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Announcement
A new section of the Yale Cancer Center intranet site was launched March 7 to showcase the Supportive Care Program. In addition to a short description of Supportive Care, the site has links to video archives of the January conference, Demanding Excellence in Hospice/Palliative Care. Archived issues of YaleCares and the first clinical tool, an Opioid Dosing guidelines page, round out the initial content. For readers without access to the intranet, past issues of YaleCares may be requested at the e-mail address at the bottom of this page.

In the news
- **Quality in palliative care.** In our first issue we reported on the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care, issued in 2004. The long-awaited follow-up from the National Quality Forum (NQF) is now available. *A National Framework and Preferred Practices for Palliative and Hospice Care Quality* may be purchased on the NQF web site; the Executive Summary is available for free download. Attendees at last month’s joint annual meeting of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association received the full text on CD-ROM. The NQF report is expected to have a major impact on the way palliative care programs are organized, run, and evaluated.

- **How do you talk to your kids about serious illness and death?** MSNBC has an online article and video about how one family is answering this question.

Journal watch
Unrelieved side effects and toxicity of the treatments we offer patients with serious illness are a major reason for either non-adherence or stopping treatment all together. Palliating these symptoms is a major challenge that requires sensitivity as well as clinical skill and knowledge.


- The current issue of the *Journal of Supportive Oncology* contains summaries of presentations at the 2nd Annual Chicago Supportive Oncology Conference. Many of these address symptoms experienced by patients across the cancer spectrum. *Peripheral neuropathy*, an often painful, sometimes debilitating, and usually frustratingly difficult-to-treat toxicity of several chemotherapy agents is one of the symptoms reviewed (scroll to bottom of page).

- Another frustrating symptom is the hot flashes caused by some hormone treatments and the early menopause caused by some chemotherapy treatments. A small non-randomized trial of pregabalin suggests it may be a useful agent for this symptom. As the authors note, its older cousin, gabapentin, has been shown to have moderate efficacy for this off-label indication. Presant CA & Kelly C. *Palliation of vasomotor instability (“hot flashes”) using pregabalin*. *Community Oncology*. Feb 2007;4(2):83-84. (full text free online)

Way back in 1969 Elisabeth Kübler-Ross published her stage theory of grief in *On Death and Dying*. Most of us have been taught the stage theory, but few of us have subjected it to a researcher’s eye. Here’s an important look: Maciejewski PK, et al. *An Empirical Examination of the Stage Theory of Grief*. *JAMA*. 2007; 297:716-723.


From cyberspace
One of the local NPR affiliates, WNPR, had an hour-long program, “Breaking down hospice care stigma” on its “Where We Live” daily talk show. A major topic was the relatively low use of hospice by African Americans.

Survivorship
- **Psychosocial Aspects of Cancer Survivorship**—online CE offered by the American Psychosocial Oncology Society.

- **CancerCare**, an advocacy, education, and support program for people with cancer and their families is offering its 5th Annual Survivorship Series, “Living with, through, and beyond cancer.” Both survivors and professionals can sign up. CE credit available for social workers.
- Neuropathy and Joint Aches: New Post Treatment Challenges; Apr 17, 1:30 – 2:30pm EDT
- My Treatment is Over: Why Do I Feel So Alone and Sad? May 15, 1:30 – 2:30pm EDT.
- Finding Hope and Meaning After Treatment; June 19, 1:30 – 2:30pm EDT

Speaking of cycling . . . In the February issue we highlighted the upcoming Connecticut Challenge bicycle ride to raise funds for the Survivorship Clinic at the Yale Cancer Center. There’s a slide show and a “Why I ride” feature on the home page of the CC web site. A colleague in Ohio sent a link to an interview with a cancer survivor who is cycling in a ride in that state for the American Cancer Society. This woman is an athlete, but as she says in the interview, “you don’t need a gold medal to ride, just a heart of gold.”

- Dennis W. Pyritz is an oncology nurse with T-cell leukemia. In Diary of an Illness, on the Oncology Nursing Society web site, he chronicles the lows and highs and the meaning of surviving.


Blogs

- Pallimed, mentioned in our first issue, has a new URL and look. Visit or subscribe for some excellent discussions and literature reviews.

- A blog that is recommended by the authors of Pallimed is Hospice Blog.

- Here’s a blog, from the other side of the stethoscope, on NPR.org that can be both read and listened to. My Cancer is written and read by Leroy Sievers, a journalist with cancer. A recent post: “Will I Be Someone Who Used to Have Cancer?” (March 5).

Children and Palliative Care


- The current Expert Interview on the PainEDU web site focuses on pediatric palliative care.

Conferences, Meetings, Education

If you would like to have your hospice or palliative care event listed here, please send an e-mail to the address at the bottom of this page.

- The Connecticut Coalition of End-of-Life Nurse Educators has scheduled four offerings for 2007 based on the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) curriculum. Open to all clinicians; CNE’s available. Contact: Pat Trotta, (203)379-4763; patricia.trotta@cancer.org.

- Mar 31, 8:30am – 12:30pm. Hospital of St. Raphael, New Haven. Communication, Grief, Loss, and Bereavement.

- May 19, 8:30am – 12:30pm. Waterbury Hospital. Care at end of life.