



Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian

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Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian Hoag Cancer Center The Hereditary Cancer Program—and More

The Patty and George Hoag Cancer Center in Newport Beach, Calif., consolidates most outpatient treatment and support services under one roof in a patient friendly, state-of-the-art, 65,000-square-foot facili-

ty that features natural light, lush plants, tropical aquariums, and comfortable rooms. It provides easy patient access to radiation therapy, chemotherapy, pheresis, physicians, home care, education and support groups, and oncology administration.

Hoag Cancer Center takes an active role in educating the community, as well as physicians and staff, about all aspects of cancer. In 1993, 78 different prevention and early detection programs reached an estimated 5,700 individuals, an increase

Founded in 1952, Hoag Memorial Hospital is a 421-bed institution serving the Orange County and southern California areas. The oncology registry, established in 1980, now follows more than 6,000 cases. In 1991 the official Patty and George Hoag Cancer Center opened and began offering a comprehensive range of cancer

services. The Hoag Cancer Center offers innovative new treatments such as autologous bone marrow transplantation, stereotactic radiosurgery, and a wide array of biological therapy programs. Additionally, the Hoag Cancer Center participates in an ongoing program of clinical investigation and has its own cell biology labo-

ratory. The center's American College of Surgeons' approval was renewed in 1991.

VITAL STATISTICS

- Total institution bed size: 421
- Dedicated cancer unit beds: 33
- New cancer patients seen each year: 1,450
- Managed care penetration in the state: 36 percent

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

- A variety of educational programs and materials, in addition to community outreach programs, are offered to the public free of charge.
- Hoag has numerous support groups for patients, including those with breast cancer and brain tumors. There is a caregivers' support group, a bereavement support group, and a home-based hospice program, in addition to many others.
- Fitter Image uses low-impact aerobics classes and stretching exercises to help cancer patients maintain their physical conditioning and sense of well-being.
- Yoga classes are held weekly, along with a T'ai Chi pilot program.
- Brighter Image helps patients with the cosmetic and aesthetic issues arising from surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy.
- A public information cancer hotline provides support, education, and resource information 10 hours each day.



of 79 percent from 1992. Additionally, the Cancer Center is working with a number of Orange County corporate employers and community groups to provide information and on-site programs about the prevention and early detection of cancer and cardiac disease.

Community education programs include lectures on cancer specific topics, health fairs, breast health programs, cancer/cardiac screenings, and risk reduction programs. In addition, Coping with Cancer, an educational support program, addresses the medical, physical, social, and psychological aspects of cancer.

Another popular offering is the twice-yearly prostate and skin cancer screenings. Hoag medical staff volunteer their time to provide physical examinations and many other services to the public free of charge.

ANALYZING CANCER RISK

An additional screening program of importance, and one that is still fairly unique in the community cancer center, is the Richard J. Flamsom Hereditary Cancer Program for individuals who may be at risk for developing a hereditary cancer.

Established in 1991 in conjunction with the Hereditary Cancer Institute at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebr., Hoag's hereditary screening program strives to provide individuals with an in-depth analysis of the meanings of the cancer patterns in their families. There is no charge for this service. In 1993, 55 community members participated in the program.

According to Oncology Education Coordinator Tonyce Williams, M.N., "Heredity accounts for about 5 to 10 percent of all cancers. If people know they're at increased risk, they can take steps that may save their lives. That's why providing service like this now is so valuable. In the future, advances in the field of genetics will make hereditary screening even more important.

"Often, I will receive calls from a mother, for example, who has breast

cancer and whose own mother had breast cancer," Williams continued. "However, she is not making the call for herself. She is concerned about the risk to her daughter and wishes to learn all she can in order to minimize that risk. As you can see, this program has a far-reaching; educational and emotional impact on everyone who participates, including other family members."

Individuals who are concerned about their cancer risk can contact the center to receive an information packet on the screening program that also includes an easy-to-follow family history questionnaire.

At the actual screening, Williams leads the participant through an interactive computer program that elicits information on high-risk cancer characteristics, with a special emphasis on malignant melanoma and colon and breast cancers. Then, the information from the family history questionnaire is entered. The computer immediately generates a family tree that graphically shows patterns of cancer occurrence.

The Hereditary Cancer Institute in Omaha then retrieves the information, and Henry Lynch, M.D., a medical oncologist, and the director of the institute, completes a genetic analysis. The participant receives a letter outlining his or her risk for a particular type of cancer, whether relatives are also at risk and the percentage of that risk. The letter also addresses screening recommendations. A copy of the letter can be sent to the participant's personal physician if requested.

"We encourage participants to return to the center to review their results in a supportive setting where their questions can be answered by a trained professional," Williams said. It has been difficult, she noted, to convince people of the need and importance of a follow-up interview. Although many people find, to their relief, that there is no increased risk of cancer in their family, others find just the opposite is true. For these people, Hoag Cancer Center offers specific cancer screening advice.

A HIGH-TECH AND PERSONAL APPROACH

Hoag Cancer Center's motto is "Aggressive Treatment, Sensitive Care." Aggressive treatment includes the three traditional forms of therapy: surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy, as well as innovative biological therapy provided by the center's cell biology laboratory. This on-site program means patients have access to clinical investigations, new treatments, and future progress in the areas of genetics and gene therapy.

In 1991 the Radiation Oncology Department expanded from 5,000 to 15,000 square feet in the new Cancer Center facility. Some of the most sophisticated equipment in the world is housed in this area, including two Ximatron simulators and the Clinac 2500C and 600C linear accelerators, complete with a separate computer-operated quality control system. Construction is under way for the addition of a third accelerator. Hoag Cancer Center provides about 25 percent of the radiation therapy offered in Orange County.

In February 1993 Hoag began its stereotactic radiosurgery program. More than 65 patients have undergone this procedure, which destroys certain brain tumors and lesions with a single, large dose of radiation.

Neuro-Oncology Services Resource Nurse Kris O'Neal, O.C.N., is the coordinator of stereotactic radiosurgery. She brings a special empathy to her work with Hoag's cancer patients. O'Neal was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 1991 and went through an aggressive treatment regimen of high dose chemotherapy with stem cell replacement.

"I understand the frustrations of coping with cancer—the fears, the difficulties encountered, and the treatment decisions a patient faces," O'Neal said, exemplifying Hoag Cancer Center's determination to treat patients with sensitivity and the best personal care. ■