

# HUG MAGAZINE



**August 2012**

(issued on 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of alternate months on meeting days)

For HAEMATOLOGY and ONCOLOGY patients, being treated in the Day Therapy Centre and Dove Ward or under review



The new gazebo in use at the Swindon Old Town Festival

Email: [hugswindon@btinternet.com](mailto:hugswindon@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.hugswindon.co.uk](http://www.hugswindon.co.uk)

## H.U.G. Swindon Get-Togethers at the GWH

We usually meet in the Academy on the second Thursday of the month.

Turn up there or at the alternative venue at any time between 10:00 am and 12:30 pm unless otherwise stated

<b>13 September 2012</b>	-	<b>Cherwell, Brunel Centre (11:00 – 13:00)</b>
<b>11 October 2012</b>	-	<b>Academy, Seminar Room 11:00 – 13:00)</b>
<b>15 November 2012</b>	-	<b>Cherwell, Brunel Centre (11:00 - 12:00)</b>

(The Academy is reached from the front of the Hospital through the double doors at the back of the atrium, going right and following the signs, which first appear at the end of the corridor. If you are eligible, you can use the disabled car parking spaces at the back of the hospital, cross the road and head back towards the entry road. The Academy entrance is about half way along, in the main building. The small parking area just outside the Academy is for staff.)

### What do we do?

**HUG offers tea, sympathy, sharing of ideas and information and much more, to patients and their families or carers, including:**

- **Organising monthly get-togethers at the Hospital, Coffee Mornings (contact us for details of the next one, usually around the end of each month) and Craft Sessions (on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month) away from the Hospital**
- **Suggesting how and where to access professional help, where appropriate**
- **Attending Cancer Services User Involvement Meetings on behalf of patients and carers and discussing or raising and following up on issues of importance to them**
  - ✓ **Items currently under discussion include Complementary Therapies, End of Treatment Care and Radiotherapy for Swindon**
- **Fund-raising to provide practical help with purchases including thermometers, travel bands, mugs, slippers, gel bags and heat pads, when suggested by clinical staff, patients or carers**
- **Maintaining a website and making leaflets available to promote the group and advertise our activities**
- **Producing the HUG Magazine bi-monthly and leaving copies in Cancer Services areas, providing direct to members and posting on the website**

**Items for sale at any time: chemo hats made of a silk/wool mix in a choice of colours and styles and our personalised mugs and teddy bears. Contact us for more details.**

# INTERESTING HEALTH-RELATED NEWS

## **Positive thinking does work?**

Research reported in the journal Psychological Science suggests that positive thinking does work. By anticipating a specific outcome, we can focus our thoughts and actions on making it happen. This conclusion is based on research projects by psychologists Maryanne Garry and Robert Michael of Victoria University in New Zealand and Irving Kirsch of Harvard.

They think that people's lives could be improved by harnessing the power of suggestion.

Daily Mail 14 June 2012

## **Fish to reduce risk of colon cancer**

According to an analysis of 41 studies from around the world, people who eat plenty of fish may have a lower risk of colon cancer and rectal cancer. The analysis, which appeared in the American Journal of Medicine, is the latest report that ties fish consumption to a number of possible health benefits.

Researchers from China's Xijing Hospital of Digestive Diseases combined the results from 41 studies from the United States, Norway, Japan, Finland and elsewhere, published between 1990 and 2011, that measured fish consumption and tracked cancer diagnoses. "Our findings [...] suggest that fish consumption is inversely associated with colorectal cancer," the researchers wrote. Overall, they say, regularly eating fish was tied to a 12% lower risk of developing or dying of colon or rectal cancer. Find out more at [http://www.europacoln.com/news.php?Action=News&News\\_ID=646](http://www.europacoln.com/news.php?Action=News&News_ID=646)

## **A cold virus could shrink cancer tumours**

A promising type of cancer treatment called viral therapy avoids detection by the body's immune system and reaches tumours by hitching a ride on blood cells. This helps to shield such experimental viral therapies from destruction by antibodies, the body's natural police force, according to researchers from the University of Leeds and The Institute of Cancer Research.

The research involved a small number of patients, and did not measure effects of the treatment on patients' wellbeing or disease. But its results suggest that viral therapies could be injected into the bloodstream in the same way as certain chemotherapy drugs. This is preferable to injecting the virus directly into tumours - a more difficult procedure requiring technical expertise. Several viral therapies have shown promise in clinical trials, but researchers have not yet worked out the best way to give them to patients.

Ten patients with advanced bowel cancer who were due to have surgery on tumours that had spread to the liver took part in the study. They were given up to five doses of a viral therapy called reovirus in the weeks before surgery. Blood tests carried out shortly after treatment found the active virus had piggybacked onto blood cells. Subsequent blood samples showed that the hitch-hiking virus was quickly eradicated from the patients' blood system after completing its task. Around four weeks after the surgery, tests on different tissues showed that the virus was active in the tumour, but not the healthy parts of the liver. This suggests that reovirus specifically targets the cancer after being injected into the bloodstream.

University of Leeds Professor Alan Melcher led the study team. He said: "By piggybacking on blood cells, the virus is managing to hide from the body's natural immune response and reach its target intact. This could be hugely significant for the uptake of viral therapies like this in clinical practice." The authors also say that because the virus can be injected into the bloodstream, it could be used for a wide range of cancers, rather than being restricted only to ones that need to be injected directly.

Dr Julie Sharp, senior science information manager at Cancer Research UK, said: "This promising study shows that reovirus can trick the body's defences to reach and kill cancer cells and suggests that it could be given to patients using a simple injection. Details were published in the journal Science Translational Medicine. Refer to: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/archive/cancernews/2012-06-13-Cancer-fighting-virus-piggybacks-on-blood-cells>

## Healthy Eating Guidance

There are a number of documents and web sites offering guidance on healthy eating for existing cancer patients and those wishing to avoid cancer in the future. Some suggestions only are listed. If you do not have computer access, ask for help at the Cancer Services Information Point.

Macmillan's website contains a video on health eating, for which there are easy links from the home page, or go direct to:

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Eatingwell/Eatingwell.aspx>.

This gives suggestions for prevention, with the main suggestions being a high fibre diet, plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and limited amounts of red meat only. It is also possible to order copies of the Macmillan diet leaflets, namely "Healthy Eating and Cancer", "Eating Problems and Cancer" and "The Building Up Diet", the contents of which are fairly self-evident. Copies may be available on the Cancer Services Information Point, or you can request that they are ordered for you.

The Cancer Research website does not give general diet advice, but does make dietary recommendations for different cancer types in patient information leaflets. We found these by going to the home page on their website at

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>

and then searching for "diet". Readers can then choose the most relevant patient information for them.

The Lymphoma Association provides some dietary advice for those with neutropenia. With this condition some foods should be avoided. The details can be downloaded from the website or ordered as a booklet. The information is more or less exactly what you would receive at the GWH, but you can refer to:

<https://www.lymphomas.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdfs/Food%20safety%20when%20you%20are%20neutropenic.pdf>

Perhaps more useful and all encompassing is the Bristol Approach to Healthy Eating, from the Penny Brohn Cancer Care Centre. This is not available on the internet, but you can go to their centre in the Pill area of Bristol and find out for yourself on the course they run called Nutritional Support for Living with Cancer. There is no charge for the various courses to provide emotional and physical support, although donations are very welcome.

Details are available on the website at [www.pennybrohncancercare.org/](http://www.pennybrohncancercare.org/), together with one or two healthy recipes for you to try. Diet advice lists foods to eat in abundance, to eat in moderate amounts and in minimal amounts.

## Travel Insurance

Since new readers are likely to be interested in this subject, we make no apologies for returning to the subject of travel insurance.

It is not really possible to recommend one or two companies which would be suitable for all cancer patients. Each insurance company assesses risk according to their own agreed criteria. This means that you really need to get a number of quotes before you are in a position to decide which one is going to offer the best deal for your specific circumstances.

A good starting point is the Macmillan website travel insurance section at:

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Practicalissues/Travel/Gettingtravelinsurance.aspx>

There are suggested considerations and a checklist of information you will need to have to hand, to help you when contacting insurers. All the insurance companies and brokers suggested have been recommended by cancer patients or their families. Telephone numbers are provided, as well as web site addresses, for those who do not usually have computer access. You could ask a friend or family member to make a list for you if necessary.

Cancer Research UK also have lots of similar useful information and suggestions available at:

<http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org/coping-with-cancer/coping-practically/money/travel-insurance>

Details are included of companies specialising in insurance for cancer patients.

Confused.com and Travel Supermarket can help too by getting quotes from a number of different specialist companies on line:

<http://www.confused.com/campaign/travel-insurance/pre-existing-medical?MediaCode=396&kw=travel+insurance+for+cancer+phrase&gclid=CKXR7fON4rECFSsntAod9S8AYw>

<https://www.moneysupermarket.com/travel-insurance/pre-existing-medical-conditions/enquiry/>

This approach can save time and effort if you are not feeling like spending too long on individual searches yourself. However, we would recommend only choosing a solution from a comparison website, if it is also recommended by Macmillan or Cancer Research UK and only after discussing your particular circumstances with the company. Note that your consultant may be asked to provide further details.

Unfortunately there is no way around putting some effort into the search for travel insurance if you want your condition to be covered. Many companies will be happy to insure you, but exclude your medical condition. This will be the cheaper option, if you are unlikely to have an emergency during your holiday.

## Higher Profile for Hair Loss

**Women’s track cyclist Olympic gold medal winner Joanna Rowsell has been praised world-wide for her bravery. She, of course, is the young lady who stood on the podium without a wig to cover the alopecia, from which she has suffered since the age of 12. She made a conscious decision to appear unadorned, but has been amazed by the reaction.**

**And she looked really pretty, regardless, don’t you think?**

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It must be time for another Sudoku: Place the numbers from 1 to 9 in each empty cell, so that each column, row and 3 x 3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9. It’s an easy one!

			8	4	7		9	5
2	5	7			9		4	8
	4	8			2	7	3	
1		6		2		9		3
5		9	1	6	3	4		7
4		3		9		8		1
7	9	2	3			6	8	
	1	4	2			5	7	
	6		9	7	4			

Solution on Page 8



# HUG

## Fridge magnet

### fun

**There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age.**

**Sophia Loren, Actress**

**A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows.**

St Francis of Assisi




It is never too late to be what you might have been

George Eliot

Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens.

**Forget about all the reasons why something may not work.**

**You only need to find one good reason why it will."**

**Dr. Robert Anthony**




To the sick, while there is life there is hope.

Marcus T. Cicero

Sudoku solution								
6	3	1	8	4	7	2	9	5
2	5	7	6	3	9	1	4	8
9	4	8	5	1	2	7	3	6
1	7	6	4	2	8	9	5	3
5	8	9	1	6	3	4	2	7
4	2	3	7	9	5	8	6	1
7	9	2	3	5	1	6	8	4
3	1	4	2	8	6	5	7	9
8	6	5	9	7	4	3	1	2



*Update on  
aspirins and  
cancer risk and  
cancer stem cells*

American Cancer Research Society researchers have recently analysed information from more than 100,000 older patients over 11 years. They found that healthy adults, with no history of cancer, who used aspirin daily for up to five years had a 16% lower overall risk of dying from any type of cancer. This was recently reported in The Guardian newspaper.

This is rather less than the previous estimate of a 37% reduction in mortality reported by British researchers at Oxford University earlier this year.

Dr Eric Jacobs who lead the U.S. research stresses that any decision about daily aspirin use should only be made in conjunction with a healthcare professional. This is because there have been concerns about the possible side effects, notably damage to the stomach lining.

Scientists are unsure how aspirin prevents cancer, but it may act by damping down inflammation in the body, or slowing the buildup of mutations in cells that ultimately turn cancerous. The drug appears to slow the spread of cancer around the body by preventing cancer cells from sticking to blood platelets.

For more information refer to:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2012/aug/10/daily-aspirin-cancer-risk-study?newsfeed=true>

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Three separate studies on mice appear to have confirmed the view that the growth of cancerous tumours is driven by so-called cancer stem cells. Researchers have discovered the cells in tumours that seem to be responsible for the regrowth of tumours.

The studies have been published in the journals, Nature and Science. The researchers claim to have resolved one of the biggest controversies in cancer research and say their work marks a "paradigm shift" in the field.

Evidence for the existence of cancer stem cells has been weak to date. Now three separate groups of researchers working independently have found direct evidence of cancer stem cells driving tumour growth in brain, gut and skin cancers.

The suggestion is that the same may be true of all cancers which produce solid tumours.

More information is available from the BBC website at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-19083685>

Cancer Research UK's Cambridge Research Institute suggests that combining a drug which targets these cells with current treatments "might be a better strategy to effect a real cure and prevent relapse".

## H.U.G. News – read all about it

- Get-togethers were held in the Academy at the Great Western Hospital on 14<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> July.
  - Coffee mornings continued at the Blunsdon Arms at the end of June and on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Dates were arranged according to the availability of members.
  - We still haven't managed to fit in a craft session since the last issue, because our "expert" has been house renovating. We hope to start again in September!
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### 1. Get-Togethers

We have been pleased to welcome some new members. Getting to know everyone has occupied us at hospital meetings and coffee mornings. We hope to be able to offer support to each other for as long as is necessary.

### 2. Income and Expenditure

Our stall at the Old Town Festival, as pictured on the front page, raised £73.50, after deducting the £20 cost of having a stall. Last year we were at the Lawns, but this year, it was the Old Town Gardens. There is no parking there, with temporary unloading on the paths only. This made setting up and clearing away somewhat challenging. We felt that given the weather and the lack of parking for buyers, we did pretty well really. Parking spaces had been made available on a school playground, but it was quite a walk away.

The new gazebo stood up to windy conditions very well!

We had intended to sell at a car boot sale or two by now, using our stock of books, plants etc. This hasn't happened so far, because of the weather. We have the offer of sharing in a garage sale with half of the holder's profits coming to HUG, as well as what we sell ourselves. This will be in Lambourn on a date which is weather and availability dependent, but will hopefully be in the next month!

As reported last time, We have a hospital sales table behind the atrium on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September. We shall be selling craft items, pottery and jewellery.

### 3. Other Activities

HUG is going to the Penny Brohn Centre in Bristol again for another taster on a date to be finalised. This centre offers residential and day stays for a number of therapies and advice, as reported in a previous issue. Contact us if you would be interested in going along.

The Outing to Evesham Country Park, sponsored and organised by Day Therapy volunteer Jenny Yallop, went very well and was greatly enjoyed by those who were able to attend from abc group. Unfortunately no one from HUG was able to go on the rearranged date for reasons of availability or health.

We have decided on Avebury Manor for our outing, since a number of us followed the renovations on the BBC. The September date will be decided at our August Meeting. We shall travel by car.

We are again holding a Macmillan Coffee Morning in the Memorial Hall at Lambourn, on Friday 28th September from 10.00 to 12.00. There will almost certainly be a similar event at the GWH, if this is not convenient for you. Donations of produce or raffle prizes will be welcomed at our September meeting.

## Parking at the GWH

The Lymphoma Association has produced a series of short films, with the help of a professional video producer, to help raise awareness of lymphoma and to make the charity's information more widely available on the internet. The films are available on YouTube.

The films were produced because YouTube is used by millions of people every day and a lot of the videos about lymphoma on the internet are not very helpful or contain inaccurate information. Topics include:

- What is lymphoma?
- Treatment for the relapse of lymphoma
- Chemotherapy and radiotherapy for lymphoma
- Hodgkin lymphoma – possible long term effects of treatment

as well as information about the Association, its local support groups and recent fund-raising efforts.

To view the film clips go to [youtube.com/lymphomaassociation](https://youtube.com/lymphomaassociation).

## Parking at the GWH

Parking has definitely become easier for those patients and visitors using the general parking spaces. Part-time staff may find it rather more difficult to park, but things are working out reasonably well for most staff members.

The number of disabled parking spaces at the front of the hospital has been reduced. I don't qualify for a disabled space, but feel that it is not very easy for any disabled who have to park at the rear, beyond the Brunel Centre.

It is quite a walk from there to the main building and would be particularly challenging for lone wheel chair users, because of the number of doors to be negotiated.

Do let us know of your experiences with this.

