HIPEC at UCSD Moores Cancer Center

Who are we?

Cancer will affect all aspects of an individual’s life. In addition to obtaining all available information on the disease and deciding which approach and treatments will work best, there is the added pressure to find the time to meet day-to-day expectations. The Ambassador Program is an extension of the UCSD Moores Cancer Center. It exists to provide HIPEC patients with needed emotional support. The “whole-person” approach to care hopes to assist current patients in their journey to recovery. When patients are asked what they hold most dear, many answers include family, friends, the ability to care for oneself, and having the strength to continue to do the activities they love. More often than not, the answers involve human desires and are not always medical in nature. The Patient Ambassador Program was created to address these needs and wants. The program is designed to allow cancer survivors to connect with current patients. Many times, a patient’s journey to recovery becomes more obtainable when they can speak to someone who experienced the same diagnosis and procedure...who walked in the same shoes. The opportunity to see a cancer survivor thriving in his or her day-to-day life can provide the emotional strength needed to beat this disease.

Contact

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Do you have children at home? If so, there are a few things you can do to make sure everything runs smoothly during your absence. Anything you can do beforehand will alleviate any stress before, during and after your hospital stay.

*The most important thing is to keep your children on as regular a schedule as possible. Post a calendar with the daily schedule or routines.

*Let teachers, counselors and administrators know you will be away from home so they can receive any support they need from their school. This will make them more aware of any behavioral or emotional changes that may occur at school.

*Arrange for neighbors, family and friends to check in on your children and/or stay with them, depending on their age(s). Allow anyone who is willing to help do so. When they ask if you need help, it means they really do want to help, so let them.

*Plan a time to connect with your loved ones through "Face Time" on your phone or tablet. It will make you feel like you are together even if your family is far away. Or you can have them visit if they are close enough. The best time would be a couple days after surgery when you are more up to having visitors.

*You may want to leave money or gift cards for food or emergencies.

*Have a list available of emergency phone numbers or contact information.

With a little bit of planning ahead of time, you can rest assured that your family will be in good hands during your absence and you will be home before you know it.

**Patient Feature:**
Lori McIntosh

“I am so grateful to the UCSD HIPEC team and their commitment to helping patients and their families and friends through the HIPEC Ambassador Program. I joined the program shortly after my HIPEC surgery back in October of 2013 and have been able to reach out to patients and their families from near and far. I know how scary a diagnosis of cancer can be and I want to make sure that patients know there are people they can turn to for support, information and counseling. The best part of this program is that the people offering support have been there themselves. I would like to invite you to seek guidance with one of our Ambassadors or become an Ambassador yourself. We are eager to have you join our team of former patients and family members so you too can reach out and help new patients find their way.”

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–Lori McIntosh