

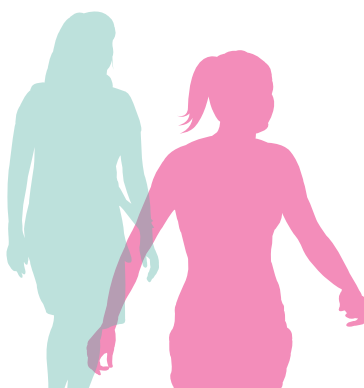
Young and Strong®

A PROGRAM FOR YOUNG WOMEN
WITH BREAST CANCER

Volume 9, Issue 1: Spring/Summer 2018

SUSAN F. SMITH
CENTER FOR
WOMEN'S CANCERS

DANA-FARBER
CANCER INSTITUTE



A program just for you

Established in 2005, Young and Strong, the Program for Young Women with Breast Cancer at Dana-Farber's Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers, provides comprehensive care and support to young women confronting the challenges of living with and beyond breast cancer. Our mission is to enhance care and education for patients and their families, as well as to advance understanding of the biology of breast cancer and the experience of the disease through ongoing research focused on younger women. More than 3,500 young women have been enrolled to date.

For more information about Young and Strong, please contact the Young and Strong team at **617-632-3916**, or visit www.danafarber.org/YoungWomenBreastCancer.

You can also follow us on Twitter @YoungStrongDFCI.

Research Update; News from San Antonio



One San Antonio presentation focused on the value of acupuncture.

Each December, thousands of physicians, scientists, and patient advocates attend the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium to discuss the latest advances in treatment for breast cancer patients. The 2017 symposium highlighted findings that impact care for young women with breast cancer. Here is a summary.

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Ovarian Suppression and Fertility Preservation

Matteo Lambertini, MD, presented a meta-analysis study looking at whether ovarian suppression helps preserve fertility in young breast cancer patients who are receiving chemotherapy. Ovarian suppression, using medication such as Lupron or Zoladex, temporarily puts the ovaries "to sleep" during treatment which may prevent damage to the ovaries from chemotherapy. In the analysis, young women who underwent ovarian suppression were significantly more likely to get their periods back within two years of chemotherapy completion. They were also almost twice as likely to have gotten pregnant compared to those who did not undergo ovarian suppression during chemotherapy. Another important finding highlighted the safety of ovarian suppression treatment. There was no difference in breast cancer recurrence rates whether or not a woman underwent ovarian suppression

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during chemotherapy only. While ovarian suppression is not for everyone, it can be a more affordable alternative to other fertility-preserving methods such as ovary or embryo freezing. Furthermore, many young women are recently using ovarian suppression to treat their breast cancer.

Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Research

A drug called IMMU-132, also known as Sacituzumab, continues to be developed for metastatic triple-negative breast cancer. An ongoing study has shown that this drug had notable efficacy in people with metastatic triple-negative breast cancer who had already tried and experienced resistance to at least two other therapies. A large trial is now open at Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center sites to evaluate whether this drug should receive FDA approval.

Acupuncture

Dawn Hershmann, MD, led a study focused on acupuncture as a non-medical treatment to alleviate aromatase inhibitor (AI) side effects, such as joint pain and stiffness. These side effects, also referred to as musculoskeletal syndrome, can occur in up to 50 percent of premenopausal women.

Patients in the study were randomized to receive either true acupuncture, sham acupuncture (i.e. the wrong types of needles inserted into the wrong parts of the body), or no acupuncture. Results from the study showed that, after six weeks of two sessions weekly, patients receiving true acupuncture had significantly reduced joint pain compared to those who received sham acupuncture or no acupuncture. This reported relief was consistent even as the sessions became less frequent after the initial six-week treatment period.

This is an exciting finding as it presents evidence to support a potential new strategy to help manage the burdensome side effects that some experience while on AIs. This intervention may help people stay on their medication longer, and thus see more benefits. See page 3 for more information on acupuncture and other integrative therapies that may alleviate some of the side effects of treatment.

If you are interested in learning more about any of the treatments mentioned in this article, please check with your medical care team. Additional information on past and upcoming San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposia can be found at www.sabcs.org.



Integrative therapies such as yoga can help patients achieve optimal health.

Integrative Therapies and Acupuncture

Integrative therapies are increasing in popularity, with 65-90 percent of breast cancer patients employing them as part of their treatment. These therapies can be effective in helping manage cancer-related symptoms and improve quality of life during or after active treatment. Integrative therapies are appealing to many as they do not require a prescription, are less likely to have side effects, and give patients a sense of control over their own health.

What are Integrative Therapies?

Integrative therapies, also known as complementary therapies, focus on treating the whole person and not just the disease. Integrative therapies work to complement conventional medical care, and differ from alternative therapies in that they do not replace any form of treatment. The goal of integrative therapies is to make use of all appropriate therapeutic and lifestyle approaches, healthcare, and disciplines to achieve optimal health and healing. Exercise, nutrition, acupuncture, Qigong, Reiki, and massage are all examples of integrative therapies.

Special Points to Remember When Considering Integrative Therapies

- Anyone who performs integrative therapies should be licensed or certified.
- Before trying any integrative therapies, first speak to your medical team.
- Supplements are generally not recommended for breast cancer survivors. If you decide to take any supplement, discuss this with your oncologist to ensure there are no interactions with the medications you are taking – including hormonal therapies or aromatase inhibitors.
- If you're wondering which integrative therapies may be beneficial for you, some institutions, including Dana-Farber, offer integrative medicine consultations. In these consultations, you'll meet with a practitioner who

will explain the safety and benefits of integrative therapies, how they work in conjunction with traditional cancer treatment, and which ones may best fit your diagnosis, treatment schedule, and interests. These consultations are billed to insurance and cost varies based on coverage.

- Financial assistance might be available to those who qualify for other fee-based services like acupuncture and massage. Dana-Farber has a patient financial assistance program thanks to the generosity of several donors. For more information, please email Zakim_Center@dfci.harvard.edu or call **617-632-3322**.

How Can Acupuncture Help Me?

Exciting recent research indicates that acupuncture may help relieve joint pain and stiffness caused by aromatase inhibitors. Acupuncture has also been proven effective at alleviating chemotherapy-induced nausea, hot flashes, depression, anxiety, and fatigue.

What to Expect During an Acupuncture Session

During acupuncture treatment, hair-thin needles are placed at specific locations on the body that are rich in nerve endings. When acupuncture needles are worked by either hands or mild electric current, the sensation sends nerve impulses to the spine and brain regions that activate the body's ability to correct and rebalance its systems. A typical acupuncture session lasts 45-60 minutes but some techniques, like ear acupuncture, can be done in as brief as 20 minutes during an infusion treatment.

Finding Acupuncture in Your Community

If you are a Dana-Farber patient, Dana-Farber's Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies and Healthy Living offers acupuncture appointments with practitioners trained in working with oncology patients. They will go over your medical history, treatment, and lab results and plan a safe and effective session with you. To schedule an appointment at the Zakim Center, please call **617-632-3006**. There are also many acupuncturists in the community. Below are some tips from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health on how to find a qualified practitioner.

- Don't use acupuncture to postpone or replace seeing a health care provider about a health problem.
- If you decide to visit an acupuncturist, check their credentials. Most states require a license, certification, or registration to practice acupuncture; however, education and training standards and requirements for obtaining these vary from state to state. Although a license does not ensure quality of care, it does indicate that the practitioner meets certain standards regarding the knowledge and use of acupuncture.

Spotlight

B-PREP Program

Brigham and Women's Hospital, in collaboration with Dana-Farber, has launched a new program: Breast Cancer Personalized Risk Assessment, Education and Prevention (B-PREP). Available to anyone with or without a family history of breast cancer who is concerned about their risk of developing breast cancer, the B-PREP Program facilitates a better understanding of one's risk and equips one to take early preventive action. Should a problem arise, a team of experts will be on hand – already familiar with the patient and ready to step in with the most advanced and proven treatment methods. The B-PREP team is led by Tari King, MD, chief of Breast Surgery at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center. If you or a loved one would benefit from this program, please go to www.brighamandwomens.org and type B-PREP into the search tool.



Tari King, MD [right], counsels Lee Tobey about breast cancer risk.

- Some conventional medical practitioners, including physicians and dentists, practice acupuncture. When considering practitioners, ask about their training and experience.
- Ask the practitioner about the estimated number of treatments needed and how much each treatment will cost. Some insurance companies may cover the costs of acupuncture, while others may not.
- Help your providers give you better coordinated and safe care by telling them about all the healthcare approaches you use; give them a complete picture of what you do to manage your health.

Additional Information

To learn more about the Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies and Healthy Living, please visit dana-farber.org/Zakim. More information on Integrative Health can be found on the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health's website at nccih.nih.gov.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION



Susan G. Komen
www.komen.org

Susan G. Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists working together to save lives.



Young Survival Coalition
www.youngsurvival.org

The Young Survival Coalition (YSC) is an international, nonprofit network of breast cancer survivors and supporters dedicated to the issues unique to young women with breast cancer.



Living Beyond Breast Cancer
www.lbbc.org

Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC) is a national organization whose goal is to improve quality of life and help women in their recovery or management of the disease.



LIVESTRONG Fertility
<http://bit.ly/2qxgceS>

LIVESTRONG Fertility, a program of the LIVESTRONG Foundation, provides information and support to cancer patients and survivors whose medical treatments present the risk of infertility.



Bright Pink
www.brightpink.org

Bright Pink is the only national non-profit organization focusing on the prevention and early detection of breast and ovarian cancer in young women, while providing support for high-risk individuals.



FORCE
www.facingourrisk.org

Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) is the only national nonprofit organization devoted to hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Programs serve anyone with a BRCA mutation or a family history of cancer.

Support and Education

SoulMates

A peer mentoring program providing guidance and support to women with early-stage (0-III) breast cancer. If you are newly diagnosed and want to be matched to a survivor, or if you are a survivor looking to be a mentor, contact SoulMates at **617-632-6501**.

Young Women's Telephone Support Group

Robin Swartz Raider, LICSW

For young women with early-stage (0-III) breast cancer who are within the first year of diagnosis looking to connect with others who understand the impact of living with and beyond breast cancer. Sessions offered twice a year. For more information, contact **617-632-3916** or youngandstrong@partners.org.

Facing Forward

Julie Salinger, LICSW

A six-session series held twice yearly for patients who have recently completed early-stage (0-III) breast cancer treatment. For more information, call Julie Salinger at **617-582-8081**.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Support Group

Liz Farrell, LICSW, and Fremonta Meyer, MD | Monthly, 11–12:30pm

For women of all ages living with metastatic breast cancer. For more information or to register, call Liz Farrell at **617-632-5606**.

Upcoming Events

Young and Strong Walk Team

A Young and Strong Walk Team will once again participate in the Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk® on September 23, 2018.

To prepare, we will continue the traditions of Long Walk Sundays this summer. This group is a great way for young survivors to meet one another and exercise. We are looking for volunteers to lead these walks, so please be in touch if you are interested. You do not have to be a member of the Walk Team to participate in the Long Walk Sundays; all are welcome.

To learn more or get involved, please email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Breast Cancer in Younger Women: A Forum for Patients and Survivors

Friday, Oct 12th, Joseph B. Martin Conference Center, Harvard Medical School

This annual day-long event for our patients and their loved ones includes a patient/survivor panel, an "Ask the Expert" panel including many prominent providers from the Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers, as well as small group sessions with our social workers. For information or to register, **617-632-3916** or email youngandstrong@partners.org.

Celebrating Young and Strong Gala

Friday, October 26th, Artists for Humanity Epicenter, Boston, MA

The planning committee of Celebrating Young and Strong is excited to announce their 5th annual Celebrating Young and Strong Gala. This fun-filled evening, established and planned by young survivors, celebrates the courage and strength of all young women facing a breast cancer diagnosis. Celebrating Young and Strong is not a Dana-Farber event but their proceeds benefit Young and Strong – a Program for Young Women with Breast Cancer, at the Susan F. Smith Center for Women's Cancers at Dana-Farber. In addition to a joyful night of food, cocktails, and dancing, this event provides a unique opportunity for young women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer to gather for support, love, and encouragement. For more information or to get involved, please visit their website at <http://www.celebratingyoungandstrong.com>.