Intrabeam Intraoperative Radiotherapy
Just what is it?

Women with early-stage breast cancer now have a new treatment option available at Beaumont Health. This past September, breast specialists and radiation oncologists at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, were the first in the state to treat patients with the Intrabeam intraoperative radiotherapy system.

Radiation or radiotherapy treatments have proven to be effective in reducing the recurrence of breast cancer after a surgical procedure.

How does the new radiotherapy system work? After breast-conserving surgery, while the patient is under anesthesia, a single-dose of radiation therapy is delivered. The treatment usually takes 20-30 minutes. Compared to traditional external beam therapy, the one-time dose of radiotherapy reduces radiation exposure and offers the patient the convenience of a focused beam of radiation treatment during the breast operation. This form of focal radiation specifically targets the area of the breast that is most likely to have a recurrence and minimizes the radiation dose to the rest of the breast.

This may be an excellent therapy option for suitable women having a lumpectomy. More traditional forms of radiation therapy can require three to six weeks of treatment, depending on the type and extent of the patient’s cancer, according to Nayana Dekhne, M.D., breast surgeon and corporate director, Breast Care Program, Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak. “With this new less invasive treatment, the spherical tip of a small radiation device is inserted into the lumpectomy incision,” said Peter Y. Chen, M.D., a Beaumont radiation oncologist. “The targeted intraoperative therapy, or TARGIT, is delivered while the patient is still asleep. No additional surgery is needed, and both the treatment time and radiation exposure are reduced. Given the focused radiation dose to the lumpectomy site, patients benefit from less radiation delivered to surrounding normal tissues such as the lungs and heart, and fewer cosmetic problems with the breasts. This can contribute to helping patients get back to their everyday lives more quickly.”

Beaumont, Royal Oak is participating in a multisite research trial called TARGIT-B. Dr. Chen, site investigator explained, “The study is for women whose doctors think they have a higher than average risk of the cancer coming back after treatment. The aim of the study is to see if having radiotherapy intraoperatively, in the form of boost irradiation, during surgery, lowers the chance of cancer coming back in the breast and if it reduces the risk of long-term changes to the breast. After this initial boost dose of radiation, participants in the TARGIT-B study will undergo a conventional course of external beam whole breast irradiation as an outpatient, after full recovery from their lumpectomy surgery.”

When combined with external beam radiation, TARGIT intraoperative radiation reduces the number of treatments that a patient needs. Additionally, an ongoing area of research is to define the type of patient for whom intraoperative treatment...
Looking back, my cancer journey began in the ER when I was 38 years old. I was having severe abdominal pain and a look-see surgery was performed. A post-op diagnosis revealed small bowel adhesions and a 0.5 cm carcinoid tumor on my appendix. I was told about the carcinoid as a FYI and not worry about it!

Four months later I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Cancer was not new to my family as my sister was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 28 and again six years later. I had not had a mammogram until I discovered the large lump in my breast. I chose to have a single mastectomy even though a second opinion physician suggested double mastectomy. Along with the fear of cancer and radical surgery, came the big fear of the chemotherapy treatment that I would have to undergo. I was too scared to ask questions and too naïve to know that I should ask questions. I managed to get through the 6 months reasonably well, working full time, being a mother of two teenagers, and even keeping up with tap dance lessons and competitions. My good attitude was the result of the love and support I received from my husband, family and friends.

I was once again diagnosed with cancer in my other breast 6 years later. Fortunately, I did not have to have chemotherapy again, however, another mastectomy was done and once again I was faced with emotional grief in the diagnosis of cancer and the loss of my other breast.

Then, at age 48, I was diagnosed with stage III-C ovarian cancer. One year prior to this diagnosis, I began having changes in my bowel habits & I was losing weight. I would feel full after eating a few bites. Of course I was happy with this because I was exercising more and I thought that the exercise was finally paying off. The change in bowel habits grew intense and I made an appointment with a physician. I had my first colonoscopy & the doctor mentioned to my husband that he thought he saw something at first but dismissed it. My bowel habits improved, which I thought was the result of being cleaned out for the colonoscopy, and I was still losing weight which I thought was due to loss of appetite. But 8 months later, I began to experience left lower quadrant pain which I ignored for a long time. When the pain became intense I finally made an appointment with my GYN doctor. Abdominal ultrasound was done and an appointment with a gynecological oncologist was quickly made. Arrangements were immediately made for a total hysterectomy and I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

My once positive attitude quickly faded away. For the sake of my loving husband and family, I tried to be upbeat, but in private, I cried. The day I was discharged from the hospital, I finally asked my physician for an honest prognosis. He told me that I had a 50% chance of survival. I didn’t think I was strong enough to get through this, but I made up my mind that I was going to survive this challenge that I faced – I was NOT going to be a statistic.

That was 19 years ago and I consider myself very fortunate to be able to share my cancer experiences. There are so many women who are not so fortunate. I was able to see my two daughters marry and we now have 5 grandchildren including triplets!

Five years ago at the request of my then 40 year old daughter I had the BRCA testing. I did test positive and thankfully she tested negative. Our other 37 year old daughter did not wish to be tested and I respected her opinion. However, she, the mother of triplets, was diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago and tested positive for the gene mutation.
Intrabeam Intraoperative Radiotherapy

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may serve as the only form of radiation therapy.

Jayant Vaidya, professor of surgery and oncology, University College, London, who pioneered the Intrabeam system, was present at Beaumont to observe the first two procedures. “It’s fantastic Beaumont has this leading edge technology. Beaumont has always been progressive in radiation oncology,” he said.

Beaumont has been one of the pioneers in accelerated partial-breast irradiation using brachytherapy for more than 20 years. Today, Intrabeam intraoperative radiotherapy system is another partial radiation option. Women who have been diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer should talk with their physician about whether this treatment is right for them, suggests Dr. Dekhne. “Our patients who are eligible for intraoperative radiotherapy like that this new treatment option is easy to understand,” said Dr. Dekhne. “By getting their radiation treatment in one-dose immediately after their lumpectomy, they have the comfort of knowing two procedures have been accomplished under one anesthesia.”

Those interested in learning more about this new radiation option can call Beaumont’s Comprehensive Breast Care Centers at 888-924-9460 or go to www.beaumont.edu/cancer/centers-clinics/comprehensive-breast-care-centers/.

Whenever you find yourself doubting how far you can go, just remember how far you have come.

Remember everything you have faced, all the battles you have won, all the fears you have overcome.

-Unknown

Sharing & Caring Profile

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When I was diagnosed with breast cancer I had never heard of ovarian cancer. I ignored my own body speaking to me because I was naive and was not aware of the symptoms.

This cancer journey has brought me to places I wouldn’t have expected. I am co-facilitator for the One to One ovarian cancer support group. I am also in a program called ‘Survivors Teaching Students’ presenting to medical students, and also a program by MIOCA (Michigan Ovarian Cancer Alliance) called SPEAK (Survivors Promoting Early Awareness and Knowledge). Hearing personal accounts from ovarian cancer survivors helps put a face and voice to the disease. This not only illustrates the real life subtleties of its symptoms and the often delayed path to diagnosis, but also makes the information especially memorable. The purpose is to raise awareness of the disease and increase the public’s understanding of ovarian cancer symptoms so women seek medical advice sooner.

It is so important to understand the symptoms of ovarian cancer and to go to the doctor if something is wrong. Ovarian cancer is difficult to detect as the symptoms could be diagnosed as many other things. Be aware of your body and be persistent!

And stay away from reading statistics!!!

3
Breast Cancer Support - There’s something just right for you!

Never Alone - Peer to Peer Support Group
Thursdays, January 19, February 16 and March 16 1:00 pm - Royal Oak
After the storm of a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment, you may be left with a lot of unanswered questions and feelings. Sometimes it’s just nice to talk to others who may be dealing with some of the same emotions. Topics of discussion will include dealing with fatigue, fear of recurrence, body image concerns, managing anxiety and finding a renewed sense of purpose. Meets in the Royal Oak Cancer Center 1st floor classroom.

Rack Pack: Unique Issues for Young Women with Breast Cancer
Tuesdays, January 10, February 14 and March 14 6:30 pm - Gilda’s Club
Are you looking to connect with other young women diagnosed with breast cancer? Our young survivors here at Sharing and Caring have joined forces with the Rack Pack at Gilda’s Club. This support group will focus exclusively on the unique issues and concerns specific to young women. From parenting young children, concerns about future fertility, managing careers, sustaining relationships, dating and intimacy, young women often have different experiences and can often feel especially alone and overwhelmed. Finding the right support group can bring strength and friendship as young women struggle to balance their personal and professional lives.
Meets at the Gilda’s Clubhouse in Royal Oak. 3517 Rochester Road, Royal Oak, MI

Breast Cancer Support Group
Mondays, January 16, February 20 and March 20 10:30 am - Troy
Receiving a cancer diagnosis can be a complete derailment to life. The sudden and unexpected upheaval is very stressful. This group, led by Oncology Social Worker Laurel Martinez, LMSW, LCSW, OSW-C, provides an opportunity to discuss your diagnosis and treatment with others who are going through the same experience. Meets in the Wilson Cancer Resource Center 1st floor conference room, located across the bridge from Beaumont, Troy, in the Physician Office Building. (44344 Dequindre Road)

STAGE 4 - A Group for Women with Metastatic Breast Cancer
Tuesdays, January 17, February 21 and March 21 6:30 pm - Royal Oak
This group provides an opportunity for women who have metastatic breast cancer to discuss the unique challenges and issues they face. Women with stage four breast cancer often feel unable to talk about their cancer. This format provides a safe arena to converse about what is on your mind and in your heart. You are welcome to attend one or all meetings. Please note, this group is intended only for women diagnosed with Stage IV disease. These meetings are facilitated by Psychologist Dr. Sally Smolen of Mercy Works in Farmington Hills.
Meets in the Resource Center on the first floor of the Rose Cancer Center, Royal Oak.

Additional Programming
Angel Pillow Project - Giving Back & Enjoying Life: Mondays, January 9, February 6 & March 6 12:00 pm
Gather with us for conversation, encouragement and community as we “give back” and help those who are in treatment. We will be making heart shaped pillows to help other women recover from the physical and emotional pain after breast surgery. We provide all the tools & materials, but donations of these items are always welcome. Don’t sew? Come anyway! We have things you can do. We will meet at Gilda’s Club, located at 3517 Rochester Road in Royal Oak. Please call 248-551-8585 to let us know you’re coming.
Wraps with Wendy: Thursday, January 5  6:00 pm
Winter is here, and we want to stay warm! With the help of Wendy, a breast cancer survivor, we’ll learn how to make a fashionable wrap from warm fleece. Make one for yourself, and another to donate. Please bring a piece of fleece 88” x 29”, and any thread or decorative accessories you’d like for your own. We will supply everything you need to make one to donate! Meets in classroom 1 of the PNC building, 755 W. Big Beaver in Troy. Register early, space is limited!

Naturopathic Medicine for Metastatic Breast Cancer: Tuesday, January 17  7:00 pm
Please join us as Dr. Michael Walker, Oncology Naturopathic Physician, explains how naturopathic medicine can help you. He will speak on alternative ways of easing side effects from treatments and share his knowledge beyond what you might commonly hear. Meets in the 1st floor Royal Oak Cancer Center Resource Center, just prior to the Stage IV support group meeting. If you have metastatic disease, you are welcome to stay for the support group.

The Science of Diagnosing Cancer: Tuesday, February 7  6:30 pm
Have you ever been intrigued about the pathological side of breast cancer? Most times we are unable to speak with and ask questions of the person that examines our cancer cells. Please join us for an educational evening as Dr. Mitual Amin, Chief Anatomic Pathologist, gives us an understanding of DCIS, invasive carcinoma, and various subtypes of breast cancer from a pathological stand point. Meets in the Royal Oak Beaumont, Neuroscience Center, 2nd floor Allison Conference Room.

Field Trip! - Finding the Right Fit - Bra Fitting at Nordstrom Somerset: Tuesday, March 7  6:00 pm
Many women have not ever had a professional bra fitting. Following a breast surgery, this may be even more essential. It is important to get the right fit in order to maximize comfort and confidence. Please join us as Nordstrom’s professional bra fitters get you in the right bra. All are welcome to join us! We will meet in a pleasant, non-clinical surrounding at the lingerie department of Nordstrom inside Somerset Mall (2850 W. Big Beaver Rd., Troy)
Register early, space is limited!

Survivorship Workshop Series: Moving Beyond Breast Cancer!

YOU MUST REGISTER TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE! A light supper is served at the Survivorship Workshop series.

You can register online at http://SharingandCaring.eventbrite.com or by calling 248-551-8585. If no one is available to take your call, a message with your name, phone number and which program you want to attend will complete your registration. If you do not reserve your spot, we will not be able to contact you in the event that we must cancel a program. If you signed up and are unable to attend, PLEASE CALL TO CANCEL so that we can give your spot to someone on our waiting list! Unless otherwise noted, Survivorship workshops are held at the PNC Building at 755 W. Big Beaver in Troy. Parking is available in back of the building, in the southwest lot.

Getting on the Right Track - Healthy Eating after Breast Cancer: Thursday, January 26 6:30pm
Following a healthy diet is important for cancer survivors. Learn the truth behind eating organic and what ‘genetically modified’ really means. Increase your awareness about harmful additives hidden in our foods, and get tips on including more high nutrient foods with cancer-fighting powers to your diet. Take the next step by making a few simple changes to your diet, allowing you to improve your long-term health. Join us as we learn ways we can add more cancer fighting foods to our plate. Facilitated by Hallie Jack, RD. Meets in Classroom 1 of the PNC Building.

Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Take Charge of Your Heart after Cancer: Thursday, February 23  4:00 pm
Heart disease and breast cancer are the top 2 causes of death for women. Radiation to the chest, chemotherapy, and hormone changes can affect heart function during treatment and into later years. Many women wonder about the after effects of treatment on heart health and the cardiovascular implications from their breast cancer treatments. Join us as Dr. Marandici discusses steps we can take to prevent heart disease and how we can recognize early symptoms. Please note: we will meet in the Ministrelli Heart Center, just inside the Royal Oak East hospital entrance.

Return to Wellness - Mind, Body & Spirit: Thursday, March 23  6:30 pm
Join Dr. Michelle Crowder, Naturopathic Physician, and Dr. Michael Walker, Oncology Naturopathic Physician, as we discover mindfulness based therapies that can help reduce stress, anxiety, insomnia and fatigue. Learn complementary treatments that can provide relief from peripheral neuropathy and other common lingering side effects of treatment and how to improve your overall well-being with a holistic approach that can move you away from disease and toward vibrant health. Meets in Classroom 1 of the PNC Building.
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It’s easy to sign up for our programs through the Eventbrite website:

Please visit our homepage at http://SharingandCaring.eventbrite.com in order to view and sign up for all active programs.

Once on the homepage, there will be a list of classes that are available. You will click on whichever class interests you. This will then open up a page that has more information about the class, along with a tab to register. Click on the “registration options” tab, and a box will come up. Choose 1 seat and at the bottom, click “register”. It then directs you to a page where you will input your contact information (name, telephone number, email address), along with a summary of the program date/time, location, and a way to contact Sharing & Caring, if needed.

You will then click “complete registration”. A confirmation is sent to your email address. You will also be sent a reminder email a few days prior to the program.

Sharing & Caring recently received a generous donation from Steve Prothro in memory of his wife Jeri, one of our long-time Stage IV support group members. Jeri Prothro was an advocate of retreats that help women battling metastatic disease relax and recharge, but also knew that not everyone could afford to attend these retreats. For that reason, Steve has asked that a scholarship fund, to cover registration and/or travel expenses, be established to help make attending a retreat a reality for more women with metastatic disease. Sharing & Caring extends our deep gratitude and appreciation for this very thoughtful gift. Call us for more information about scholarships.
Nutrition for Cancer Survivorship—During Treatment and Beyond: Thursday, February 9 (sorry, no classes in January or March) 6:30 - 7:30 pm. Patients will learn how diet influences cancer. Sample foods and recipes will be provided. Please join Hallie Jack, RD, and Chef Bryan Cicchini for a fun, informative, delicious evening! Meets in the Rehabilitation & Dialysis Center 2nd floor, Staff lounge, 44500 Dequindre, Sterling Heights MI 48314. Although there is no fee to attend, registration is required by calling the Wilson Cancer Center at 248-964-3430

Living with Ease after cancer: Formerly called Silver Linings, this is a mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) series with Ruth Lerman, M.D., certified M.B.S.R. teacher. There is no cost to participate. Location to be determined; sorry, registration date, meeting and retreat dates not available at time of printing. For more information, call Pam at 248-551-4645 or email pamela.jablonski@beaumont.org.

Look Good Feel Better: This program is presented in conjunction with the American Cancer Society to help women who are currently undergoing cancer treatment to improve their appearance and self image by teaching them hands-on beauty techniques to overcome the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatments. Bring home a beautiful kit filled with new makeup, and learn some new scarf-tying tricks as well. Reservations for LGFB for Troy (10 am meeting time), or Royal Oak (6 pm meeting time) or Grosse Pointe must be made by calling the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345. Meeting dates for Royal Oak and Troy are Mondays, January 9, February 13 and March 13. Sorry, meeting dates for Grosse Pointe were not available at time of printing. This is a free workshop!

Beaumont Cancer Survivorship Clinic: The long-term effects of cancer and cancer treatment can be challenging. To meet these unique needs, Beaumont offers a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach for survivors. One of our goals is to provide guidance to live a healthy life after treatment, including lifestyle recommendations, nutritional counseling, wellness education and more. For more information or to schedule a Breast Cancer Survivorship Clinic appointment, call 248-964-5892.

Exercise and Wellness During Treatment and Beyond: Thinking about exercising in a safe way? Come join a group of cancer survivors who meet regularly with rehabilitation specialists with an emphasis on improving strength, movement, balance, promoting fitness and supporting a healthy lifestyle. An individualized exercise program will be created for you that will promote participation in the activities of your choice. For additional information on our comprehension Oncology Rehabilitation Services call Troy 248-964-0700, Royal Oak 248-655-5700, Grosse Pointe 586-447-4070 or go http://www.beaumont.edu/cancer/classes-support-resources/cancer-survivorship-program/exercise-wellness/

Thanks to a very fun group of volunteers helping out at a recent Angel Pillow Project program. We have so much fun getting together and making pillows.