

DOC TALK

Jon Obray, MD, is a physician with Intermountain Southwest Spine & Pain Center. He and his partners, Rick Obray, MD, and Derek Frieden, MD, are dedicated to the treatment of painful disorders, including cancer-associated pain syndromes. He completed medical school at Johns Hopkins University and subsequent specialty training at the Mayo Clinic, with fellowship training in interventional pain medicine. He now serves as medical director of spine & pain medicine at Intermountain Dixie Regional Medical Center. Prior to moving to southern Utah, he was a staff physician at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., where he served as medical director of the pain clinic, where they provided service to the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center. He now enjoys the southern Utah area with his wife and five children and appreciates the good people and beauty of the area.

Jon Obray, MD



PAIN MANAGEMENT IN ONCOLOGY

by Jon Obray, MD



The patient experience with cancer has been changing over the past couple of decades. The medical community has been making progress in treating a number of cancers, allowing patients to live for increasing number of years. Although progress has been made to eradicate or control cancerous tumors, our treatments aren't perfect, which at times do leave our patients suffering with disability and pain. The medical community recognizes the importance of addressing the quality of life of our patients with the goal of restoring normal life without pain and disability. There are physicians who now specialize in the treatment of pain and other unwanted symptoms associated with cancer, partnering with oncology and surgical specialists for the best treatment outcomes for our patients.

Cancer-related pain is a common problem, with one half to three fourths of patients experiencing pain during the process of living with a diagnosis of cancer. Medications are an important foundation for the treatment of pain, but at times are limited by unwanted side effects. Pain specialists now recognize the importance of utilizing a number of tools for the treatment of our patients, which is what we call multimodal therapy. One of our important treatment goals for cancer survivors is to minimize the use of opioids to reduce unwanted side effects of opioids.

Specialized treatment of cancer-related symptoms such as fatigue and pain starts with a comprehensive medical evaluation typically performed by a pain medicine specialist or palliative care specialist, who can work in partnership with primary care specialists and oncology specialists when needed. The goal of this evaluation is to reach an agreement to guide the development of a treatment plan. When medical therapies and physical therapies are not providing sufficient relief unwanted side (continued on back)

(continued from front page) effects, procedures may be performed to relief pain and unwanted side effects. Interventional pain specialists are trained in a number of innovative techniques that can be utilized safely for the treatment of patients. Traditional surgical therapies may be appropriate as well. Along with medication, rehabilitation and procedures, attention to the emotions and feelings of patients is important. Depressed feelings are common in the patient experience with cancer and pain and can be treated successfully.

In summary, we are fortunate that medical progress is being made daily toward the eradication or control of cancerous tumors that limit or threaten the lives of patients. But the way we live is also important. Quality of life for patients with a diagnosis of cancer can be improved by addressing symptoms leading to pain and disability. There are physicians who specialize in the treatment of pain and other unwanted symptoms associated with cancer, typically called palliative care or pain medicine specialists. Physicians with additional training in minimally-invasive procedures are called interventional pain specialists. Innovative therapies and techniques have been developed to reduce dependence on medications and reduce unwanted medical side effects, especially with the use of opioids.

EVENTS AND CLASSES

Classes take place in the Radiation Conference Room, 400 East Entrance--544 S. 400 E.

August

Meditation & Stress Busting Mondays at 11 a.m.

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| 1 | Yoga | 11:35 a.m. |
| 8 | Care Connections
<i>General Support Group</i> | 11:35 a.m. |
| 11 | Coping STEPS for Couples | 4 p.m. |
| 18 | Breast Friends
<i>Breast and Ovarian Group</i> | 11:35 a.m. |
| 22 | Care Connections
<i>General Support Group</i> | 11:35 a.m. |
| 23 | Look Good, Feel Better
<i>Call Deb at 688-5092 to register</i> | 4 p.m. |
| 24 | Lympho-cise
<i>Call Deb at 688-5092 to register</i> | 4:30 p.m. |
| 25 | I Care: Self-care for Caregivers | 4 p.m. |
| 29 | Care Connections
<i>General Support Group</i> | 11:35 a.m. |



UPCOMING AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Hope for the Soul: Join Cynthia Kimball for an interactive workshop focusing on the impact of hope-based vs. fear-based thinking on emotional well being, self-esteem and resiliency. This event will take place August 20 at 10 a.m. in the Foremaster Auditorium, 1424 East Foremaster Drive, St. George.

Cynthia faced the fear of being diagnosed with breast cancer at age 31 and along with her 4 sisters—testing positive for BRCA 1 mutation. Cynthia will share techniques for reclaiming emotional well being and self esteem. Her resiliency is an inspiration. Space is limited to 25 participants, so register early. Call Deb at (435) 688-5092 or Cheryl at (435) 868-5685 for more information.

Other Upcoming Events include: LIVESTRONG Day, October 1
 Red Mountain Tapas, October 25
 Breast Cancer Survivor and Co-survivor Symposium, November 5