

Spring 2009

CANCER RESOURCE

A publication from The Cancer Center at Lake Manassas
www.cancercenterlm.org



Cancer Survivors' Day!

The Cancer Center hosted its first annual Cancer Survivors' Party on October 11 last year. Patients and their families were invited to the center to celebrate their successful treatment and recoveries. Look for more information about this year's Cancer Survivors' Party in the next issue of *Cancer Resource*.

NEW TREATMENT!

Radiation with RapidArc

The Cancer Center at Lake Manassas is now offering faster and more accurate radiation treatment thanks to RapidArc—the latest in cancer treatment technology. The Cancer Center is the first treatment center in the Northern Virginia/Washington, D.C. area to offer this new technology.

RapidArc can be used to treat many kinds of cancer. It is especially useful in treating prostate, rectal, and head and neck cancers.

Shorter, More Accurate Treatments

Compared with other treatments, the RapidArc is much quicker. "Patients can be treated in three to five minutes, versus 15 to 20 minutes with other methods, including tomotherapy," explains Sanjeev Aggarwal, M.D., medical director at The Cancer Center. As patients are less likely to move during these short treatments, accuracy is improved and there is less risk of damage to the surrounding healthy tissue.

"This technology allows us to more closely focus on the tumor

while blocking out critical areas and important organs, so in some cases, patients can receive a lower dose of radiation," adds Dr. Aggarwal.

A Better Experience Overall

RapidArc can also help improve the overall experience for the patient. "Going through treatments and the anxiety of holding still for an extended period can be stressful," notes Dr. Aggarwal. Most patients would probably agree that less time in the machine and quicker treatments would make for a more pleasant, less stressful experience. ●

- The Cancer Center is the first facility in Virginia to use RapidArc.
- Treatment time is shorter with RapidArc.
- For more details, go to www.cancercenterlm.org

For more information about RapidArc, talk with your physician or call The Cancer Center at **703-753-4045**.



The Cancer Center
at Lake Manassas
a partnership of Prince William
& Fauquier Hospitals

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Letter from the Medical Director



Brachytherapy Available Soon

This spring, another treatment option will be available for those with prostate cancer—brachytherapy. Dr. Aggarwal will perform brachytherapy surgery at Prince William and Fauquier Hospitals.

A New Option

Brachytherapy is sometimes called internal radiation therapy. It involves implanting a small radioactive seed directly into a tumor or in the area around a tumor. Brachytherapy allows a higher dose of radiation to be given in a small area without damaging healthy tissue. This increases the chance that the tumor will be destroyed. Brachytherapy also cuts down on the number of treatments needed. Just two brachytherapy treatments can deliver the same amount of radiation therapy as 42 external-beam treatments.

Coordination of Care

Patients who choose brachytherapy treatment can expect the highest level of care. Dr. Aggarwal works closely with patients' referring doctors to plan the appropriate treatment and follow-up care. "We also educate patients so that they can be a full participant in their treatment and recovery," says Dr. Aggarwal. ●

I am pleased to bring you this issue of *Cancer Resource*, which highlights new technologies at The Cancer Center as well as our philosophy of complete care for cancer patients. We are committed to seeing that every patient gets the best possible care, not just by offering the latest technologies, but also by working closely with the entire care team to address each patient's unique situation.

Receiving a cancer diagnosis and planning for treatment is a difficult process and involves many medical specialties. We are sensitive to the concerns and questions that you may have and know that you want to receive treatments and be cared for by physicians you trust. We employ a team approach to providing care for all patients at the center, including those who have had surgery at other facilities. Your care team at The Cancer Center works closely with other doctors,

including surgeons and referring physicians, to review medical records and develop treatment plans. Our goal is to build a strong rapport with all your physicians so that you can get the best possible care and feel comfortable and well-informed.

Each of us at The Cancer Center is committed to caring for the patient as a whole. This means not only bringing you the best cancer-fighting technologies, but also listening to your questions and concerns, understanding your individual needs, and working with your other physicians. Our goal is to provide exceptional care for every patient.

Best wishes,

Sanjeev K. Aggarwal, M.D.

Medical Director, The Cancer Center at Lake Manassas



BRIEFS



Did You Know April Is Cancer Control Month?

The American Cancer Society named April Cancer Control Month. To help take control of cancer, it helps to know the symptoms so your doctor can diagnose your condition earlier. Tell your doctor if you notice:

- A new mole or change in a mole
- A thickening or lump in the breast or any other part of the body
- A sore that won't heal
- A cough or hoarseness that doesn't go away
- Changes in your bowel or bladder habits
- Discomfort after eating
- Having difficulty swallowing
- Unexplained weight loss or gain
- Unusual discharge or bleeding
- Feeling tired or weak

Talk with your doctor about what cancer screening tests you need and whether you should be doing any self-exams. For information about cancer screening guidelines, go to www.cancer.org and search for "early cancer detection."

Check Out Our New Web Site

Receiving a diagnosis of cancer isn't easy. You may feel anxious and overwhelmed as you try to plan treatments and gather information. The Cancer Center's new Web site—www.cancercenterlm.org—is designed with this in mind. You and your family members can use the Web site as a tool to help guide you through cancer treatment.

You can go online to get information about The Cancer Center, including directions, hours, staff bios, and a list of services. You can find stories and comments from patients, links to community organizations and support groups, and frequently asked questions. The site also has links to other sites recommended by The Cancer Center's staff.

Eat Right to Fight Cancer-Related Weight Loss

Eating well during and after cancer treatment is vital. It can help you feel better and better tolerate treatment. It also aids in recovery.

To keep the pounds on, have a light meal or snack every one to two hours. Choose foods that are high in calories and protein. Suggestions from the National Cancer Institute include:

- Peanut-butter sandwiches
- Cheese and crackers
- Tuna
- Yogurt
- Hard-cooked eggs

If you don't feel like eating, make your own milk shake using an "instant breakfast" supplement. Mix in milk, fruit, or cookies for extra calories.





**The Cancer Center
at Lake Manassas**
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Q&A with the Doctor



Sanjeev K. Aggarwal, M.D., is the medical director of The Cancer Center at Lake Manassas. He is a radiation oncologist and certified in therapeutic radiology. Dr. Aggarwal completed his undergraduate work at the University of Virginia and continued training at the Medical College of Virginia and the University of Maryland.

Q I have an oncology doctor and surgeon whom I see at a different hospital, but I would like to get radiation therapy treatments at The Cancer Center because it is closer. Is this OK?

A Yes, you may receive radiation treatments at The Cancer Center, regardless of which other doctors you see. It can be very beneficial for cancer patients to receive care close to home, and I am committed to following a team approach to make sure your treatments are both effective and convenient.

If you choose to have radiation therapy here, I will discuss your case with your oncologist and surgeon to develop the optimal treatment and follow-up care plan. This allows for a team approach with the added benefit of receiving radiation therapy close to home.

Q I was recently diagnosed with prostate cancer. Is radiation therapy an option? How do I find out more information?

A Radiation therapy is one possible treatment. When deciding which treatment is best, you should consult with your cancer doctors and research all options. The appropriate treatment will depend on many things, including your medical history and the type and stage of cancer. Understanding all your options can help you make an informed decision.

The staff at The Cancer Center is available for consultation to present objective, accurate information about radiation therapy and help you gather information to talk with your other cancer doctors about a treatment plan. For more information, call The Cancer Center at 703-753-4045. •

In Your Words

When Bill Keys needed external beam radiation therapy, following brachytherapy at Georgetown, he wanted to explore options closer to home. A shorter commute would make treatment easier, but, says Keys, "I didn't know if seeing doctors at different facilities would mean less effective care."

Thorough research convinced him that The Cancer Center offered the right technology and services, and Dr. Aggarwal and Keys' surgeon assured him that they would work closely to develop the most effective treatment plan.

The team approach was evident to Keys. Regular communication, phone calls, and status updates between Dr. Aggarwal and the doctors at Georgetown assured Keys that he was getting excellent care, coordinated to follow up his brachytherapy effectively.

Keys is pleased with Dr. Aggarwal's team approach and the staff he calls "excellent—very competent and with a great attitude."



Bill Keys