FEBRUARY 2024

DCI E-news

Duke Cancer Institute

DCI E-News is a monthly newsletter sharing the latest DCI and oncology-related announcements, feature stories, and news updates. For more, visit the DCI Blog.

In the Spotlight

CAR T-Cell Therapy Gains Ground

In the summer of 2016, three-time leukemia patient Connor McMahon, then 15, enrolled in a clinical trial at Duke of a first-of-its-kind immunotherapy using his own disease-fighting T-cells. Since then Connor has grown up and this novel type of immunotherapy — CAR T-cell therapy — has gained ground.

Duke Cancer Institute is now certified to offer all six commercially available CAR T-cell therapies that together encompass treatments for B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, various B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphomas, and multiple myeloma. This last fiscal year saw the number of patients undergoing CAR T-cell infusion nearly double. READ

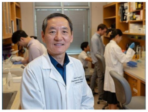
Investigators Find Active Substance Use Disorders in Adult Cancer Survivors

In a recent JAMA Oncology study, investigators found a prevalence of active substance use disorders of 3.8% among U.S. adult survivors of solid tumor cancers, with higher rates among those with head/neck, esophageal/gastric, and cervical cancers as well as melanoma. **Devon K. Check, PhD**, is the corresponding author. READ in JAMA :: READ in The ASCO Post

Duke Tops List of Most Cited for Immunotherapy Work in Glioma

A new global study of advancements in immuno-therapy for glioma itallied the 100 most cited papers of the past 20 years. The institution that made the greatest contributions was Duke University, with 16. **Amy Heimberger, MD, PhD**, **John Sampson, MD, PhD, MBA, MHSc**, and **David Reardon, MD**, secured the top three positions with 15, 12, and 11 papers. READ in Frontiers in Oncology

Huang Team Awarded $1Million for Novel Prostate Cancer Treatment Strategy



A team led by Duke Pathology Chair **Jiaoti Huang, MD, PhD**, with DCI's **Andrew Armstrong, MD, MSc**, **Kent Weinhold, PhD**, **Susan Halabi, PhD**, and **Michael Zalutski, PhD**, have received a 2-year $1M Prostate Cancer Foundation Challenge Award for a project "targeting neuro-endocrine cells in prostate cancer." READ at Duke Patholog

Clinic & Community News

DCI Pilot Program Ensures Black Men with Prostate Cancer Get the Care They Need

Edward Fogg was 66 and homeless when doctors told him he had an elevated PSA score. Fogg didn't understand that was a red flag for aggressive prostate cancer, and he also didn't want to talk about his health issues.

Fortunately, DCI patient navigators, as part of a new pilot program, are reaching out to men like Fogg to help them get the care they need. READ

Related

Meet the North Carolina nurse who gets Black me to care about prostate health *(Black Enterprise)*
Features **Melody McNair, LPN**, and **Hannah McManus, MD**

WATCH: The Complexity of Prostate Cancer Disparities

Steven Patierno, PhD, delves into his 25-year journey tackling cancer disparities in this UroToday video. He emphasizes systemic racism, lifestyle choices, and institutional barriers as key disparity drivers and highlights DCI's innovative screening algorithm, which significantly improved prostate cancer screening, particularly among African-American men. Patierno also stresses the importance of diversifying clinical trials, citing the Panther trial's ground-breaking results. WATCH

"We need to humanize health care more — talk less about the dollars and start talking about patient care."
– Haley Arden Moss, MD, MBA
WOMEN IN ONCOLOGY

Moss on a Mission

Haley Moss, MD, MBA, was spotlighted in a Healio series "Women on a Mission." Mosss has conducted extensive research on the Affordable Care Act's impact on cancer care and the expansion of Medicaid. She is an assist. professor, a gynecologic oncologist, and director of the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Breast and Gynecologic Oncology System of Excellence. READ

Duke Expands Gynecologic Oncology Care at Duke Raleigh With New Oncologist

Lauren Turker, MD, recently joined DCI as an assistant professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Her clinical focus is making surgery least invasive with equivalent outcomes to open surgery.

Turker is a strong advocate for individualized care. "No two cancers are the same, and no two women are the same in how they view what's most important to them in their care. I want patients to feel empowered to make choices that align with their values and goals, and I support them in those decisions," she said. READ

Survey Links Drug/Cannabis Use During Pregnancy with Certain Childhood Cancers

While the risks of drug use, smoking and drinking during pregnancy are widely accepted, a new Duke investigator-initiated survey of parents has identified clear associations between certain types of childhood cancers and gestational substance use, notably cannabis. "Alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy has declined, but gestational cannabis use has risen in the last decade," said lead author **Kyle Walsh**, **PhD**, whose study appears in Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers, and Prevention. READ

MORE

New data shows colon cancer remains among deadliest cancers in U.S., warning signs one survivor says saved his life *(WRAL)*
Features DCI patient & DCI OHE health ambassador **Tristan Evans**

WATCH: Mortality risk after ADT in African American patients with prostate cancer *(GU Oncology Now)*
Features **Judd Moul, MD**

Banning menthol cigarettes will lead to a healthier North Carolina *(Fayetteville Observer)*
Features **F. Joseph McClernon, PhD**, **Tomi Akinyemiju, PhD**, and **James Davis, MD**

Fewer head and neck cancer diagnoses during COVID may mean trouble ahead *(Everyday Health)*
Features **Nosayaba Osazuwa-Peters, BDS, MPH, PhD**

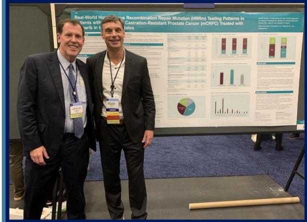
BRCA1/2 mutation carriers & risk reducing mastectomy: Who undergoes surgery and potential benefits *(The American Journal of Surgery)*
Features **Sydney M. Record; Samantha M. Thomas, MS; Koumani Ntowe, MS; Akiko Chiba, MD;** and **Jennifer K. Plichta, MD, MS**

Now or Later? Patient Satisfaction and Anxiety Among Women Undergoing Breast Biopsies Performed the Same Day as Recommended Versus a Later Day *(Journal of the American College of Radiology)*
Features **Lars J. Grimm, MD; Rebecca A. Shelby, PhD; Eun L. Langman, MD; Marybeth A. Nedrud, MD, PhD; Alexis Musick; Sora Yoon, MD; Karen Johnson, MD; Jay Baker, MD; Michael Taylor-Cho, MD; Mary Scott Soo, MD**

How 4 hospitals are improving their ORs with black box technology *(Advisory Board)*
Features **Christopher Mantyh, MD**

Research News

2024 GU ASCO: George Advises Early HRR Genetic Testing in Metasatic Castrate-Resistant Prostate Cancer


Judd Moul, MD, and Daniel George, MD, in front of George's poster, 2024 GU ASCO

‘We're really looking at a situation where most of the HRR testing is happening when patients have already exhausted all other standard options... HRR testing in patients before or at the time of mCRPC [diagnosis] would allow for olaparib therapy earlier in the disease course and potentially greater clinical benefit." — ***Daniel George, MD**, 2024 GU ASCO*

WATCH: HRR mutation testing patterns in mCRPC & Patients with HRR gene-mutated mCRPC require earlier genetic testing (Urology Times) :: Significance of early genetic testing in HRR-mutated mCRPC highlighted by real-world observations (Targeted Oncology) :: Real-world findings emphasize the need for early genetic testing in HRR-Mutated mCRPC (OncLive)

JAMA Health Forum Paper Exposes Continuing Inequities

In a recent JAMA Health Forum paper — Trends in Cancer Mortality Disparities Between Black and White Individuals in the US, 2000-2020 — **Tomi Akinyemiju, PhD**, and co-author **Anjali Gupta**, a Duke University scholar, found that "substantial racial and ethnic disparities persist for many common and preventable cancers." They found that despite overall progress against cancer in the U.S., Black Americans are still more prone to die of the disease than whites, and that disparities in deaths from breast cancer, prostate cancer, and colon cancer in men are particularly troubling. READ

More

As cancer deaths fall nationally, racial disparities still exist (WTVD Raleigh) :: Race Still Plays Role in U.S. Cancer Death Rates (Healthday) :: Age-adjusted cancer mortality rates decreased from 2000 to 2020 (Physician's Weekly)

Gender Could Be a Prognostic Factor in Clinical Outcomes For Spine Mets Patients

A new retrospective review finds that gender may be a prognostic factor in survival and clinical outcomes for patients undergoing treatment for spine metastases.

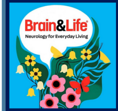
“Both males and females experienced significantly improved health-related quality of life scores after treatment, but females demonstrated longer survival and a lower complication rate,” the authors wrote in Spine, adding that gender should be taken into consideration accordingly when counseling patients.

Rory Goodwin, MD, PhD (left) is first author. READ

Duke Drug Improves Survival in Advanced Brain Cancer Patients

Three decades of DCI research has come to fruition. In 1968, Duke Medicine biochemist **Irwin Fridovich, PhD**, and graduate student Joe McCord discovered superoxide dismutase. In the 90s Fridovich postdoc **Ines Batinic-Haberle, PhD**, began work on a synthetic form. Recently that drug (BMX-001) was shown, in a phase 2 clinical trial led by Katy Peters, MD, PhD, to improve survival and lessen cognitive decline for patients with advanced brain cancer. READ

Duke
CENTENNIAL
100



LISTEN: Strength in Unity, Advocating and Advancing Research for Brain Tumors

TUNE IN: Peters Co-Hosts American Academy of Neurology Brain & Life Podcast

How do you keep your brain healthy? How can you live better every day after being diagnosed with a brain condition? *Brain & Life*® from the American Academy of Neurology tackles those questions and more at the intersection of brain health and neurologic disease.

Each week, neurologists Daniel Correa, MD, MSc (Montefiore Medical Center) and **Katy Peters, MD, PhD**, speak with neurology experts, celebrity advocates, and people whose lives are affected by brain conditions. READ

MORE

Duke Collaboration Results in Multi-Million Dollar Award to Support Blood Cancer Research at a New Tri-Institutional Consortium Center
Features **Ken Young, MD, PhD**

BostonGene and Duke University announce master collaboration agreement *(Yahoo Finance)*
Features **Jeffrey Clarke, MD**

Study examines real-world outcomes with Ivosidenib vs Venetoclax in Acute Myeloid Leukemia & Expert Point of View *(The ASCO Post)*
Features **Harry Erba, MD, PhD**

CheckMate 8Y8 trial of Nivolumab with/without Ipilimumab in untreated RCC (OncLive)
Features **Daniel George, MD**

Cancer mutation that spurs cell division helps heart models run at full gallop *(Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News)* & Time-dependent effects of BRAF-V600E on cell cycling, metabolism, and function in engineered myocardium *(Science Advances)*
Features **Nenad Bursac, PhD**, and **Nicholas Strash, PhD**

APOBEC3A induces DNA gaps through PRIMPOL and confers gap-associated therapeutic vulnerability*(Science Advances)*
Features **Lee Zou, PhD**

Corticosteroids and clinical trial design in chronic GVHD & Targeted treatments for GVHD *(OncLive)*
Features **Mitchell Horwitz, MD**

WATCH: First line Treatment and Challenges in Chronic GvHD*(Targeted Oncology)*
Features **Nelson Chao, MD, MBA**

Events

Academic Events
(strictly academic or clinical)

February

FEBRUARY 23 (12:00 PM to 5:00 PM): UNC and Duke/NCCU BIRCWH (Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health) Women's Health and Career Development Symposium

Rachel Greenup, MD, will present "Standing on Shoulders of (Little) Giants: Academic Success in Health Services Research Through Mentorship & Collaboration."

Target Audience: Faculty, fellows, postdocs, students and staff interested in research related to women's health or sex differences in human health and disease

LOCATION: Trent Semans Center Great Hall

Register

Submit Poster Topic
**Students (undergraduate, graduate and medical), postdocs, fellows and faculty may submit a poster. Poster topics should focus on health of women and/or the influence of sex as a biological variable on health and disease*

March

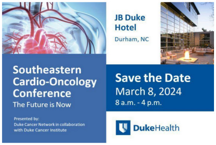
MARCH 1-2: APP Oncology Summit (APP OS)

DCI speakers include **Tucker Coston, MD**, on solid tumor screening recommendations; **Vijay Paryani, MD**, on breast cancer; **Margot Mahon O'Neill, PA-C, MHS**, on APP leaders and the path to leadership; and **Rebecca Phillips, MSN, AOCNP, FNP-C**, on immunotherapies in non-small cell lung cancer.

Target audience: NPs, PAs, pharmacists, and RNs

LOCATION: Charlotte, NC

Learn More & Register



MARCH 8 (8:00 AM to 4:00 PM) Southeastern Cardio-Oncology Conference: "The Future is Now," with a focus on the evolving landscape of cardio-oncology and amyloidosisis, is presented by the University of North Carolina Health System, Duke Heart Center, and the Duke Cancer Network in collaboration with Duke Cancer Institute.

Target Audience: Cardiologists, primary care providers, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgical oncologists, surgeons, nurses, pharmacists, advanced practice providers, and all those who contribute to the care of oncology and cardiology patients.

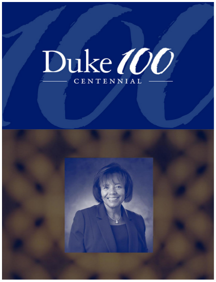
LOCATION: JB Duke Conference Center

Register by March 5 & Learn More

Special Events
(general public welcome)

February

NOW through APRIL 6 (ONLINE): Bench to Beat Cancer, a fundraiser hosted by Duke Sports Performance/Duke Olympic Sports Performance at Duke University, in partnership with Duke Cancer Institute, to help alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with a cancer diagnosis . Pledge donations based on the number of bench press reps they will perform within one minute on April 7. Learn More



FEBRUARY 9 (3:00 PM to 6:30 PM): The MaryAnn Black Distinguished Health Equity Symposium, a Duke 100 Event
*Appetizers & Dinner are included

Luminaries include **Mary Klotman, MD**, **Michael B. Kastan, MD, PhD; Steven Patierno, PhD**; **Tomi Akinyemiju, PhD;** community leaders, government officials, and guest speaker Mary Bassett, MD, MPH.

LOCATION: Durham Convention Center | 301 W. Morgan St. | Durham, NC

Learn More & View Agenda

Register/Purchase (free) tickets to secure your spot

FEBRUARY 25 (2:00 PM to 5:30 PM): 5th Annual "She Dunks on Cancer Educational Symposium" presented by the Endometrial Cancer Molecularly Targeted Therapy Consortium. This event includes a symposium & dinner, followed by a Duke Women's Basketball game (v. NC State) at 5:30 PM.

April

Duke Cancer Network Event

24th Annual Duke Debates: Controversies in the Management of Patients with Hematologic Malignancies

APRIL 12 to 14: Duke Debates: Controversies in the Management of Patients with Hematologic Malignancies, presented by the Duke Cancer Network in collaboration with Duke Cancer Institute. CME credit available. Earn up to 12 MOC Part 2 points

LOCATION: Hilton Head, SC

Register

CLICK to View the Duke 100 Event Calendar
February 2024 — May 2025
(check back often for more listings)

Featured speakers from Duke include: **Angeles Alvarez Secord, MD, MHSc; Stephanie Shuey, PharmD, BCOP**; **Mary Katherine Anastasio, MD**; **Emma Rossi, MD**; **Sabino Zani, MD**

Learn More & View Agenda

SYMPOSIUM LOCATION: The DeJoy Family Club room, Blue Devil Tower | Wallace Wade Stadium |110 Frank Basset Dr. | Durham, NC

GAME LOCATION: Cameron Indoor Stadium

Register for Symposium & Game Tickets

March

MARCH 2 (1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM): "Elephants and Tea" March Magazine Release Event, presented by the DCI Teen & Young Adult Oncology Program, Atrium Health Levine Cancer Institute Adolescents and Young Adult Oncology Program, and the UNC AYA Cancer Program.

Target Audience: Oncology patients between the ages of 18 and 39. Patients are encouraged to bring a friend.

LOCATION: Duke Medicine Pavilion

The day's agenda includes Healing Through Writing, Intentional Movement, and Collaging workshops, as well as a night out in downtown Durham. All activities are offered at no cost. Download the flyer

Learn More about "Elephants & Tea" magazine

CLICK to View the **FEBRUARY** Cancer Support Calendar

Team Spirit

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR
2024

Happy Lunar New Year! (Feb. 10)

May the dragon bring you and yours prosperity, energy, success, good luck, and happiness!

Julie Poucher Harbin, Senior Writer, DCI, is Managing Editor of the DCI E-News & the DCI Blog.

FILL OUT THIS FORM to submit announcements of upcoming events; new faculty, fellows, or residents; honors, awards, recognitions, new roles, promotions; and other news you wish to share for potential inclusion in the next DCI E-news or internal channels.

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