

# Cancer Support Now Newsletter



Autumn 2017

Issue 7.4

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This is the **Autumn edition** of the CSN Newsletter. We have expanded listings of all the numerous support groups for survivors and caregivers online.

This year we will try four issues, in February, May, August, and November

E-mail works best, send items to me at [geraldcross@comcast.net](mailto:geraldcross@comcast.net)

Thanks,  
Jerry Cross  
505-228-6768

## Survivors Writing Together

By Anjie Cureton and Eleanor Schick

The Survivors Writing Together support group has been meeting weekly at the University of New Mexico Cancer Center since May 2005. The group has also been held on occasion at the Cancer Services of New Mexico (CSNM) Family Cancer Retreat.

At the Fall 2017 CSNM Retreat, thirteen cancer survivors and their loved ones gathered to participate. They were invited to write on the topic of "What's different in my life now?" More than one participant began their writing with "Everything." Anyone who has ever been through cancer or loved someone going through cancer knows that it impacts every aspect of one's life. There were many tears in the group that day - tears of sadness and grief, and there were tears of gratitude.

A pair of friends were part of the group that day. One of the women spoke only Spanish, and the other was bilingual. She translated for her friend and for the participants that only spoke English. Beautifully, a full half of the group was bilingual and was able to appreciate this woman's words in her native tongue. She shared that she had been diagnosed and was going through treatment for cancer with no support, and with great fear. Then she met her friend, who had been through cancer a few years before. The Spanish-speaking friend shared how fearful she had been before... alone, with no hope, and had begun to question whether or not she wanted to keep living, where she had been met with more kindness and caring than she had experienced before in her life. With tears streaming down her face, and down the faces of most of the other participants who were finally helping her to hold her pain, she shared her appreciation and her newfound commitment to life.

One of the guidelines for all of the journaling groups is to "hold the space" for the person who is sharing their writing. This has never been so beautifully demonstrated as it was on that Saturday afternoon at the retreat. A group of twelve strangers held the space for this woman as she poured out her heart in a language that some could not understand. But everyone felt the intensity and honesty of her words. Nobody jumped in with empty condolences of "it's okay." It clearly had not been okay in her life for a long time. The group held her not-okayness, and her movement into considering the possibility that she could be okay, with its silent presence.

More pictures of their retreat Tai Chi class can be found online and here "[Retreat](#)".



## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### Cancer Support Now Officers and Board

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Sandy Ginsburg**

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**Eleanor Schick, Helpline/Navigator**

**Sarah Contreras, Navigator, also in Spanish**

**Runtang Wang, Webmaster**

**Patricia Monaghan, Legal Advisor**

**Alice Hiat, Emeritus**

**Michael Linver, Emeritus**

### **Cancer Support Now, Inc**

**PO Box 37338,**

**Albuquerque NM, 87176**

**Email:**

**[info@cancersupportnow.org](mailto:info@cancersupportnow.org)**

**Facebook: [https://  
www.facebook.com/  
cancersupportnow](https://www.facebook.com/cancersupportnow)**

**For support and information  
call our**

**Helpline at**

**505-255-0405 or  
toll free 855-955-3500.**

**All CSN support services  
are free.**

### **CSN Affirmation**

Cancer Survivors Offering Support

We offer our presence, a presence that listens without judgment, a presence that is comfortable with silence, tears and laughter, a presence that offers encouragement. Support is just that—being there, listening attentively, accepting moments of silence, tears and laughter, encouraging without judgment. What is the gift we have to offer a support person? We have a personal experience of cancer—we understand and we are not afraid to be there to listen.

We live in a community where no one has to go through cancer alone, whether as survivor or caregiver, whatever their needs may be.

Mission statement: We are a community of survivors reaching out, supporting, educating, and assisting survivors, their loved ones, and caregivers.



The CSN webpage, [www.cancersupportnow.org](http://www.cancersupportnow.org) has many pages of resources, other websites, articles, and documents of help for anyone. It also has page links in Spanish and Chinese.

Please like our Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/cancersupportnow>

You do not have to be a Facebook member to see our postings, just click on the link.

Disclaimers: Cancer Support Now offers education, information and support but not medical advice. Please contact your physician for all your medical concerns. No copyrighted material belonging to others is knowingly used in this publication without express permission. If any is inadvertently used without permission, please contact our editor. Articles are selected from a variety of sources to give us a wide range of content. Cancer Support Now does not endorse or approve, and assumes no responsibility for, the content, accuracy, or completeness of the information presented.

## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### **American Cancer Society needs volunteer drivers. Maybe you, or someone you know, needs a ride. (see [flyer](#))**

At the American Cancer Society, we have a program called Road To Recovery. This is a program where local volunteers provide rides to cancer patients that have no way of getting to their appointments. The coordination is all handled online and we do not require a driver to drive a certain number of rides a month. Just whatever you can help out with. As a driver, you can also set your mileage on how far you are willing to drive and block out days you are not available. Please reach out to me if you have any questions at all.

In Albuquerque, we currently have 28 Albuquerque drivers and provided over 823 rides in New Mexico.

**There is some insurance coverage available beyond the volunteer's own insurance coverage.**

### Automobile Liability Insurance Statement

All volunteers operating their personal vehicle at the direction of the American Cancer Society for the business of the American Cancer Society become an additional insured on the Society's commercial automobile liability policy, but only in excess of policy limits maintained on the volunteer's personal automobile. The Society's insurance policy will provide third-party liability protection to the volunteer, but beyond the driver's own auto insurance. Third-party liability would include damage to other vehicles or property, or injuries to the driver or passengers of other vehicles.

The Society does not provide any insurance for physical damage (collision/comprehensive) to the volunteer's personal vehicle. For Road To Recovery drivers, this insurance is in effect only when driving a sanctioned trip scheduled by the Society and under the guidelines of the Road To Recovery Program.

Additional Insured: A volunteer conducting work of the Society, with the knowledge of and at the direction of the Society is considered an additional insured under the Society's insurance policies. Therefore, if a patient in the Road To Recovery program or any third party files a claim or suit against the volunteer driver for any damages, the Society will defend the volunteer and pay related legal costs (notwithstanding who was at fault) or settlements (if the Society was legally liable).

So if you are willing and able, please volunteer to help. If you, or someone you know needs transport help, call the number on the [flyer](#) attached.

Shirelle Quintana Program Manager [Shirelle.quintana@cancer.org](mailto:Shirelle.quintana@cancer.org)

8500 Menaul NE Suite A500 Albuquerque NM 87112

505-262-6026

### **FDA Approves New Mammography System** September 5, 2017

[http://www.mdedge.com/oncologypractice/clinical-edge/summary/breast-cancer/fda-approves-new-mammography-system?group\\_type=week](http://www.mdedge.com/oncologypractice/clinical-edge/summary/breast-cancer/fda-approves-new-mammography-system?group_type=week)

The FDA has cleared the first 2D digital mammography system that allows patients to increase or decrease the amount of compression applied to their own breast before the mammogram x-ray is taken.

The Senographe Pristina with Self-Compression is a digital mammography system designed to give the patient an active role in the application of compression. The system has a handheld wireless remote control that patients can use to adjust the compression force after breast positioning.

Approval was based on a clinical validation showing that the addition of a remote to allow self-compression did not negatively impact image quality, nor did it significantly increase the time of the exam.

Citation:

FDA clears mammography device with option for patient-assisted compression. [news release]. Silver Spring, MD: FDA. September 1, 2017. <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm574562.htm...> Accessed September 2, 2017

## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### **Cancer Support Now Peer Support Groups and Services**

**For further information, please call our Helpline at 505.255.0405 or Toll Free at 1.855.955.3500.**

**Many other groups, events, and organizations are listed on our website Services page**

#### **Advanced Diagnosis Group**

All types of cancer, survivors only  
1st and 3rd Tuesday, 1:00-2:30 PM  
Carlisle and Comanche

#### **Blood Cancer Group**

Survivors dealing with blood or lymphatic cancer  
2nd Tuesday, 1:00-2:30 PM  
Carlisle and Comanche

#### **Breast Cancer Group**

Survivors only  
Every Wednesday, 6:00-7:30 PM  
Carlisle and Comanche

#### **Community Cancer Navigation**

[\(view flyer\)](#)

Community cancer navigators work hand in hand to meet non-medical needs of people experiencing cancer in any way, as survivor, caregiver or friend  
English speaking: Eleanor Schick  
505.255.0405  
En Español: Sarah Contreras 505.890.1205

#### **One-on-One Peer Cancer Support**

Call our Helpline - available seven days a week from 9 AM-9 PM.

#### **Friends & Family Writing Together**

[\(view flyer\)](#)

Journaling Support Group for Grief / Anticipatory Grief  
Caregivers/loved ones of someone with any cancer  
Every Thursday, 4:00-5:30 PM, UNM Cancer Center

#### **North Valley Women's Support Group**

All cancers, survivors and caregivers  
Every other Thursday night, 6:30-8:30 PM  
Montano, West of Fourth Street

#### **One-on-One Cancer Caregiver Session**

One time, 90-minute Session  
Resources and Support for Cancer Caregivers  
Scheduled individually to accommodate the needs of the caregiver; call Patricia at 505.307.3414

#### **One-on-One Peer Matching**

Call the Helpline to be matched with a peer supporter who has dealt with a similar diagnosis and/or challenges.

#### **One-on-One Smoking Cessation**

Scheduled individually  
Call Patricia at 505.307.3414

#### **Ovarian Open Arms**

Third Saturday of the month, 10:30 AM  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
NE Heights

#### **Pueblo of Isleta Community Cancer Support**

All are welcome!  
2nd Tuesday of the month, 10:30-Noon  
Isleta Health Clinic

## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### Cancer Support Now groups, continued

#### **Relaxation Support Classes**

Open to cancer survivors and/or their loved ones

Call Jean Stouffer, certified hypnotherapist,  
505.296.8423

Last Friday of the month, 10:30-Noon  
Carlisle Boulevard NE

#### **Sandia Breast Cancer Group**

1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month,  
Noon-1:00 PM

Sandia Base: Sandia Employees Only  
Check Sandia Daily News

Contact [emhinma@sandia.gov](mailto:emhinma@sandia.gov)

Sandia Base, Employees and Contractors only

#### **Santa Fe Women's Support Group, "Surviving Sisters"**

A group for all diagnoses for women  
2nd and 4th Tuesday, 4:00-5:30 PM  
Santa Fe

#### **Survivors Writing Together Journaling Support Group ([view flyer](#))**

Survivors, all diagnoses  
Every Monday, 2:30-4:00 PM  
UNM Cancer Center

#### **Taos Support Groups**

Survivors (all cancers) and/or caregivers  
Tuesdays, 5:00-6:30 PM  
Sipapu Street, Taos

#### **U27 (Under 27 Years Old)**

Survivors, all diagnoses, male and female  
3rd Wednesday from 5:30 -7 PM  
Location TBA

#### **UNM/CSN Education and Support Group**

A group for patients, survivors of all types  
of cancer, and their loved ones

1st and 3rd Monday, 5:30-7:00 PM

Central United Methodist Church, University  
Boulevard

### **Cancer Support Now's Community Partners**

#### **Prostate Cancer Support Association of New Mexico ([see flyer](#))**

Office at 2533 Virginia Street, NE Suite C  
Albuquerque, NM 87110 505.254.7784

[www.pcsanm.org](http://www.pcsanm.org)

[pchelp@pcsanm.org](mailto:pchelp@pcsanm.org)

**This is the Current Location for the  
Cancer Support Now Library-open  
Mondays thru Thursdays 10-2, and by  
appointment**

#### **The Gynecological Cancer Awareness Project**

7007 Wyoming St NE Suite D3  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
office 505-610-9300  
cell 505-585-8821

[amy@thegcap.org](mailto:amy@thegcap.org)  
[www.theGCAP.org](http://www.theGCAP.org)

**More detailed information  
and flyers for some of the  
groups can be found on the  
Services page of our website.**

## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### Cancer and Smoking

#### **Patricia Torn – certified smoking cessation specialist**

In March of 2017 I attended a tobacco control conference here in Albuquerque put on by NMACT (New Mexico Allied Council and Tobacco) of which I am an active member on behalf of Cancer Support Now. The following information is taken from one of the handouts for attendees:

Cancer is an uncontrolled growth of cells. It can happen in many parts of the body and can spread to other parts of the body. Cigarette smoking causes 87% of lung cancer deaths: it is the leading cause of cancer death in both men and women. Smoking is also responsible for most cancers of the cervix, colon and rectum, kidney, pancreas, stomach, and acute myeloid leukemia. Your chances of getting cancer decrease as soon as you quit smoking – even if you have been a heavy smoker for years. Even if you already have cancer, quitting now may help you feel better and live longer. Smoking may make the side effects of cancer treatment worse and continuing to smoke makes it harder for your body to heal. Smoking while receiving radiation therapy, chemotherapy, or surgery for cancer makes these treatments less effective. Smoking can cause mutations in genes, damaging the way your lungs work and causing your immune system to be less efficient.

If you continue to smoke, you are more likely to develop a second cancer in the same place or another type of cancer.

If you **stop smoking** you are more likely to survive the cancer than if you keep smoking.

You have less chance of developing other cancers.

You reduce complications from surgery and wounds heal faster.

Your body heals from cancer treatment more easily.

You are less likely to develop other diseases associated with smoking such as heart disease and stroke.

Your family and friends breathe cleaner air, which protects them from increased risk of cancer. And when you quit they can worry less about you and your health.

*If you have a long-term health condition, quitting smoking is even more important for you than the average smoker. The health risks associated with smoking are more serious for people with long-term health conditions. Quitting is the best thing you can do for yourself.*

Cancer Support Now offers free one-on-one 90 minute individualized smoking cessation sessions at a time convenient for the person requesting the service. We meet at one of the libraries in Albuquerque using a small conference room. For those living at a distance I mail materials ahead of time and then arrange a session by phone.

These sessions are non-judgmental and are for those both wanting to quit and thinking about quitting. The sessions are available to all adults 18 years of age and older. Call (505) 307-3414



## Cancer Survivors Offering Support

### Focus on lifestyle to manage menopause symptoms after breast cancer

Sharon Worcester August 30, 2017  
[Oncology Practice.com](http://OncologyPractice.com)

#### From the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism

Lifestyle modification, rather than hormone therapy, should form the basis for managing estrogen-depletion symptoms and associated clinical problems in breast cancer survivors, according to a review of available evidence.

The review, conducted by the writing group for the Endocrine Society's guidelines on management of menopausal symptoms, was prompted by the paucity of both randomized controlled trials in breast cancer survivors with estrogen deficiency issues and guidelines that sufficiently focus on treatment of this subgroup of women.

The problem is significant given that the number of survivors is increasing and has reached 9.3 million worldwide, and that the prevalence of estrogen-deficiency symptoms after breast cancer ranges from 79% to 95%, Richard J. Santen, MD, of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, and his colleagues reported.

"A large proportion of women experience menopausal symptoms or clinical manifestations of estrogen deficiency during treatment of their breast cancer or after completion of therapy. The specific symptoms and clinical challenges differ based on menopausal status prior to initiation of cancer treatment and therapeutic agents used," the researchers wrote in a report published in the Journal

of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism (2017 Aug 2. [doi: 10.1210/jc.2017-01138](https://doi.org/10.1210/jc.2017-01138)).

For instance, among premenopausal women treated with chemotherapy, ovarian insufficiency, severe menopausal symptoms, and infertility can result. Postmenopausal women treated with aromatase inhibitors may experience arthralgia, accelerated bone loss, and osteoporotic fractures, as well as severe vulvovaginal atrophy, they explained, noting that both premenopausal and postmenopausal survivors can experience moderate-to-severe vasomotor symptoms and sleep disturbance with related fatigue, depressive symptoms, and mood changes.

"Less common problems include weight gain, symptomatic osteoarthritis and intervertebral disk degeneration, degenerative skin changes, radiation and chemotherapy-related cardiovascular disease, and reduced quality of life," the researchers wrote.

Based on a review of randomized controlled clinical trials, observational studies, evidence-based guidelines, and expert opinion from professional societies, the writing group concluded that individualized lifestyle modifications and non-pharmacologic therapies are recommended for the treatment of these symptoms.

Specifically, the writing group recommended smoking cessation, weight loss when indicated, limited alcohol intake, maintenance of adequate vitamin D and calcium levels, a healthy diet, and regular physical activity for all women with prior breast cancer.

They also recommended nonpharmacologic therapies for vasomotor symptoms, and noted that cognitive behavioral therapy, hypnosis, and acupuncture are among the approaches that may be helpful.

Vaginal lubricants and moisturizers can also be helpful for mild vulvovaginal atrophy, they wrote. For women with more severe symptoms or signs of estrogen deficiency, pharmacologic agents are available to relieve vasomotor symptoms and vulvovaginal atrophy, and to prevent and treat fractures, they wrote, adding that "therapy must be individualized based on each woman's needs and goals for therapy."

Among emerging approaches to treatment of symptoms are selective estrogen receptor modulators (SERMs), tissue selective estrogen complex (TSEC) therapy, estetrol, and neurokinin B inhibitors, which show promise for expanding options for symptom relief with less breast cancer risk. However, these have not yet been tested in women with prior breast cancer, the researchers noted.

## Cancer Support Now Library

The online catalogue of almost 1,000 books can be seen here:

<https://www.librarything.com/catalog/CancerSupportNow>

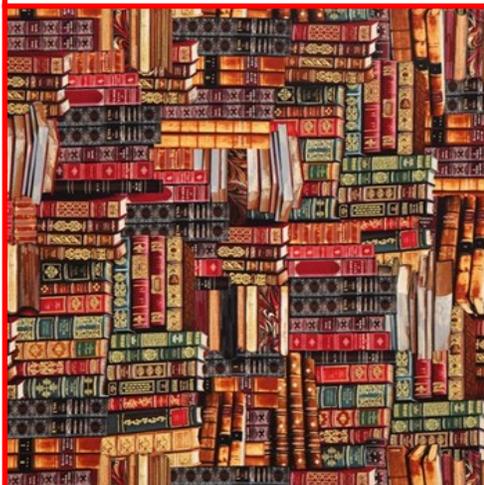
Over 100 new books are being added to the inventory.

It was moved to the office of the Prostate Cancer Support Association of New Mexico, 2533 Virginia St NE, Suite C, 87110.

Map is at <http://goo.gl/maps/EUg9S>

For now, the CSN library is open during PCSANM office hours of 10 AM to 2 PM on **Mondays through Thursdays**, and by appointment.

We hope to get some volunteers to get the library staffed the other days. If you have books checked out from the library, please return them to this new location. There is a mail slot, so most smaller books could be returned when the office is closed.



## Clinical Trials

People often ask about possible clinical trials to participate in.

Be sure to look at <http://clinicaltrials.gov> to see if there is a study you could participate in.

There are currently 103,000 clinical trials in the US, and 2,889 studies being done or recruiting in New Mexico for all medical issues

There are 158 studies recruiting in NM for cancer at the moment, see them at

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/results?cond=Cancer&term=&cntry1=NA%3AUS&state1=NA%3AUS%3ANM&Search=Search&recrs=a>

## Q and A:

### Do cell phones cause cancer?

No, not according to the best studies completed so far. Cancer is caused by genetic mutations, and cell phones emit a type of low-frequency energy that does not damage genes. For more information, see the NCI fact sheet on [Cell Phones and Cancer Risk](#).

### Do power lines cause cancer?

No, not according to the best studies completed so far. Power lines emit both electric and magnetic energy. The electric energy emitted by power lines is easily shielded or weakened by walls and other objects. The magnetic energy emitted by power lines is a low-frequency form of radiation that does not damage genes. For more information, see the NCI fact sheet on [Electromagnetic Fields and Cancer](#).

From <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/myths>