

# #SPECIALIST

## EDITION HIGHLIGHTS

6

### WHAT IS YOUR WHY?

Lynn Kay shares what drives her to do what she does

30

### GIFT GIVING

Guide for cancer patients during the holiday season

31

### COPING WITH CANCER

During the holiday season



TABLE OF CONTENTS

6

**Stories**

**What is Your Why?**  
*Lynn Kay Winters*

**Hope is in The Air**  
*The 2nd Annual  
Raising Hope Gala*



12

**Health**

Influenza Vaccines  
Adopt A Family  
Clinical Trials  
Supporting Our Patients  
During The Holidays  
Interventional Radiology



22

**Wellness**

Gingerbread Baked Oatmeal  
Cheers to a December to Remember  
Gift Giving Guide for Cancer Patients  
Coping with Cancer During the Holidays



32

**Bulletin**

Nutrition Update  
IT Update  
CareSpace  
Career Opportunities  
New Hires





# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

## My Friends,

As the final weeks of 2022 approach and we prepare for the new year, the energy of the holiday surges with new excitement and anticipation. As I step into our offices, the energy is unmistakable. The joy is palpable. The spirit of the season is alive and well at New York Cancer & Blood Specialists (NYCBS).



For many in our community, that holiday happiness comes from the engagement, support, and dedication of our staff and volunteers. Our Adopt a Family program allows us to provide hot meals and gifts to patients, ensuring that everyone's season is warm and hopeful.

In this month's The Specialist, you'll learn more about our clinical trials and research and about interventional radiology procedures. You'll find tips and healthy holiday treats to make your celebrations less stressful and as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

In addition, our gift-giving guide will spark ideas for the perfect present for yourself or your loved ones. We've also included our registered dietitian nutritionist-approved food and mocktail recipes to help fill your holiday table with delicious treats and beverages.

From the NYCBS family to yours, may you and your family embrace peace, love, and happiness this holiday season and carry those feelings into the New Year.

Warm regards,

**Dr. V**

# Patient Feedback



## Dr. Fabio Volterra

"I felt very confident in Dr. Volterra and his ability to treat my cancer. He was very thorough in his explanation of the treatment and listened to my questions and concerns."



## Dr. Jahan Aghalar

"I am always comfortable coming to my appointment as Dr. Aghalar has a very calm and reassuring manner. The staff is always friendly and helpful."



## Dr. Noshir DaCosta

"The staff was kind and encouraging, as always. They looked out for my needs by making me comfortable. They made my experience a good one. I had no stress while getting my treatment."



## Dr. Roy Chen

"Always seen in a timely manner, love the professional and helpful staff. Dr. Chen is so kind and informs me about my problems and the treatments."



## Dr. Evan Diamond

"Dr. Diamond was very good at explaining test results as well as the implications. I found that he went out of his way to explain all that I asked and forgot to ask. Very professional"





# What Is Your Why?

Lynn Kay Winters



**What is your current title?**  
Chief Quality and Learning Officer

**How long have you been with NYCBS?**

I joined the team in 2016 when Dr. Avvento, Dr. Zuhoski, and Dr. Sharma's practice merged with New York Cancer & Blood Specialists. I have worked with Dr. Avvento since 1990 (he was instrumental in discovering my why).

**What had you done prior to working for Dr. Avvento?**

I had dabbled in the hospitality sector. However, I was searching for something more (and open to anything).

**How did you land your role at Dr. Avvento's office?**

A nurse I knew who worked at Central Suffolk Hospital (Now PBMC) mentioned a local oncology office was looking for office help. Although I had already tossed my hat in the ring for a job as a flight attendant, I decided to give it a chance. At first, it was overwhelming, to

say the least. I was working the reception desk at an oncology office with little healthcare experience. I had the sense that this specialty was different from most healthcare. The patients I met seemed to depend so greatly on being able to trust the physician and staff. I felt a great responsibility to them.

**That sounds heavy. What made you stay? Actually, let me shift to stay on theme. What's your why?**

The people... both patients



and other employees. Dr. Avvento and his nurse Laura Petersen answered my every question and coached me along the way. I truly felt part of a team and our purpose was clear. As fate would have it, my experience in hospitality proved valuable in oncology. I firmly believe that a focus on improving the human experience is a key factor in elevating what can feel like an insurmountable experience into one filled with empathy, compassion, and support. These themes were palpable throughout Dr. Avvento's office, fostering a professionally and personally fulfilling environment. It's a small community. Our patients are not strangers; They are neighbors, friends, and loved ones.

**What do you find most satisfying about your career here at NYCBS?**

The collective sum of knowledge working in support of the patients. Most of the present executive and administrative staff were patient facing (many at this very organization), and the impact of that experience carries through to their current roles. In recent years our team has grown, and watching our new additions develop been very rewarding. One truth I have observed throughout my time is that mentorship and coaching pay back in dividends. My fondest desire is that any effort to guide, develop or mentor is that it pays dividends for the patients.

**One last thing, tell us a fun fact about yourself.**

I take a boat to work every day! (I am a Shelter Island local.)



THE NEW YORK CANCER FOUNDATION

*Hope is in the Air*

2ND ANNUAL RAISING HOPE GALA

On December 1st, the New York Cancer Foundation held its 2nd Annual Raising Hope Gala at Water's Edge in Centerport. It was a night filled with dancing, laughter, tears, and stories. It truly was an event to remember!

The Foundation was honored to have Dorothy Halkas, one of their grant recipients, as a speaker at this event. In the Spring of 2019, she was first diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer. After many rounds of chemo, radiation, and hydration, she was cancer free in September 2020. Just a little over one year later, in October of 2021, her cancer came back as stage 4. It is now over one year since she returned to chemo and hydration. Yet, she has turned this challenging fight into an inspiring and amazing story!

At the event, her daughter Izabella approached NYCF and expressed her gratitude for the chance for her mother to speak. They truly felt the love and support they received through this trying time.

The gala raised over \$550K to provide financial relief to cancer patients in need. Thank you to everyone who attended, sponsored, and helped make this night a great success. We truly Raised Hope at this event!





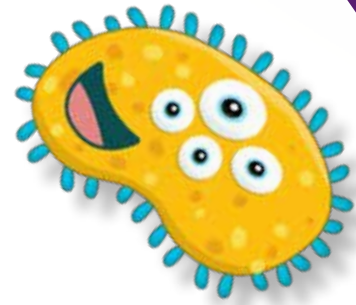


# FEAR



# Influenza

## Vaccinations Available

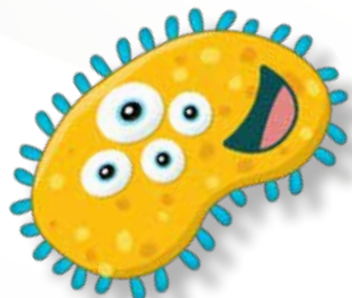


National Influenza Vaccination Week highlights the importance of continuing flu vaccination throughout the holiday season.

If you haven't already taken your vaccination shot this December, it's not too late. We encourage you to get your dose as early as possible. The season for flu is quite unpredictable; it can begin as early as fall and last until spring. Flu activity is at its peak during winter, so talk to your provider to determine if the flu shot is right for you.

## Avoid the Flu!

- Get your flu shot at any of our offices
- No appointment necessary
- Free with most insurance plans



NEW YORK CANCER & BLOOD SPECIALISTS

Conquering Cancer Together™

# Adopt A Family

Continuing The Gerri Shumway Tradition

For many years, Gerri Shumway, a Chemo Scheduler in our Setauket office, would raise funds to "Adopt-A-Family" during the holiday season to provide a holiday meal and gifts to our patients and their loved ones. In her honor, we have continued this selfless tradition.

**Last year, we raised over \$13,000 to provide 37 families with a traditional holiday dinner and gifts for their entire household. This year, our goal is to exceed that number and give even more families memories that will last a lifetime.**

Your generous donation provides more than a gift; it strengthens a family's bond and offers hope during the holiday season. If EVERY employee donates \$10.00, it will ensure we meet this goal!

Please use the form below to nominate a patient and their family. Please include a sentence or two about this patient and why they should receive the holiday package.



SCAN TO DONATE NOW!

# New York Cancer & Blood Specialists' Clinical Research

**We are the passionate team responsible for New York Cancer & Blood Specialists' (NYCBS) success as a leading clinical research facility in the United States for patient enrollment in cutting-edge hematology and oncology studies.**

**Our research team is headed by our Chief of Clinical Research, Dr. Richard Zuniga, and our Chief Research Officer, Ruth M. Morgan, DC.**

**We will continue to offer our patients cutting-edge research studies to ensure the best patient care for our patients in many of our offices.**

**We have many enrolling research studies presently open, with more on the way. Our current research staff consists of nine dedicated members and additional research interns.**

**Studies we can offer to our patients include testing new research drugs for breast cancer, lung cancer, ovarian cancer, pancreatic cancer, and prostate cancer. NYCBS also offers hematology studies which include anemia, lymphoma, and leukemia. All of our studies are listed on our website here.**

**The research team is here for our patients. Research is a vital part of cancer care. Without research, there would be limited advancements in care for cancer patients. We are dedicated to improving patient outcomes and finding the best possible treatments for all our patients.**

## COMMON QUESTIONS

### What Is Research?

Research is the ongoing process of subjecting hypotheses (scientific statements) to rigorous testing to better our understanding of a particular field of science.

### What Is Clinical Research?

Clinical research is research that focuses on advancing the field of medicine to better provide for the medical needs of patients in the future.

### What Is A Clinical Study?

A clinical study is either a privately- or publicly-funded clinical research project wherein people volunteer to participate and, in doing so, contribute to our understanding of medicine. There are two types of clinical research studies: Clinical Trials and Observational Studies

### Who Funds Clinical Studies?

Clinical studies can be funded, also referred to as "sponsored," privately or publicly. A private sponsor might be a pharmaceutical company or academic medical institution, whereas a public sponsor might be a government agency. Specific study-related information about clinical studies, which includes information about their sponsors, can be found at [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://ClinicalTrials.gov).

### Who Conducts Each Clinical Study?

Each clinical study has a Principal Investigator who assumes the ultimate responsibility for how the study is conducted and oversees all study-related procedures on behalf of the study sponsor. A clinical research team assists the Principal Investigator with most of his or her study-related responsibilities, which have been largely delegated to team members to best accommodate patient and practice needs. Team members usually include other physicians, nurses, research coordinators, and other healthcare professionals.

### How Do I Participate in A Clinical Study?

In order to be eligible to participate in any of the clinical studies we offer, a potential participant must first be a patient with us. This means the first step in eligibility is either requesting an appointment or being referred to us through a current healthcare provider.

Only after collecting a medical history, administering a physical examination, and making an assessment can your physician begin to work with our research team to determine if you would be a good candidate for a clinical study. If your physician and the research team together determine you are a good fit for a study, they will contact you to see if you'd like to participate. Only if you are eligible, have had ample time to discuss any questions and/or concerns you might have about participation, and express willingness to participate after reviewing what participation will require of you over the course of the study, you may sign an informed consent form.

### What Is Informed Consent?

Informed consent is a process that involves informing potential research participants of the reasons for conducting the research, how the research will be conducted, what is required of their participation in the research, notice that their participation is voluntary and they may withdraw from the study at any point in time, details regarding study-related procedures, whether or not their participation will directly or indirectly affect their routine medical care, resources available to participants, and, among other details, whether or not participants will be compensated.

Obtaining informed consent prior to participation in research is meant to protect the interests of potential research participants by ensuring they understand their rights and their role in the study in which they might be interested.

### How Much Time Do I Have to Decide If I'd Like to Participate in A Clinical Study?

Although certain aspects of your routine medical care may be time-sensitive, we encourage patients to take as much time as they need to ask questions and discuss any concerns regarding clinical study participation with their care team and/or our research team to determine if they'd like to participate. Only if you are eligible, have had ample time to discuss any questions and/or concerns you might have about participation, and express willingness to participate after reviewing what participation will require of you over the course of the study, you may sign an informed consent form.

### What Is A Clinical Trial?

A clinical trial is clinical research that focuses on evaluating the effectiveness and/or safety of medical devices, diagnostic procedures and products, and medications in addressing the medical needs of people. We may attribute our vast understanding of all current medical devices, diagnostic procedures and products, and medications in this regard to the success of pre-clinical and clinical research.

### What Is An Observational Study?

An observational study is an investigative effort to collect data on health-related participant outcomes. In an observational study, as opposed to a clinical trial, people are not assigned specifically to an intervention—or interventions—such as a specific treatment regimen. Instead, participants receive routine medical care.

### How Long Will A Clinical Study Last?

Clinical studies can be funded, also referred to as "sponsored," privately or publicly. A private sponsor might be a pharmaceutical company or academic medical institution whereas a public sponsor might be a government agency. Specific study-related information about clinical studies, which includes information about their sponsors, can be found at [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://ClinicalTrials.gov).

### Where Can I Find More Information About A Study?

More information about clinical studies can be found at [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://ClinicalTrials.gov), which is a database of privately- and publicly-funded clinical studies provided as an informational resource by the U.S. National Library of Medicine.

### Where Can I Find The Results of A Clinical Study?

In order for the results of a clinical study to be released, the study must first reach completion. For this to happen, enough participants will have to have been recruited and health-related data collected on these participants to draw scientific conclusions. The status of clinical trials are posted and updated regularly on [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://ClinicalTrials.gov). Once all the data has been collected on participants and analyzed, the results are published.

*Please feel free to review [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://ClinicalTrials.gov) at any time for more information about the clinical studies we offer at our practice locations. If you have any questions regarding any of the observational studies we conduct, eligibility, and/or participation, you are welcome to contact us at (631) 675-5075.*





# Patient Community Meeting

*Coming Together to Inspire, Share, Learn & Support You Throughout Your Cancer Journey*

## Where:

NYCBS  
49 Nesconset Hwy,  
Port Jefferson Station,  
Waiting Room

## When:

Wednesday  
December 21st @ 6PM



PAWSITIVE  
POSSIBILITIES  
RESCUE,  
INC.

### **\*Learn about Pawsitive Possibilities Rescue\***

Studies have shown that dogs may help decrease anxiety and pain, lower blood pressure and help alleviate depression, while offering welcome companionship and a positive distraction from treatment schedules and worries.

**\*Dogs will be present throughout the meeting\***

## Light Refreshments Served

As Always Caregivers Are Welcome!



# Women's Cancer Support Group

Social connectedness is a key component for thriving, so we hope this will help fulfill the need for emotional and peer support while creating meaningful connections. Each week we will discuss different topics.

**\*Although the Women's Cancer Support Group is based in our Lake Success office, all are welcome to attend.**

## The Women's Cancer Support Group will be held at:

Lake Success Office, 1 Delaware Drive, New Hyde Park, NY 11042

Every second Wednesday of each month from 6-7 pm

## Facilitated by:

Dr. Janaya Raynor,  
Wendy Kaplan, RDN,  
and Dr. Yelda Nouri

**A patient with questions can email**



# Supporting Our Patients During the Holidays

By MaryAnn Fragola, DNP, ANPC, ACHPN

The month of December can bring a whirlwind of emotions: joy, sadness, exhaustion, and excitement. The holidays can be busy and hectic for us all; now, imagine our patients who are battling a cancer diagnosis or chronic illness.

While we are busy with our joyous, hectic moments, our patients are adding appointments, treatments, side effects, and worry to the list. While we are planning a celebration, patients may worry about how they will feel or how they will get through the days ahead. Some helpful tips for friends and family members include offering to help with gift shopping and decorating, extending offers to help with transportation to appointments, picking up medications, assisting with meal preparation, or hosting as patients may have difficulty with food aversions or eating as they normally have.

Families and friends of cancer patients often act differently. A patient must be treated as normal as possible. Remember, they have cancer, but cancer does not define them. They are more than a diagnosis; they need to enjoy time with friends and loved ones. Patients can feel frustrated when they are treated differently. Overprotecting or taking their independence away leads to further isolation. Most of the time, when they are battling a cancer diagnosis, it is always on their mind. It is natural for a cancer patient to mourn their previous "normal" life and have anxiety about what lies ahead. Allowing for times of sadness is important as the holiday season is often a time of reflection, and feelings of anger, sadness, and worry are normal. Sharing these feelings may help; allowing honest emotions and acknowledging change can allow patients to move past this. Remember, it is ok to laugh, and it is ok to cry!

Let us support our patients by listening to what is important to them, sharing memories, and making them feel important, not only because of their diagnosis but because they mean something more.

Take time this holiday season to enjoy the moments that matter, the little things, and the magic of the season. Connect with loved ones and celebrate the wonderful things that matter most to you!

Wishing blessings to all for a healthy and joyous holiday season!



# Interventional Radiology

**By Dr. Michael J. Drabkin**

*Chief of Interventional Radiology and Interventional Oncology*



The interventional radiology (IR) team at New York Cancer & Blood Specialists perform minimally invasive therapies using imaging to guide minimally invasive procedures that diagnose, treat, and cure many conditions. Interventional radiology procedures are often less expensive, less risky, and less painful than traditional surgery. Many patients can potentially benefit from these procedures but are unaware of the option.

IR is one of the pillars of treatment for both primary and secondary tumors. A patient's first encounter with IR might be an image-guided biopsy, which uses ultrasound or CT to guide a needle directly into the tumor. Previously, biopsies required being cut open or laparoscopic surgery to take a piece of the liver. With IR, the whole biopsy procedure takes about ten minutes. The procedures can be performed with either sedation or local anesthesia. Patients leave the same day with a band-aid and no incisions.

The two main types of IR procedures that treat cancers are ablation and embolization. Ablation is a needle-based procedure that uses heat or cold to destroy the tumors. At NYCBS, microwave ablation is performed using the latest and most advanced system, NEUWAVE Microwave Ablation System. The system allows for more precise and complete treatment of tumors. Similar to a biopsy, imaging is used to guide a needle into the tumor, but instead, this needle emits microwaves that heat the tumor, burn, and destroy it. Ablation procedures can, in certain instances, completely cure cancer, for example, stage 1 renal cell carcinoma and BCLC stage 0 and stage A Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC). Ablation is a good treatment option for patients who are not good surgical candidates or have such small tumors that they do not necessarily need more extensive surgery. Patients recover just as quickly from the ablation procedure as from biopsies. They are monitored for two hours and then go home.

For patients with painful metastatic bone lesions, ablation is helpful not only for curing tumors but also as a palliative procedure. Although burning the painful bone tumors may not cure the cancer, it can help provide lasting pain relief. This can also be combined with external beam radiation for additional pain control.

Embolization is another outpatient IR cancer treatment. Embolization blocks arterial blood flow to tumors using tiny particles injected through a catheter directly into the organ with the tumors. For example, primary liver cancer (HCC) is a very arterial vascular type of tumor that responds well to embolization. When treating one or few focal tumors, the interventional radiologist can get into the specific tiny vessel that feeds only that tumor (or at least primarily

that tumor and just a small part of the surrounding liver). The normal liver gets its blood supply mainly from the portal vein. So even if the entire hepatic artery is blocked, the normal liver tissue still survives while the tumors die. For patients with certain types of diffuse metastatic liver disease, embolization of an entire lobe or even the entire liver can be performed. When embolizing the entire liver, treatment is usually performed over two separate sessions. This usually helps to shrink the tumors throughout the whole liver but leaves the normal liver tissue mostly intact.

Unlike surgery, with embolization, patients have no or minimal scarring. Embolization often works part of the way and shrinks the tumors but does not always eliminate them. In those cases, we can repeat the procedures as often as needed to keep the tumors under control. For example, with primary cancer of the liver, Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), if it doesn't work the first time, we can repeat the procedure the following month. The goal is to cure the cancer in that case by repeating the process and being more aggressive until the tumor is destroyed. For patients with diffuse metastatic disease, the goal is tumor control rather than cure. These patients may experience regression or shrinking of the tumors, and then a year after treatment, the tumors may recur or progress. If the tumors recur or progress, embolization can be repeated as often as needed.

Chemoembolization is a specific type of arterial embolization in which particles are mixed with chemotherapy that is also injected into the tumors. That allows the tumor to be hit with 50 times as much chemo as during a regular chemo infusion, but the patient's body will still get less than a regular chemo infusion. As a result, patients don't experience the chemo side effects even though they are getting very high doses of chemo directly into the tumor.

Embolization and ablation can also work together. For example, if there is a large tumor, it might need to be embolized first to block its blood supply and shrink it so that it can then be more easily burned with ablation. By decreasing the blood flow first, embolization stops the blood from carrying heat away from the tumor and allows the ablation to reach higher temperatures to better kill larger tumors.

Prostate cancer can also be treated using embolization. By shrinking the prostate and moving it away from the rectum and other delicate structures, the embolization allows external beam radiation to cure the prostate cancer without damaging the rectum or other structures nearby. In addition, by shrinking the prostate's total volume, the total radiation dose needed for treatment can also be reduced.

Embolization can be used to treat not only cancer but also benign lesions in different organs. In the kidney, embolization can be used to treat benign tumors called angiomyolipomas that can otherwise cause internal bleeding. Prostate artery embolization has become a popular treatment to shrink the prostate in patients with trouble urinating due to benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). Uterine Fibroid Embolization is another treatment that can help patients with heavy menstrual bleeding or pain related to fibroids, adenomyosis, or endometriosis.

Embolization and ablation are amazing procedures with various uses that can really help our patients. Advancements in embolization and ablation are occurring all the time, leading to new and improved types of treatments.



# Gingerbread Baked Oatmeal

By Michelle Slowey, MS, RDN, CDCES, CDN



## Ingredients:

- 2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 2 cups of milk
- ½ cup apple sauce
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- ¼ cup molasses
- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp allspice
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup chopped pecans

## Instructions:

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees
2. Mix all dry ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Mix in milk, egg, apple sauce, syrup, molasses, butter, vanilla extract
4. Add nuts
5. Spray an 8-inch baking dish with cooking spray and pour in all ingredients.
6. Bake 30-35 min.
7. Top with whip cream if desired.

## Enjoy!







# Chocolate: Healthy Or Hype?

By Wendy Kaplan, MS, RDN, CSO, CDCES, CDN

Media reports have touted chocolate as healthy. Is this true? Does chocolate truly have a health halo, or are the reports overhyped?

In short, chocolate can provide some health-promoting effects, such as cardiovascular benefits. Chocolate is made from cocoa beans, which contain flavanols. Flavanols are plant compounds that, in laboratory studies, have shown antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits; however, there's more to the picture.

Not all chocolate is created equal. Flavanol content can vary widely from chocolate piece to chocolate piece. Many factors affect the final product, including where the cocoa bean is grown and how it is harvested, processed, and prepared.

**As a general rule, the darker the chocolate, the higher the concentration of flavanols. Manufacturers add milk, sugar, cocoa butter, and other ingredients to their products to enhance the taste and satisfy the sweet tooth of consumers. Chocolate with the least processing and/or additions will confer the most health-promoting benefits.**

The jury is still unsure whether the amount of the phytochemical we ingest when eating chocolate actually improves our health. Studies have yielded inconsistent results that we must weigh against the downsides of eating chocolate, such as extra calories, high fat, and saturated fat content. Another important fact to note is that tea and apples also contain the same flavanols as chocolate!

Should you give in to your chocolate-craving desires? I don't think you should go out of your way to eat chocolate specifically for its health benefits but rather for enjoyment. So yes, enjoy the deliciousness! Choose a bar of at least 70% dark chocolate, and limit your portion size to 1 oz. And, of course, consume plenty of fruits, vegetables, and other plant foods to reap the health benefits of all the different phytochemicals.

## Ways to incorporate a little chocolate into your life!

Make dipped treats. Melt chocolate and partially dip fresh fruit (orange, pineapple, strawberries, bananas), dried fruit (apricots, mango, ginger), pretzels, and marshmallows. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and chill for ~15-20 minutes.

**Homemade nut clusters** ~ melt some chocolate, and add in your favorite crushed nuts (almonds, pistachios, walnuts, etc.) or seeds. Spoon out onto a parchment-lined baking sheet and chill for ~15-20 minutes.

- Add unsweetened cocoa powder into smoothies.
- Throw some chocolate chips into overnight oats or chia pudding.
- Drizzle a bit of melted chocolate onto plain popcorn and let it harden.
- Add dark chocolate to pancakes, muffins, and banana bread.
- Eat it plain!



# Healthy

## Apple Muffins Recipe:



By Adeeba Peerzade, BS, RDN, CDN

### Ingredients:

1 ¾ cups white whole wheat flour or regular whole wheat flour  
 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder  
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 ½ teaspoon baking soda  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1 cup grated apple  
 1 cup apple diced into ¼" cubes  
 1 1/3 cup melted coconut oil or extra-virgin olive oil  
 ½ cup maple syrup or honey\*  
 2 eggs, preferably at room temperature  
 ½ cup plain Greek yogurt  
 ½ cup applesauce  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1 tablespoon turbinado sugar (also called raw sugar) for sprinkling on top

### Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease all 12 cups on your muffin tin with butter or non-stick cooking spray if necessary.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt. Blend well with a whisk. Add the grated apple (if it is dripping wet, gently squeeze it over the sink to release some extra moisture) and the chopped apple. Stir to combine.
3. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the oil and maple syrup and beat together with a whisk. Add the eggs and beat well, then add the yogurt, applesauce, and vanilla and mix well. (If the coconut oil solidifies in contact with cold ingredients, gently warm the mixture in the microwave in 30-second bursts.)
4. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and mix with a big spoon until combined (a few lumps are ok). It's expected for the batter to be thick. Divide the batter evenly between the 12 muffin cups. Sprinkle the tops of the muffins with turbinado sugar. Bake muffins for 13 to 16 minutes, or until the muffins are golden on top and a toothpick inserted into a muffin comes out clean.
5. Place the muffin tin on a cooling rack to cool. If you have leftover muffins, store them, covered, at room temperature for up to 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.







# Apple Ginger Fizz

## Ingredients

4 ounces of apple cider  
2-3 dashes of cinnamon bitters  
Ice  
Ginger beer to top off  
Apple slice for garnish

## Directions

Add ice, apple cider, and cinnamon bitters in a highball or rocks glass. Stir to mix. Top off with ginger beer. Garnish with apple slices.

**1**  
SERVING



**1**  
SERVING

# Holiday Cheer

## Ingredients & Directions

Layer a mason jar with ¼ cup to ½ cup chopped green apples, cranberries, quartered green grapes, and pomegranate aril. The more fruit, the more intense the flavor. Then, top with plain or flavored sparkling water. It's that simple!

**CHEERS TO A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER!**

# Mock Mojito

## Ingredients

10 mint leaves (muddled)  
2 seeded cucumbers (thinly sliced)  
¼ cup lime juice  
1 cup coconut water  
½ cup seltzer

## Directions

Combine all ingredients. Let chill for 1 hour.

**2**  
SERVINGS



# Merry Mocktail

## Ingredients

4 oz cranberry-flavored seltzer  
2 oz cranberry juice  
½ lime  
pomegranate seeds  
fresh mint

## Directions

Fill a tumbler glass with ice. Pour seltzer and cranberry juice. Squeeze ½ lime into a glass. Stir. Sprinkle w/ pomegranate seeds and top with 2-3 fresh mint leaves.

**1**  
SERVING



# Virgin Autumn Orange Spiced Mocktail

## Ingredients

2 ounces of nonalcoholic bourbon  
1-ounce cinnamon simple syrup  
3-4 dashes of orange bitters  
2-3 aromatic bitters  
Ice  
Cinnamon stick, rosemary sprig, orange wheel, and star anise for garnish

## Directions

Add ice, nonalcoholic bourbon, cinnamon, simple syrup, and bitters in a mixing glass. Stir to mix. Strain into a rocks glass over fresh ice. Garnish with cinnamon stick, rosemary sprig, orange wheel, and star anise.

**1**  
SERVING







# GIFT GIVING

Guide for Cancer Patients

The holiday season is centered around food and family and giving gifts to those you love. While the holiday season can be a very stressful time for everyone, it can be especially overwhelming for someone coping with cancer. When shopping or making gifts for cancer patients, it is important to keep in mind how even small things can help them.

Finding comfort while dealing with cancer care can be extremely difficult. Consider finding a fuzzy pair of socks, cozy slippers, or a pajama set! These items can make your loved one feel as comfortable as possible during a very difficult time.

Another way to help cancer patients find comfort is through easy activities. Finding their favorite book genre could be an amazing way to find something they love that will help pass the time. In this same spirit, you could buy them a gift card to a streaming service. This allows them to watch any show or movie whenever they want, at home or at an appointment.

Giving the gift of food can be one of the most helpful things you can give. Making meals can be difficult when dealing with side effects of cancer treatment, such as fatigue or nausea. Whether you bring them their favorite home-cooked meal or send them a gift certificate to their favorite restaurant, giving them the gift of an easy meal can be extremely helpful, especially if they have children.

Another gift idea that doesn't cost any money is to make a book full of "gift coupons" that can be redeemed for things that can help during their day-to-day life. Consider "taking the kids for the day," gifting "a day full of home-cooked meals," or "cleaning the house," and many other thoughtful ideas!

You don't need to get extravagant things to help people feel their best. It's the little things that count! Whether you buy something that will warm their heart or body or make something to show how much you care, your loved one will appreciate it.



Coping with Cancer During the

# HOLIDAYS

Holiday stress can be a lot for anyone, but when it also involves dealing with cancer, the holidays can become overwhelming. While this time may feel isolating or uncontrollable, it is important to remember that the people you are surrounded by during the holidays are there to support you the best they can. There are many ways to make this holiday season as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

There is always a lot to do during the holidays, whether shopping for gifts or preparing a family meal. However, when coping with cancer, your physical limitations may be different than they were before. The side effects of cancer treatment can make you feel more fatigued, so be kind to yourself, especially your body, when you may not be able to keep up like you used to.

In some households, traditions are a crucial part of the holiday season. Some old traditions may be too much for people coping with cancer, like ice skating or caroling around the neighborhood. This year try making new traditions like watching your favorite holiday movie as a family or playing a holiday game after a meal.

Another important thing to remember is to put yourself first. This may seem difficult during a time of year when caring for others is the main focus. Make sure to make time for yourself. You may feel like your family doesn't understand what you are going through, so finding a support group or community of other cancer patients will allow you to validate your experiences while also having unlimited support.

Most importantly, remember that your family supports you and your diagnosis through thick and thin. So even if the holidays seem daunting, you will get through it. Live in the moment, be present, feel your feelings, and enjoy the holidays surrounded by laughter and love.



## Nutrition Update

Team Nutrition loves being a part of New York Cancer & Blood Specialists! We have expanded our services tremendously in 2022 and look forward to more endeavors in the new year.

As the Director of Nutritional Services, I direct all aspects of our nutrition program, including all clinical nutrition practices and some wellness and survivorship programs. Some of our highlights were the "Cooking With Your Oncologist Program" and our ongoing "Women's Cancer Support Group," which meets monthly. We've also had some programs in Spanish on healthy eating during cancer treatment.

This year we also teamed up with many internal departments and external community organizations for company-wide initiatives (on malnutrition and bone health) and much-needed support. We had so much fun with everything, especially our Instagram Takeovers during National Nutrition Month in March!

There are a lot of great nutrition ideas, projects, and collaborations in the works for 2023. We look forward to working with you and helping you meet your nutritional needs and goals. We learn and grow from working with you every day. It means a lot to have such great support in the workplace.

I know for some of you, this time of year can be stressful. Try to manage stress (as best as possible), get enough sleep (it's not underrated), and surround yourself with positive people.

I wish you a wonderful holiday season filled with delicious food, family and friends, and special cherished and new traditions.

Happy, healthy holidays and new year!

## IT Update

### All I want for Christmas...is to be cyber-safe when doing online shopping.

When trying to find that perfect gift, always keep an eye out for the tricks cybercriminals will use this holiday season.

1. Too-good-to-be-true deals are often just that. Always be sure that you are shopping on legitimate websites, and don't immediately trust the links emailed to you. Instead, go directly to the merchant's website to find the deals.
2. Fake shipping notices often entice you to click on bogus links. If you receive emails regarding updates to shipping and are expecting a package, it's best to go directly to the website to verify the shipping status. i.e., FedEx website, UPS, Amazon, etc.

**Cybercriminals will do anything to try and trick you, and they don't care about the holiday spirit.**

# CareSpace

**Check out our CareSpace patient portal to access and manage your health online anytime.**

Signing up is easy! Ask a team member to set you up.

## Do you have access to your Patient Portal?

### Access Your Health Information

CareSpace is easily accessible: on your personal computer, tablet, or mobile device, you have 24/7 access to your medical information.

### Communicate with your care team

CareSpace provides you a place to communicate with your care team at our practice and have your questions answered seamlessly.

### Keep friends, family and caregivers informed.

By inviting friends and family to your CareSpace account, your support team can stay informed on your treatment plan and progress.

### Download and securely send your health information

For CareSpace, you can securely send your health information to providers outside of our practice.



# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

## LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES (LPN'S)

Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER- QUEENS/BRONX

Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[Dyoungs@nycancer.com](mailto:Dyoungs@nycancer.com)

## REGISTERED NURSE

Smithtown Medical Oncology,  
Ronkonkoma Medical Oncology  
Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## RADIOLOGIST

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[rnicoletti@nycancer.com](mailto:rnicoletti@nycancer.com)

## FRONT DESK SUPERVISOR- BRONX

Eastchester Breast Center  
Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## MEDICAL FRONT DESK RECEPTIONIST

Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
By Email: [careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## STAFF HEMATOLOGIST/MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST NEEDED Brooklyn, NY at our

Brooklyn Hospital Location  
Contact: Eric Jackson  
[eric.jackson@oneoncology.com](mailto:eric.jackson@oneoncology.com)

## HEMATOLOGIST/ONCOLOGISTS

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[eric.jackson@oneoncology.com](mailto:eric.jackson@oneoncology.com)

## NURSE PRACTITIONER (NP) / PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA)

Contact: Robert Nicoletti  
[apprecruitment@nycancer.com](mailto:apprecruitment@nycancer.com)

## POST DOC PSYCHOLOGIST

Contact: Robert Nicoletti, CHRO  
[jschomber@nycancer.com](mailto:jschomber@nycancer.com)

## INFUSION LPN

Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF NURSING

Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[careers@nycancer.com](mailto:careers@nycancer.com)

## OFFICE MANAGER

Elmhurst Medical Oncology  
Contact: Robert Nicoletti - Chief People Officer  
[gcolas@nycancer.com](mailto:gcolas@nycancer.com)

# NEW HIRES

*Agnieszka Radzieta* (Medical Assistant)

**Alexandra Jacques** (Ultrasound Technologist)

**Anastasia Sarlanis** (Office Manager)

**Andy Gao** (Ultrasound Technologist)

**Ashley Cassidy** (Receptionist)

**Brittney Willis** (CCM MA)

**Chelsea Murphy** (Ultrasound Technologist)

**Chris Candela** (Intake LPN)

**Crystal Thompson** (RN)

**Daytona Wagner** (LPN)

**Deanna Abarca** (Patient Communications Operator)

**Dena Kranzberg** (Nurse Practitioner)

**Destiny Almonte** (Receptionist)

**Diane Barakat** (Ultrasound Technologist)

**Erika Plunkett-Cartolano** (Intake LPN)

**Harleen Bains** (Receptionist)

**Ifrat Hussian** (Receptionist)

**Jaime Clougher** (RN)

**Jasmine Scott** (Radiation Therapist)

**Jhneale Cockburn-Georges** (Intake LPN)

**John Dujmovic** (Nurse Practitioner)

**John Kaku** (CT Technologist)

**John Scelzi** (Executive Assistant)

**Joshua Carratala** (Patient Communications Operator)

**Julie Rosario** (Lab Medical Assistant)

**Kristen Desideri** (Implementation Specialist, LPN)

**Kyle Butler** (Care Coordination LPN)

**Lauren Guilfoyle** (Intake LPN)

**Marlon James** (PET/CT Technologist)

**Mary-Kate Hickey** (Care Coordinator LPN)

**Matthew Wilson** (Care Coordination LPN)

**Melissa Deutchsh** (Lab Technologist)

**Melissa Magana** (Receptionist)

**Michelle Mahoney** (RN)

**Nadira Hildebrandt** (Lab MA)

**Nivedita Misra** (Office Supervisor)

**Onome Ogeleza** (CT Technologist)

**Rachel Cole** (Receptionist)

**Rajesh Bhatta** (MRI Technologist)

**Sara Zahed** (Radiation Therapist Aide)

**Seline Colon** (Receptionist)

**Seline Colon** (Receptionist)

**Seydou Niang** (CT Technologist)

**Shannon Dallas** (Director of Nursing)

**Taylor Castillette** (LPN Care Coordinator)

**Tetyana Fonarova** (Medical Technologist Supervisor)

**Thomas Valiaparampil** (Pharmacist)

**Thomas Wiebke** (PET/CT Technologist)

**Tiara Jordan** (Lab Medical Assistant)

**Veronica Reynoso** (Lab MA)

**Vivian Liang** (CT Technologist)





# OUR PATIENTS & THEIR FAMILIES

Our patients and their families tell the story of conquering cancer like no other. They help us connect, inspire, and empower. If you know a patient or have a family member who would like to make an impact and share their experience with us, please have them contact [marketing@nycancer.com](mailto:marketing@nycancer.com).