

Joining Forces to Fight Cancer

Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium



Through With Chew Cowboys & Cowgirls!

Wyoming Through With Chew (WTWC) is proud to announce 24 total "Through With Chew" cowboys and cowgirls will represent Wyoming at the National High School Finals Rodeo, July 19-25 in Farmington, New Mexico. The WTWC Rodeo All-Stars campaign honored the best high school rodeo competitors in the state who had pledged not to use spit tobacco. In the inaugural year of the campaign, 43-percent of all Wyoming High School Rodeo Association competitors signed the "Through With Chew" pledge.

Of the 51 student-athletes who will represent Wyoming at the National High School Finals Rodeo, 24 signed the WTWC Rodeo All-Stars pledge not to use spit tobacco. That means 47-percent of Wyoming's best high school rodeo competitors have pledged to live "Through With Chew." Wyoming will have 12 alternates for the NHSFR and five of the alternates (41-percent) signed the WTWC Pledge.

WTWC Rodeo All-Star of the Year Jake Mangis of Jackson qualified for the nationals in the team roping. Mangis will continue his rodeo career next year at the University of Wyoming. Lance Creek's Jordan Ann Thurston, the female WTWC Rodeo All-Star of the Year, qualified for the nationals by winning the goat tying at the WHSRA State Finals Rodeo. Both Mangis and Thurston earned \$1,000 each in scholarship money from Wyoming Through With Chew and "The Sports Flash" (TSF) Radio Network.

In addition, both WHSRA all-around winners signed the WTWC Rodeo All-Stars pledge and were finalists for the WTWC Rodeo All-Stars of the Year. Cowley's J.R. Vezain won the all-around cowboy title with 6,037.38 points. Lance Creek's Ace Thurston, another WTWC Rodeo All-Star of the Year finalist, finished second in the boys all-around with 4,394.70 points as a sophomore.

Kinnear's Devin Nicholls won the girls all-around title, finishing the year with 7,184.58 points. Nicholls, a junior, earned the week nine WTWC Rodeo All-Star of the Week and was a finalist for the \$1,000 scholarship.

Article Submitted by the Wyoming Through With Chew Program

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Cancer: It's not just about the medicine, it's about you.

Fighting Fatigue When You Don't Have the Energy

By: Andrea Berry, MHR, ATR-BC, LPC, NCC

“Oh I can't believe how exhausted I am, and the strange thing is that the more I rest the more exhausted I feel.” Statements like this are often heard by doctors, family, and friends of people who are in treatment for cancer or have completed treatment for cancer. In fact, fatigue is the number one complaint from people diagnosed with cancer.

In the past we have spoken about how being diagnosed with cancer is not just about the medicine, it's about you and living your life. The experience of overwhelming fatigue has been described as: “Stealing what little of my life I have left.” Another client expressed that she had expected that her doctor and her oncology team to be her support during treatment, but to her surprise it was her living room couch.

Is fatigue to be expected? Yes to some degree. You are asking your body to do a great deal of work when you take on the fight against cancerous cells. Many cancer treatments increase fatigue and lower immune systems. Others treatments, such as hormone blocking agents and adjuvant therapies increase the potential for symptoms such as insomnia, thus making a person more likely to experience chronic fatigue. Other causes of fatigue can be social and emotional. Being diagnosed with cancer increases the likelihood of experiencing depression and anxiety. These emotions add to the potential for fatigue. Surgical pain, cancer pain, and treatment pain may make it harder to experience a sound night's sleep and thus increase fatigue. So, if you or a loved one, is or has experienced on-going fatigue don't be alarmed, it is very common.

Luckily, your oncology team can help you cope with this experience. Please talk with your doctor about your fatigue, even if it seems silly or unimportant. They have many ways to help you medically. But do not rule out considering some non- pharmaceutical interventions, which can be very beneficial as well. There is a great deal of published psycho-social oncology research studying how fatigue affects cancer patients and their caregivers. This research has shown that there are many successful non-medical interventions. Some of these interventions will require that you make a few modifications in your habits, but I promise these are well researched and do help. Remember, always talk with your oncologist and let them know what you are wanting to try. Below are a few proven interventions that are low tech and very helpful.

If you are up at night worrying, having hot flashes or feeling somewhat . . . shall we say, “Out of control” . . . this might be a good time to consider talking with an oncology counselor or joining a support group. Why? Because, research shows that psychosocial support helps by increasing positive coping skills. Many people find that when they learn they are not alone in their cancer experience, their anxiety goes down and they experience better rest.

Talk with your oncology counselor about learning some relaxation techniques. Being anxious is exhausting and even a brief moment of relaxation helps relieve the fatigue. Because cancer is an experience that is tough on everyone; your caregivers and loved ones will also benefit from learning relaxation techniques.

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Sleep and fatigue studies with women diagnosed with breast cancer and who are now on adjuvant therapy demonstrated those women who received 30 minutes of very bright full spectrum light showed a statistically significant improvement in sleep quality and length and reported much reduced fatigue compared with women that received the same light later in the day and the women that received no light intervention. What these studies mean to you (even if you are not female or had another type of cancer) is that you should get up and spend some time soaking in bright full spectrum light every morning. It is okay to go back to bed later. If you can't go outside try sitting by a window in the sunshine - in the morning. We have great sunshine in Wyoming, so go get some sunshine. Please remember to be sun-wise! You will also help your body produce vitamin D by doing this.



Scientific research supports the use of good sleep hygiene as a means to combat insomnia. If this is a new idea don't be worried. It means that you have a bed time/sleep routine that you stick to. Go to bed at the same time every night or as close to it as possible. Keep your bed and bedroom reserved for nighttime sleep and romance. Move the TV out of the bedroom. Darken your bedroom as much as possible. Have good air flow in your room. White noise is fine, music is not recommended. Have clean wrinkle-free sheets on your bed and do your cracker eating in another room. If you find that you wake up in the middle of the night get up, move to a different location, that is dimly lit. Sleep research shows that turning on the TV or trying to be productive will wake you up. The same research suggests sitting quietly or reading in dim light is helpful because your eyes will become tired and you will fall asleep more easily. You can also try a mindfulness practice called "Crazy Breathing;" a technique of intentionally practicing an irregular breathing pattern for a few minutes. This is done by mixing slow deep breaths, with fast breaths, with yawns, and with big inhales. This is not a hyper-ventilating technique, it is a way to demand mindfulness which limit's the minds ability to get caught up in anxiety, as well as making the mind work against the autonomic nervous system for a few minutes, and this is tiring work and makes you feel sleepy.

During the day try to get up and move. Movement is beneficial! Purposeful movement, however and whenever you move, within the limitations of your condition has been proven over and over to assist in the reduction of fatigue and stress experienced by persons affected by cancer. If you can get outside, try to do it in the morning and get the added benefit of the light therapy.

Well after all that, I bet you are ready for a nap! Remember fatigue is real. You are not alone in finding this to be one of the hardest parts of the cancer experience to deal with. Your doctor, your cancer counselor and you can all help to relieve that fatigue. Now your treatment team, family and friends can be your best support rather than your couch!

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Cowboys Against Cancer

In reading the Spring WCCCC newsletter recently, I found myself nodding knowingly with portions of each of the articles submitted; and I realized from first-hand experience the importance and comfort that the “safety net” described in one of them meant to me. And, in a way, I am among the “blessed” for having survived cancer and been able to work with an unbelievable support system and group of volunteers in Sweetwater County to reach out to our many friends and neighbors in this seventh largest county in the nation to assist them in getting the care they need.

This vast state of “high altitudes and low multitudes,” especially in Southwestern Wyoming—although fortunate to have excellent health-care facilities—lacks the specialization in diversity of care which cancer treatment requires. We know we are faced with travel to larger, urban areas. And we also know Mother Nature, during certain times of the year, will add an additional challenge.

From the personal turmoil, anxiety of leaving loved ones for care, and stress of financial crises came the idea for Cowboys Against Cancer—a 100 percent, all-volunteer organization composed of participants from all walks of life, ethnicity, and personal challenge. For the past fifteen years our organization has reached out to cancer patients and their families to assist them in seeking care in surrounding metropolitan areas by providing grants to offset the trepidation and anxiety which accompanies the overwhelming deluge of expense associated with cancer care and treatment

Our humble beginnings from selling \$100 squares in a quilt made by friends who were quilters raised the first \$10,000 Cowboys Against Cancer earned and was able to distribute as \$200 grants. Now in our 15th year—our “crystal anniversary”—we will try to surpass last year’s fundraising efforts which has it possible to give individual grants of \$2,500. Overall, Cowboys Against Cancer has directly nearly one million dollars in grants to individuals needing treatment from Sweetwater County. We accomplish these efforts through our annual Benefit and Banquet which is held the first Saturday in November each year at the Sweetwater County Events Complex in Rock Springs. And the economic downturn of the Nation will fuel the determination of our myriad of volunteers who know too well the paths they must pursue to reap the benefits of helping cancer patients overcome their own, individual adversities.

Aside from the monetary assistance we are able to give Sweetwater County residents, we reap a much greater benefit through Cowboys Against Cancer: the personal reward of supporting family, friends, loved ones and acquaintances who are suddenly thrust into a new lifestyle dictated by medical treatment, disruption of personal responsibilities, and adjustment to the hourly and daily routine which their medical care imposes. The friendships born, the family ties strengthened, and the love of individuals from all walks of life and all levels of government and industry help form a bond in providing treatment while researchers and those in the medical community continue their search for eradication of cancer.

Cowboys Against Cancer welcomes your support and encouragement. And if we in Sweetwater County can provide help to your friends and loved ones in this part of Wyoming, we welcome your message—and your encouragement!

Margaret Parry
Founder and President
Cowboys Against Cancer*

*Margaret Parry was a young mother of two in 1992 when she embarked upon the struggle of getting to and from Salt Lake City for treatment for breast cancer while having to leave her children and home for days at a time. She channeled her faith, energies, and enthusiasm into Cowboys Against Cancer and continues to be an active participant in the ongoing search for a cure for cancer while, at the same time, helping to alleviate some of the concerns associated with seeking treatment.

Annual Pink Flamingo Event: A Must Attend!

By Dency Gabert
Memorial Hospital of Converse

Converse County Breast Cancer Awareness Task Force will be hosting their annual Pink Flamingo Fundraiser this October 3rd at the Douglas Fair Grounds. The Pink Flamingo is an all girl's party to help raise awareness about breast cancer. The festivities start at 6:00 P. M. with a social Hour. Vendors and a bar will be set up during this time. There will also be a silent auction involving decorated bras and donated quilts. Starting at 7:00 P.M. there will be an Italian inspired dinner. During the dinner a breast cancer survivor will share her personal story with trials and triumphs. After our survivors story we will have entertainment. We have planned an American Idol themed event, where different groups or individuals will get on stage and perform. The audience will then decide who moves on to the next round or who is eliminated. All of this fun is for one reason only and that is to raise awareness of breast cancer and to encourage women to have regular screenings.

After all, early detection is the best prevention. All proceeds from this event will go to the Converse County Breast Cancer Awareness Task Force to assist local eligible women with mammograms and other breast cancer expenses. Any questions about the Pink Flamingo should be directed to Memorial Hospital of Converse County's Wellness Department at (307) 358-3947.



Breast Cancer Walk To Be Held Again In Douglas

Converse County will host the American Cancer Society's 2nd annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer on October 3rd at the Wyoming State Fairgrounds. Strides is held to honor and support women who are breast cancer survivors, in memory of those we have lost to breast cancer, and to raise funds to support our continuing fight against this terrible disease.

In 2008 Wyoming had --- women diagnosed with breast cancer and the state lost --- of them. Nation wide those numbers increase to 92,370 women diagnosed and 40,170 lost to cancer. That is so much more than a number; it is 40,170 wives, mothers, daughters, aunts and friends that should have been here much longer.

The planning committee for this statewide event needs additional volunteers to help this year. If interested please call Shelly Allen at 351-2692 and leave a message so she can return your call or email rita.miller@cancer.org for more information. If you would like to form a team, register to participate as a walker or survivor, or donate to this worthy cause, you can go to www.wyomingstrides.com.

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy and services. No matter who you are, we can help. Contact us any time, day or night, for information and support at 1-800-ACS-2345 or www.cancer.org.

Submitted by Rita Miller
Community Relationship Manager
American Cancer Society

Do You Know About the National Family Caregiver Support Program?

National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) provides assistance to family and relative caregivers caring for :

- Older individuals age 60 and older;
- Older individuals who have Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunctions; and
- Grandparent and relatives, age 55 or older, caring for a disabled adult, 19 to 59, or a child(ren) age 18 and younger.

The program's goal is to reduce the caregivers stress and burden through Information; Assistance in accessing services; Counseling, Training in caregiver skills and Support Groups; Respite care and providing a wide array of Supplemental Services on a limited basis. Questions regarding the National Family Caregiver Support Program, also called the Caregiver Program, call the Aging Division at 1-800-442-2766 and ask for Jeanne Scheneman.

Article submitted by Jeanne Scheneman

Awards! Awards! Awards!

Congratulations Wyoming Cancer Surveillance Program!

The Wyoming Cancer Surveillance Program has once again received the Gold Standard award from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) for their 2008 submission (2006 data). In order to reach the gold standard a program must achieve at least a 95% Completeness rate (WY had 99.4%); less than 3% of death certificate only cases (WY had 0.3%); less than 1 per 100 duplicate cases (WY had none); pass 100% of the data edits and submit within 23 months of the end of the accession year.

The Wyoming Cancer Surveillance Program is housed within the Department of Health. They have the important duty of collecting and coding cancer incidence and mortality data into the state registry.



Congratulations Wyoming Breast and Cervical Program!

The Wyoming Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program has met all eleven performance standards/data elements that contribute to the CDC's Breast and Cervical Core Program Performance Indicators / Data Quality Report based on their April 2009 data submission for the time period July 2007- June 2008.

The Wyoming Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program is housed within the Department of Health.