Infirmary Cancer Care
INFIRMARY HEALTH

AFFILIATE OF UAB O'NEAL COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

Expanded access

Infirmary Cancer Care brings clinical trials closer to home for patients.

Through its partnership with UAB O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center, Infirmary Cancer Care is able to give patients access to more than 200 clinical trials and ensures that the criteria of standard care is met. In addition, Infirmary Cancer Care launched its own clinical trial program in January 2023, bringing expanded treatment options even closer to home for patients in the Mobile Bay region.

More to offer patients

"Not many oncologists can say to their patients, 'In addition to the standard of care, we have a clinical trial here on-site that may be a good fit for you,'" said Jan O. Kemnade, M.D., Ph.D., a fellowship-trained hematologist and oncologist and associate director of research for Infirmary Cancer Care. "Whether they decide to enroll in a clinical trial or not, just having that option as part of my treatment arsenal makes me feel like I'm offering my patients everything I can."

Dr. Kemnade leads the growing clinical trial program at Infirmary Cancer Care, which currently has 17 Phase 2 and 3 clinical trials open for a variety of cancers, including breast cancer, lung cancer, melanoma, head and neck cancer, lymphoma, hepatocellular carcinoma, neuroendocrine carcinoma rectal, colon cancer, multiple myeloma and pancreatic cancer.

Who should enroll

Which patients are the best candidates for clinical trials? "Typically, most clinical trials enroll patients who are otherwise fairly healthy, but each clinical trial has its own eligibility criteria," Dr. Kemnade said. "It's really best for patients to speak with their oncologists to ask if there's a clinical trial they may be eligible to join."

Infirmary Cancer Care's clinical trials focus on various stages of cancer, running the gamut from locally advanced and non-metastatic disease to late-stage or Stage 4 cancers. Some of the current trials are investigating new treatment agents, and others are testing drugs that have already been approved — they may be looking at using the drug in a new way, at a new frequency or for a different type of cancer.

For instance, one trial is looking at whether there is an additional benefit for patients to add immunotherapy after they have completed chemoradiation. Another is looking at whether it is better to deliver weekly chemotherapy with radiation or every three weeks at a higher dose. Some patients simply receive the standard of care. But the benefit for every patient who participates in a clinical trial is that they have the expertise of an entire research team looking at their individual case.

"I think every person with cancer deserves the opportunity to have access to a clinical trial," Dr. Kemnade said. "That's what we're hoping to provide at Infirmary Cancer Care for the population of Mobile, Baldwin and the surrounding areas."