily available.

4. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Embarking on a light exercise regime and eating healthily can help improve energy levels. Recent research has supported the claim that people who engage in some physical exercise during treatment cope better and may also live longer. Do speak with your doctors on activities that you can pursue.



5. ALLOW YOUR LOVED ONES TO HELP

Be open in receiving love and practical assistance from your friends and family. They can help with household chores, running errands, ferrying you to and from appointments and preparing meals. Accepting the help from others goes a long way in helping you and your family cope.

6. WORK ON MAINTAINING YOUR NORMAL LIFESTYLE

When faced with uncertainty, planning a significant lifestyle change will seem overwhelming; thus, you are encouraged to take small steps. Seek to maintain your normal lifestyle as much as possible, slowly modifying your routine as necessary.

We hope that the above mentioned is helpful for you. You may also be interested to attend our workshop for new patients – “Adjusting to Changes” – to learn about the physical and psychosocial changes and the options available for managing your needs.

To register and also for more information on counselling support, please refer to our CanHOPE website at www.canhope.org

7. BE OPEN TO TALKING TO OTHER PEOPLE WITH CANCER

Many patients find talking to fellow cancer patients or survivors, helpful and inspiring.

8. DEVELOP YOUR OWN COPING STRATEGY

You can try light exercises such as yoga therapy or qigong. Some patients meditate with religious groups. You can choose to keep a journal, draw, paint or embark on creative pursuits. Do set aside time to be alone, to recollect and consolidate you thoughts.

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GREEN TEA PANNA COTTA RECIPE

FROM AWAKENING THE APPETITE

By Janice Wong, Chef-owner of 2am:dessertbar

NUTRITION ANALYSIS

ANTIOXIDANT RICH

E (kcal)	170
Protein (g)	6
Total fat (g)	10
Carbohydrate (g)	16
Fibre (g)	0



Extremely rich in antioxidants, this dessert is inspired by my childhood in Japan and is meant to be very calming and soothing. This is perfect paired with a pot of hot genmaicha or brown rice tea.

DIRECTIONS

- If you are using sheet gelatine, soak it in a bowl of cold water till soft. Then, squeeze out any excess water. If you are using powdered gelatine, sprinkle it over 1 tablespoon of cold water in a small bowl and let it sit till it has softened or 'bloomed'.
- Heat the milk, cream and sugar in a saucepan until it is hot and the sugar is dissolved—about 3 minutes. Take the pan off the heat and whisk in the softened gelatine till well blended.
- Put the matcha powder in a small bowl. Take 1 tablespoon of the warm milk mixture and add to the matcha powder, mixing with a small whisk or the back of a spoon until you get a smooth paste.
- Whisk the matcha paste back into the warm milk mixture. Strain the liquid through a fine sieve into a small jug. Then, pour into 4 small ramekins or moulds. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
- To serve, unmould the panna cotta by dipping each ramekin into a bowl of hot water for a few seconds and unpeeling it onto a plate.

NOTE:

If you don't want the hassle of unmoulding the panna cotta, simply pour the creamy matcha mixture into pretty glasses instead of moulds, chill and serve directly from the cup.

SERVES 4

- 2 sheets gelatine, or 1 teaspoon gelatine powder
- ¾ cup / 150ml milk
- ¾ cup / 150ml cream
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 teaspoons matcha (green tea powder)

A DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE: TCM IN CANCER TREATMENT

Date: 20 June 2015 (Sat)
Time: 10.30am – 11.30am
Venue: Mount Elizabeth (Orchard) Hospital, Seminar Room (Level 2)

This session on "A Doctor's Perspective: TCM in Cancer Treatment", the oncologist will share on the various aspects of Traditional Chinese Medicine and illuminate its different roles in relation to the management of cancer. This session will be a good platform for survivors, patients and caregivers alike to increase their knowledge, clarify any doubts and dispel myths on this popular yet unfamiliar subject.

To register, email to register@canhope.org or call (65) 6738 9333.

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