

BMT Program Newsletter



www.marrow.org
 Help save a life!!

Join or encourage others to join the National Marrow Donor Program to register as a volunteer donor for people in need! For more info, visit the



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Volume 1, Issue 2 *Fall 2007*

Welcome to the Fall 2007 BMT Program Newsletter!

We hope you'll enjoy this issue of the newsletter with information on stress reduction, how to help yourself, others and more! As always, please submit any items of interest you'd like included in a future issue as this is *your* newsletter ~ we're seeking stories from patients, family-members and the BMT Team. All are welcome! (please send to ssharf@unch.unc.edu)



LIGHT THE NIGHT! On Saturday September 8th, the UNC Lineberger Cancer Center had a 45-member team at the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Annual Light the Night Walk in Raleigh. Organized by BMT Research Coordinator *Julia Whitley*, the event raised over \$300,000 for blood cancer research, with our team raising \$2000! A good time was had by all, and we look forward to participating in this special event again next year. We hope you can join us!

Team UNC Celebrates "Light the Night" September 8, 2007



Save the Date!
May 3, 2008
BMT Reunion
See back page for more info!

Finding Humor

The UNC BMT Program is proud to have a very talented cartoonist as one of our patients! Mr. Winfield has always found the humor in situations and illustrated his way through an unrelated donor transplant.. "If I can make others laugh during such a difficult time, that's my goal."

Mr. Winfield created many cartoon depictions with a BMT theme during his stay, and we hope to feature his talent in our newsletter whenever possible! Thank you, Mr. Winfield, for making us smile!



Lose the Stress!

By Kelly Kivette, Recreational Therapist

Most of us experience stress on a daily basis. However, when diagnosed with a serious illness, that level of stress can be significantly heightened. Acting as the caregiver for a loved one who is sick may also bring about increased feelings of stress. Many of us have symptoms of stress every day without even realizing it.

It is important to recognize the signals that your body is sending you. For example, some potential symptoms of stress may include: backaches, muscle tension, forgetfulness, headaches, insomnia, irritability, low energy level, and/or upset stomach.

The good news is that, by implementing stress management techniques into your daily life, you can significantly reduce the effects that stress may have on your body. Some basic stress management tips include:

- Maintaining a regular program of healthy eating, good health habits, & adequate sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Don't bottle up emotions. Share your feelings with others.
- Learn to manage your time efficiently.
- Avoid unnecessary arguments or quarrels.
- Practice a relaxation technique daily.
- Participate in activities with people who share your interests.
- Several times a day, do a "body check" for tensed muscles and let them relax

We don't always have control over the situations in our life, but we can control how we react or respond to them. Take some time for yourself today, and lose the stress!

"Adopting the right attitude can convert a negative stress into a positive one" Hans Selye

Coordinator's Corner: Relentless for Sean

It was this time last year when Sean Williams, a vibrant 23-year old, was in the throws of battling leukemia. A search for a donor began and unfortunately, none of his brothers were a match for Sean. A search was started through the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), and it was then that Sean decided to take it upon himself to organize bone marrow drives. Sean's desire to help others was put into motion with a personal goal to register 1000 new donors for the NMDP. Amazingly, 864 donors have now

been registered as a direct result of the drives Sean started!! Although Sean never made it to transplant, his personal commitment to finding a donor for everyone lives on. Because of Sean, over 300 donors per week are now registering at the US Marine Corps' "School of Infantry" (SOI). Since April of 2007, SOI's medical clinic has registered nearly 7,000 new donors—all because of Sean and his family's tireless efforts. This story is a true testament to what one person can do for so many. A

heartfelt thank you to the Williams family from every transplant patient, family member and transplant program around the world—you are *our* inspiration!



Spotlight on: Kathy Roundtree, BMT Social Worker

Our BMT Program is proud to have Kathryn Roundtree, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), as part of our team! Kathy is originally from the Triangle area and graduated from UNC's School of Social Work. Although new to the field of bone marrow transplant, Kathy has an impressive social work history working in the field of mental health and patient assistance. A desire to return to a more clinical arena prompted Kathy to join our team. "I wanted to return to work-

ing more closely with people. Working with our BMT patients is very satisfying, and I really enjoy it!" Fluent in Spanish, Kathy and her husband, enjoy traveling to all parts of the world.

For those who haven't met Kathy yet, she can be reached at (919)966-7861 or via email at kroundtr@unch.unc.edu

She is happy to assist both inpatients and outpatients in whatever way she can! Thanks, Kathy!



UNC's Platelet Program—We Need You!

Did you know that over 250 units of platelets are used each month at UNC Hospitals? Many patients need platelets, especially our BMT patients, and all donations are kept right here at Chapel Hill for use by our hospital! Since January of 2007, the Platelet Donor Program has only met 58% of the patient needs. The Platelet Program could use your help! Many family members and friends ask what they can do to help during your or your loved one's BMT process....if you are 17 years of age or older and healthy, come in and donate!

The program is located on the 1st floor of the Main Hospital, Room 1021, East Wing. They are open Mon-Fri and can be contacted at 919-966-2370. They also hold drawings several times a year and recently gave away 4 tickets to the UNC/USC game as well as an autographed Butch Davis football. The current drawing is for Carolina Hurricanes hockey tickets! So please come in and help if/when you can! For more information, please contact Carlette Miller, Donor Recruiter, at 919-966-9322.



BMT Program Assistant Dana Elliott donating platelets for our patients!

www.marrow.org
Help save a life!!

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the next BMT Reunion on

Reunion Info

Saturday May 3rd, 2008! We've secured the place (Union Grove Methodist Church in between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill—same spot as last time!) Specific directions to follow in a future newsletter!

WE NEED YOU to tell your story at the reunion!! If you're interested in telling your story to the folks who are attending, please call Betty Hinshaw at 919-966-8968 or email her at bhinshaw@unch.unc.edu

WE NEED YOUR PICTURES to be included in our dedication to you, our heroes. Please send pictures electronically to Sam Sharf at ssharf@unch.unc.edu or call her at 919-966-7516 and she can help you plan how to get your picture included in our dedication!



Would you like to speak with a potential transplant recipient who's interested in hearing from someone who's "been there?" We are looking for post-

transplant patients who would be interested in sharing their experience with a fellow patient who's currently considering transplant. Whether you've undergone an autologous or allogeneic transplant, your first-hand knowledge and understanding of the process could be incredibly helpful to others. Please contact Debbie Covington, Transplant Coordinator, at 919-966-0297 or dcovingt@unch.unc.edu Thanks!

Do you have chemo brain? By Amy Coghill, RN, MS, Nurse Educator, BMT Program

"Chemo-brain" is an informal term given to various changes in cognitive function experienced by people who received chemotherapy. Though "chemo-brain" is a common complaint, it remains poorly defined. The inability to concentrate on work or feeling unable to juggle multiple tasks are common complaints for those experiencing this unpleasant side effect of chemotherapy. Some complain that they just don't remember things as well as they used to.

Hess & Insel (2007) examined the available literature on chemotherapy-related changes in brain function and discussed the phenomenon in a recent *Oncology Nursing Forum* article. Hess & Insel summarize that "chemo-brain" is influenced by two interacting pathways – the psychosocial impact of

a cancer diagnosis and the physical effects of cancer treatments. The psychosocial factors include stress, depression, anxiety, and distress while physical factors include the specific chemo agents received, dose, length of treatment, side effects, and use of other medications during chemo treatment (i.e. antibiotics). Factors such as age, education, intelligence, genetic factors, and other neurologic disorders also influence "chemo-brain". People who think they are experiencing "chemo-brain" are encouraged to describe their specific symptoms to their health care providers. Likewise, nurses are encouraged to ask patients about symptoms they may experience following chemotherapy treatment. Together we can "brainstorm" possible effective interventions to improve your quality of life and functional ability while re-



searchers continue to define "chemo-brain" and determine the best treatments.

Reference: Hess, L.M. & Insel, K.C. (2007). Chemotherapy-related change in cognitive function: a conceptual model. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 34 (5), 981-992.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP
Every Wednesday at 3pm in
the BMT Conference Room

Please join us!