



# HELPING CANCER PATIENTS AND SURVIVORS THRIVE

*Karen M. Mustian, PhD, '09M (MPH)*

*Gary R. Morrow, PhD, MS*

*Michelle C. Janelins, '05M (MS), '08M (PhD), '13M (MPH)*

## FOUR IMPORTANT AREAS OF OUR RESEARCH

### SUPPORTIVE CARE AND INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY

We develop treatments to prevent, manage, and cure the toxicities and side effects stemming from cancer and its treatments. Many patients and survivors experience a number of debilitating physical, psychological, and social side effects. WCI researchers are also working on therapies that will allow patients to receive all of their treatments as prescribed. This will increase their chances of survival and ensure as full a recovery and resumption of normal life activities as possible. WCI recently received a five-year grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for a leadership role in a nationwide clinical research network to investigate cancer-related side effects. WCI is one of only two academic cancer centers in the U.S. chosen by the NCI to perform this work. Research in this area is led by Gary R. Morrow, PhD, MS, who directs the Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program and has made landmark contributions to research related to cancer survivorship and symptom management during his 30-year career.

### EXERCISE ONCOLOGY

Exercise and psychological therapy work better than medications to reduce cancer-related fatigue—the most common side effect during and after cancer treatment—and should be recommended first to patients. That is the conclusion of a study led by Karen M. Mustian, PhD, MPH, a pioneer in the new field of exercise oncology and co-director of the Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program. According to Dr. Mustian, exercise, such as a brief walk each day, combined with as little as 10 minutes of resistance band exercises, is better than medication for treating cancer-related fatigue. Dr. Mustian and several colleagues at WCI have been studying exercise and cancer for nearly 15 years. In a landmark clinical trial, she also discovered that her YOCAS® gentle hatha and restorative yoga therapy was effective for treating insomnia and fatigue among cancer survivors across the U.S.

Wilmot Cancer Institute's (WCI's) Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program is one of the nation's oldest and most highly regarded research programs. For decades, researchers in our cancer control program have contributed many important advances to help cancer patients and survivors deal with the consequences of their treatment, some of which can last a lifetime.

Our program has become increasingly important with the number of cancer survivors projected to grow to 26.1 million by 2040.





*Supriya G. Mohile, MD, MS*

## GERIATRIC ONCOLOGY

WCI has the largest geriatric oncology program in the country. Supriya G. Mohile, MD, MS—a pioneer in geriatric oncology and one of only a handful of scientists nationwide in this field—directs the Geriatric Oncology Clinic. Dr. Mohile and her team have been involved with various studies that look at the way aging cells respond to the stressful assault of cancer treatment and that link falls and functional impairment with chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy. She has been awarded a grant from the national Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute to study whether measuring a person's physiological age, rather than chronological age, is better when considering chemotherapy.

## CHEMO-BRAIN

Michelle C. Janelins, MS, PhD, MPH, specializes in the investigation of chemo-brain, a collection of symptoms associated with chemotherapy that includes forgetfulness, lack of concentration, and difficulty with multitasking. Chemo-brain is estimated to affect 80 percent of people who are in the midst of treatment; up to four million cancer survivors also suffer long-term cognitive problems. Dr. Janelins received a National Institutes of Health Director's New Innovator Award to conduct a clinical study on chemo-brain to better understand biological mechanisms in patients and possible interventions. Her goal is to predict which patients are most likely to suffer from severe chemo-brain, based on pre-chemotherapy inflammatory markers and other factors in their blood. This would help tailor a treatment plan for each patient. Janelins and her colleagues are also conducting intervention studies that may potentially alleviate cognitive problems.

**With your support, researchers in the Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program can continue their critical work and help enhance the lives of cancer patients, survivors, and their families.**

## CANCER SURVIVOR ESTABLISHES FUND FOR RESEARCH

Sandi Bishop is an ovarian cancer survivor who is forever grateful to the physicians and nurses at WCI. She and her husband, Willie, have established the Sandra Jewett and William E. Bishop Endowed Fund to support Cancer Control and Survivorship Research. They have a strong desire to improve cancer care available now and for the next generation of patients and the families who stand by them during their battle with cancer.

Bishop is impressed by the devotion of scientists in WCI's Cancer Control and Survivorship Research Program. "Their goal is to work toward improving the quality of lives of cancer patients," she said. "They work to minimize the side effects and symptoms of cancer treatments, understand the stress placed upon caregivers, and develop strategies to decrease complications from treatments."



*Sandi and Willie Bishop*

**For more information about how your gift can make an impact, please contact the Wilmot Cancer Institute Advancement Office at (585)-276-4717 or visit [wilmot.urmc.edu](http://wilmot.urmc.edu).**



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