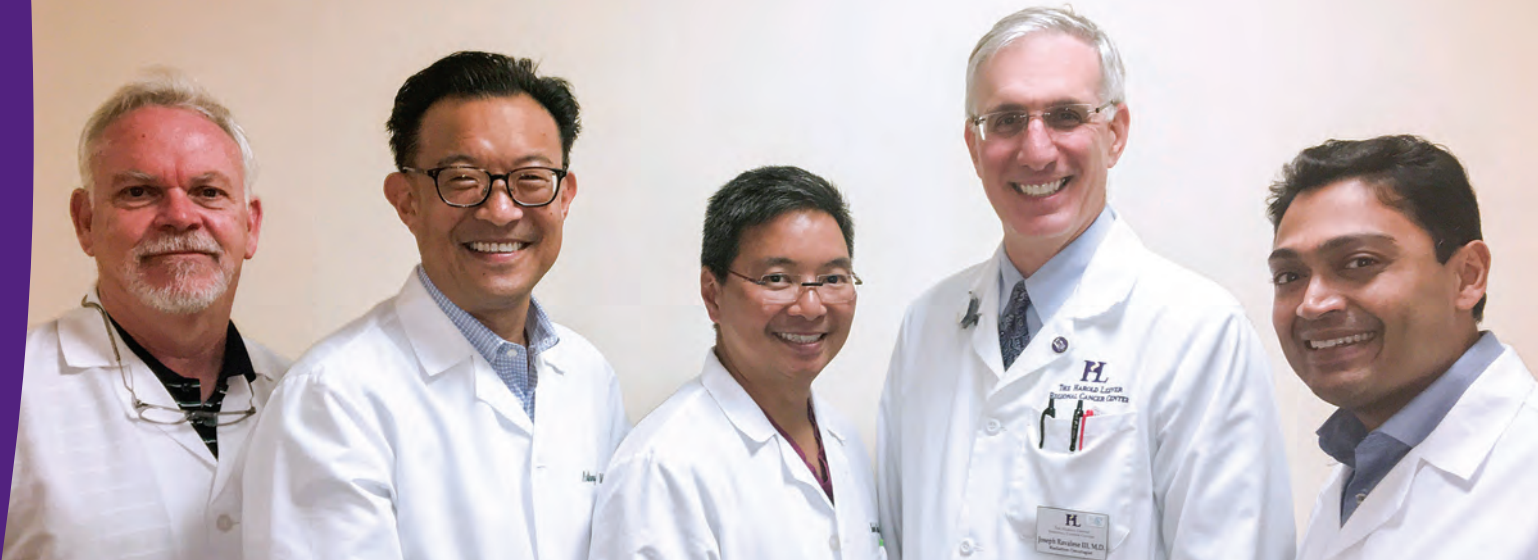


Aware! | HL

Prevention and awareness information from The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center



Get Screened!

The Leever Cancer Center Partners with Community Physicians to Serve the Community

Routine screenings are among the most important tools available to physicians and patients working to treat and prevent cancer.

“Screening can help doctors find and treat many forms of cancer early, before patients begin to experience symptoms,” explains Leever Radiation Oncologist Dr. Joseph Ravalese III. “Early detection is important because almost all cancers respond to treatment better in the earliest stages of the disease, when they have not spread to other parts of the body.”

Dr. Ravalese notes that screenings can also detect abnormal changes in cells that may become cancerous if left untreated.

“Early detection can lead to early intervention,” says Dr. Ravalese, “and that can mean stopping cancer and better patient outcomes.”

To that end, The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center offered free prostate cancer screenings to the community earlier this fall. Physicians, nurses, administrators, and support staff volunteered their time and expertise during the September event, at which 70 local men were screened, using both blood tests and physical examinations.

“Of the 70 patients we screened, 83 percent had normal results, which is great news,” says Deborah Parkinson, Operations Director at the Leever Cancer

Board-certified urologists and radiation oncologists from Urology Specialists, P.C. and the Leever Cancer Center performed 70 prostate screenings during Leever’s prostate free cancer screening event in September.

Volunteering their time were, from left: Dr. Michael Flanagan, Dr. Anthony Kim, Dr. York Paul Moy, all from Urology Specialists; Leever’s Dr. Joseph Ravalese III; and Dr. Sagar Phatak, Urology Specialists. Missing from photo: Dr. Douglas Housman from the Leever Cancer Center.

Early Bird says:

EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES!

Watch for more screening events in 2020!



Center. “We sent patients with abnormal test results a certified letter, and also contacted their family or primary care physicians for further evaluation using information they provided during the free screening registration process.”

“Abnormal prostate screening results fall into a few different categories,” explains Dr. Michael Flanagan, a urologist with Urology Specialists, P.C. “Those categories include higher than normal prostate specific antigen (PSA) levels; the detection of abnormal or suspicious masses during the physical exam; or symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia, also known as an enlarged prostate gland.”

“Not every unusual result is going to lead to a cancer diagnosis,” says Dr. Flanagan, “but every abnormal result merits a second look.”

And that, Dr. Flanagan says, goes for a wide range of cancers. The American Cancer Society and other cancer organizations have established screening guidelines — suggested procedures and ages at which they should start — for colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer, and more.

“It is important to understand that all guidelines come with exceptions,” notes Dr. Flanagan, “the most



Knowing yourself, building a relationship with your primary care physician, and never, ever ignoring symptoms are critical to cancer prevention and early detection.



*Dr. Michael Flanagan, Urologist
Urology Specialists, P.C.*

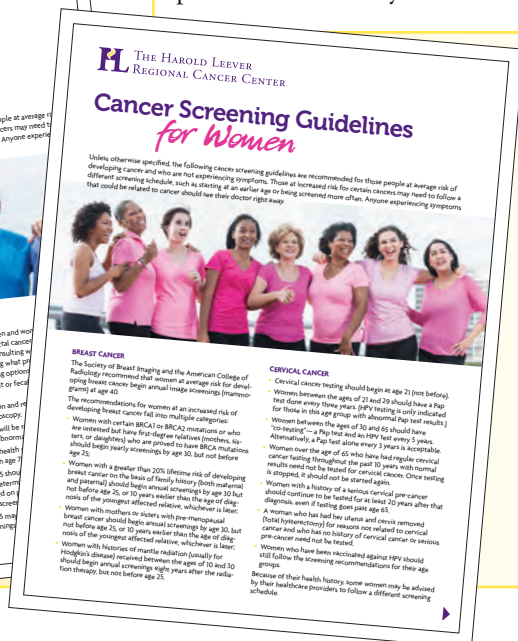
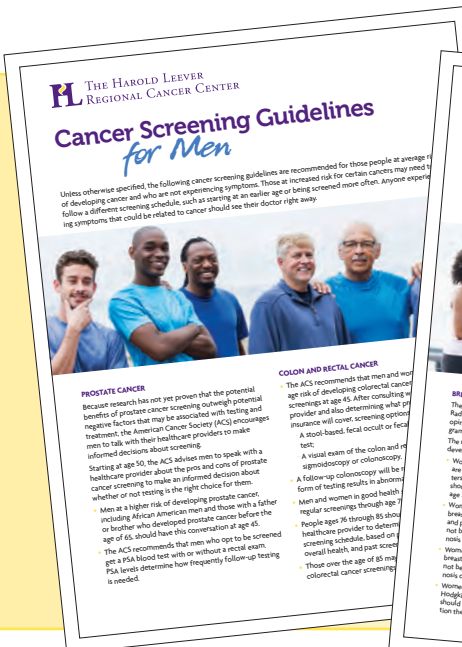


Above: Many thanks to the volunteers who made the screening event possible, from left: Joanne Giedra, Diana Spahiu, Rae Varrone, Charlene Peyre, Maria Toucet and Sharon Rouleau. Missing: Amy Baldwin-Stephens, Irene Clarke, Deborah Parkinson and Melissa Seres.

important being that every patient know their personal medical history and their family medical history, and that they work with their primary care physician to adapt those guidelines accordingly. Medicine is highly personal. Knowing yourself, building a relationship with your primary care physician, and never, ever ignoring symptoms are critical to cancer prevention and early detection.”



Thanks to Irene Clarke from Bristol-Myers Squibb and Amy Baldwin-Stephens, Cancer Registrar from Saint Mary's Hospital, who assisted with check-in at the event.



Want to learn more about cancer screening guidelines?

Find screening guidelines for men and for women on our website at leevercancercenter.org/care-services/cancer-screening.

We'll also send you a laminated reference card (see samples on left). Request yours by emailing dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org.



Spotlight on:

Look Good, Feel Better Program at HLRCC

“Look Good, Feel Better offers women the opportunity to effectively mitigate some of the side effects — both physical and emotional — that can make cancer treatment especially difficult,” says Leever Operations Director Deborah Parkinson. “We’re proud to offer the program at no cost to our patients, who are always grateful for its profound impact on their lives.”

The Look Good, Feel Better Foundation and the Professional Beauty Association train and certify program volunteers at local, statewide, and national workshops. Those and other program volunteers offer women going through cancer treatment lessons on skin and nail care, cosmetics, wigs and turbans, accessories, and styling to help them manage the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment, so that they can look and feel like themselves again. Each participant receives a complimentary collection of name brand makeup valued at \$200. The Look Good, Feel Better Foundation also offers virtual, teen, and Spanish programs online.

The Look Good, Feel Better program is open to all women with cancer who are undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, or other forms of treatment. This free program is held at the Leever Cancer Center on the first Tuesday of every month from 1-3 pm. Please register at lookgoodfeelbetter.org.



From a K.S., a Look Good, Feel Better program participant:

I just wanted to thank you for an awesome class on makeup. I will be going through a transplant (stem cell) and I needed a boost on feeling better. Your professional makeup artist was wonderful and I enjoyed it very much.

Comfort and Hope...One Quilt at a Time.

In October, **Melinda Marino, RN**; **Nan Bergamo, RN**; and **Rae Varrone, RN** — three nurses from the Leever Cancer Center building — were honored at the Quilts That Care (QTC) seventh annual celebration. They were recognized for the outstanding kindness, care and compassion each of them gives to their patients.

*Left, below: Vernette Townsend, MSN, RN; honoree Melinda Marino, RN; and Karen Pollard Murphy, APRN Center, below: Anamika Katoch, MD and honoree Nan Bergamo, RN
Right, below: Dan Varrone; honoree Rae Varrone, RN; Joseph Ravalese III, MD; and Deborah Parkinson*



Leever's extraordinary volunteers were celebrated for their dedication.



Honoring Those Who Care

The story of The Harold Leever Cancer Center is a story about people — patients, families, caregivers, doctors, nurses, administrators and, of course, its volunteers, who were recently celebrated at a luncheon hosted by the American Cancer Society and the Leever Cancer Center.

“We’re incredibly fortunate to have an extraordinary group of people who regularly give of themselves for the benefit of others,” says Leever Cancer Center Executive Director Kevin Kniery. “Our volunteers graciously drive patients to appointments, support a host of American Cancer Society programs, and serve as ambassadors for our facility, making everyone who comes through our doors feel comfortable and welcome.”

During the luncheon, speaker Anamin Reveron, a cancer survivor and former Leever Cancer Center patient (pictured at right, with HLRCC Executive Director Kevin Kniery), recalled her own interaction with a volunteer ambassador more than four years ago. The volunteer was posted at the welcome desk, and encouraged Anamin to take a blanket.

“It made such a difference to me,” says Anamin. “I still wear that blanket today.”



The impact of that volunteer’s gesture inspired Anamin to start a magazine to help and support others. Its pages will be filled with words of hope and healing; it will be available soon at the Leever Cancer Center.

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”



TENNIS BASH: SERVING UP AWARENESS

In the spirit of giving, the Leever Cancer Center supported a September “Tennis Bash,” sponsored by and benefiting “Are You Dense?”— a phenomenal nonprofit changing our understanding of what it means to have dense breast tissue.

Our own Rae Verrone, in the photo in pink, also participated in the event. With Rae, from left: John Parkinson, Leever Operations Manager Deborah Parkinson, Are You Dense Co-Founder Joseph Cappello, Leever Social Worker Melissa Seres, Bill Seres.

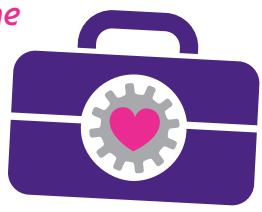


BUILDING YOUR SELF-CARE TOOLBOX: Self-Care, Right Here

What stress management tools are in your personal toolbox? As part of our commitment to providing comprehensive cancer support services to our patients and their families, the Leever Cancer Center offers a “Building Your Self-Care Toolbox” program, a series of no-cost workshops for patients and caregivers exploring different coping strategies, from chair yoga and aromatherapy to tapping, art exploration, and more.

Stay up to date on all our community programs by visiting our website, leevercancercenter.org, or by following us on Facebook.

Watch for the Spring 2020 workshops soon!



Healing Art

An art show featuring masterpieces by Leever patients was held on November 8. Supplies were made available by a gift from the Pescetelli Family to remember and honor Lia Pescetelli, a self-taught and passionate artist.



Here is a sampling of the beautiful works that were displayed. Clockwise from top left:

Untitled by Patty Austin “When I needed comfort of any kind (storm clouds — cancer), I went to my Grandma’s garden. Roses, pink roses, Grandma’s love.”

Butterfly by Virginia C. “A butterfly is a symbol of a new life after cancer.”

Thankful by Ronald Uricchio “It’s the center point time of your life; you are thankful for what you have.”

Leever’s Art Therapy program is held the second and fourth Friday of every month at 1pm in the front conference room.

“Art can permeate the very deepest parts of us where no words exist.”

Celebrating Survivors and Caregivers

Relay for Life 2019

Greater Waterbury Relay for Life raised an outstanding \$150,000!

One of the highlights of the summer is always the Greater Waterbury Relay for Life. This year the event was given a light-hearted thematic boost with Disney taking center stage. Team Leever embraced the theme with Mickey Mouse Club t-shirts, welcoming one and all to the community of survivors and supporters with words from the Mickey Mouse Club theme song, “Hey there, hi there, ho there, you’re as welcome as can be.”

“The Leever Cancer Center can feel like family,” says Executive Director Kevin Kniery. “We’re a community within a community, lending compassion, care, and support to patients and their families across the region. When we join together in one place around one cause, as we do every year at Relay for Life, it is really something to behold.”



Are Specialty Waters Worth the Price?

By Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO

Americans spent \$31 billion on bottled water in 2018, with the average American consuming 42 gallons. In fact, bottled water has become the country's number one beverage, according to *Consumer Reports*. Most people think that bottled water is safer or healthier than tap (or municipal) water, but 64% of all bottled water sold in the United States is just filtered tap water.



Water is really good for you. In fact, you can't live without it, and many Americans don't drink enough. But are all waters created equal? Are some "healthier" than others?

The choices seem endless: alkaline, spring, artesian, mineral, purified and sparkling, just to name a few. Some of these come with a hefty price tag. Are these "designer" waters worth the price? Do they actually benefit our health and prevent disease as promised on many of the promotional materials?

Alkaline water has been around for years, but has recently experienced a surge in popularity (and price). Claims state that drinking alkaline water hydrates you more rapidly and can help to cure cancer, among other things.

The term "alkaline" refers to pH, or potential hydrogen. Foods with a low pH are considered to be acidic, while those with a high pH are basic, or alkaline. A pH of 7 (as in regular drinking water) is considered neutral. Alkaline water contains salts and metals to increase the pH to a level greater than 7.

Different parts of our bodies have different pH values. For example, the stomach contents are highly acidic, helping to break down food and kill harmful bacteria. The kidneys and lungs intricately and tightly regulate the pH of the body with slight variations in blood pH, resulting in major health consequences, so whatever you eat or drink has little effect on the pH of your blood.

Unfortunately, there is no significant clinical evidence to support the claim that alkaline water is healthier. Although it is certainly not harmful and may play a role in very rare circumstances, it is unlikely to provide a significant benefit over regular water.

Mineral water contains at least 250 parts per million (0.000025%) of dissolved solids, with a consistent amount of trace elements at the source. Bottlers are not allowed to add additional minerals.

Municipal source water is a fancier name for tap water, and accounts for the majority of bottled water.

Purified water has been treated to remove chemicals and other solids. Distilled water is one example. Most of the public drinking water in the U.S. is already purified and highly regulated in order to minimize or eliminate contamination.

Spring water is supposed to be obtained from underground formations in which the water naturally flows to the surface or through a well that taps directly into a spring. There are currently numerous lawsuits against companies that claim to have spring water that, in fact, contains no spring water (e.g. Poland Spring).

Other controversies associated with bottled water include the excessive use of plastic packaging, as well as other potential contaminants that can be found in water, such as PFAS, a chemical residue used in firefighting foam and cardboard boxes.

Interested in learning how your bottled water stacks up? Go to: [consumerreports.org/water-quality/find-out-whats-in-your-bottled-water-water-quality-reports](https://www.consumerreports.org/water-quality/find-out-whats-in-your-bottled-water-water-quality-reports).

B O T T O M L I N E O N H 2 O

Drinking water is an essential way to remain hydrated. Many of us need to drink more to meet our hydration requirements. Sometimes water from your own tap is the cheapest option and will provide you with the maximum benefit.

Questions about nutrition? Contact nutritionist Karen Sabbath, MS, RD, CSO, at 203-575-5510 or email ksabbath@leevercancercenter.org.



A Community of Caring



The strength and generosity of the community that surrounds us warm our hearts. We're grateful to everyone who gives of their time, talent, and financial resources to support the important mission of the Leever Cancer Center, including:

- **The Hope Gallery Tattoo** in New Haven, who raised funds for a very generous donation at a local event.
- Our school-age friends who raised funds during "Wear Pink!" and "Pink Out" dress-down day in support of breast cancer awareness at the following schools: **Enlightenment School, Driggs Elementary, Maloney Magnet, and Wallace Middle School**, all in Waterbury; and Region 15's **Pomperaug High School**.
- **A Cut Above Hair Salon** in Watertown, whose two-year anniversary celebration included a raffle to benefit Leever.
- The **Pretty-in-Pink Zumbathon**.
- Our very generous supporters at **Thomaston Savings Bank**.
- The gracious and generous people at the **First Congregational Church, Waterbury**.
- **Jay Crawford, Andre Capaldo, WATR, and American Legion Post 195 of Watertown**, who put together an extraordinary evening of rocking to the oldies for the Leever Cancer Center Survivorship Fund, and of course, to all those who came out for this fantastic night.

Are you a candidate for a FREE low-dose CT screening for lung cancer?

More people are being diagnosed with late stage lung cancer.

- Are you aged 55 to 74 years old?
- Do you currently smoke or have quit smoking in the past 15 years, and have at least a 30 pack-year smoking history (one pack a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years)?

You may qualify for a free low-dose CT screening. Call your doctor today to find out.



LEGACY OF GIVING

J. Robert and Mary H. Farr were generous in life and, in passing, secured their legacy of giving. Their bequest to Leever will be used to establish "The J. Robert & Mary H. Farr Navigation Center" at The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center.

Members of the Farr family recently came to Leever to review the architect's rendering for the space. They are, from left, Mary Ann Urban Cordeau, PhD, RN; Bob Cordeau; Leever Cancer Center Executive Director Kevin Kniery; Michele Farr Arnold; and Leon J. Farr.

TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER THAN CANCER

One of the biggest barriers to quality cancer care can be the lack of transportation. That's why the American Cancer Society Road to Recovery program provides patients with free rides to treatment.

Need a ride? Want to volunteer?
Contact us at cancer.org/roadtorecovery or 800-227-2345.



Aware!

is published by
The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center

Editor-in-Chief: Deborah Parkinson
Editorial Executives: Kevin Kniery and Tom Belzek
Design: Aro Strategic Marketing

We encourage your feedback.
If there is a cancer topic you would like covered, to respond to an article you've read, or to be put on our mailing list, please call 203-575-5555 or email: dparkinson@leevercancercenter.org



THE HAROLD LEEVER
REGIONAL CANCER CENTER

1075 Chase Parkway
Waterbury, CT 06708
203-575-5555
leevercancercenter.org

Community Events and Monthly Support Groups

FALL/WINTER



Waterbury Area ThyCa Group: A Thyroid Cancer Support Group

Last Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM in the HLRCC Patient Resource Library

The Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc., or ThyCa, is a nonprofit organization serving patients, families, and health care professionals worldwide since 1995. Only two facilities in Connecticut host ThyCa support groups, including the Leever Cancer Center.

For more information, please contact Renée Hurne (203-598-6859) or Dot Torretta, RN (203-756-3481). Additional information can be found at ThyCa.org.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY: REACH TO RECOVERY:

by appointment, contact the ACS at 203-756-8888

ART THERAPY: monthly, 2nd and 4th Friday, 1 PM – 3 PM,
contact Deborah Parkinson: 203-575-5564

BRAVE AT HEART BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP: monthly,
1st Wednesday, 7 PM – 9 PM, contact Anne Pringle: 203-910-7582

BRAVE AT HEART 2: monthly, 2nd Wednesday, 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM,
contact Anne Pringle: 203-910-7582

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS: monthly, 2nd Wednesday,
6:45 PM – 10 PM, contact Sharon: 860-384-1398

CT MULTIPLE MYELOMA FIGHTERS SUPPORT GROUP:
at Prospect Library, monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 6 PM – 8 PM,
contact Robin Tuohy: 203-206-3536

ENERGY THERAPY: Tuesdays and Wednesdays,
contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

FAMILY AND FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, 3rd Monday,
12 PM – 1 PM, contact Melissa Seres, MSW: 203-575-5511

FREEDOM FROM SMOKING: an 8-week smoking cessation series,
contact Sandra Micalizzi, APRN, CDE, Community Outreach Nurse,
at 203-575-5573 for information on the start of the next series.

HOPE MUTUAL AID GROUP FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR

LOVED ONES: monthly, 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 12 PM – 1 PM,
contact Melissa Seres: 203-575-5511

JOURNALING: A WAY TO HEAL FROM YOUR CANCER
EXPERIENCE: Friday, 10 AM – 11:30 AM, contact Bob Devito:
203-910-3107

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER!: monthly, 1st Tuesday, 1 PM – 3 PM,
register: lookgoodfeelbetter.org, contact Deborah Parkinson:
203-575-5564

QUILTS THAT CARE: monthly, 1st and 3rd Monday,
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Deb V: 860-782-1043

WATERBURY AREA OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP: monthly,
1st Monday, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Bob Baker: 860-248-1116

WATERBURY AREA THYCA GROUP, A THYROID CANCER
SUPPORT GROUP: monthly, last Tuesday, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM,
contact Renee Hurne: 203-598-6859 or Dot Torretta: 203-756-3481

WOMAN TO WOMAN BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP:
monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 7 PM – 8:30 PM, contact Theresa Lombardo:
860-274-2200

Call contact person to confirm that group is as scheduled. Meeting times may be rescheduled to accommodate holidays or special meetings. See leevercancercenter.org for ongoing events.