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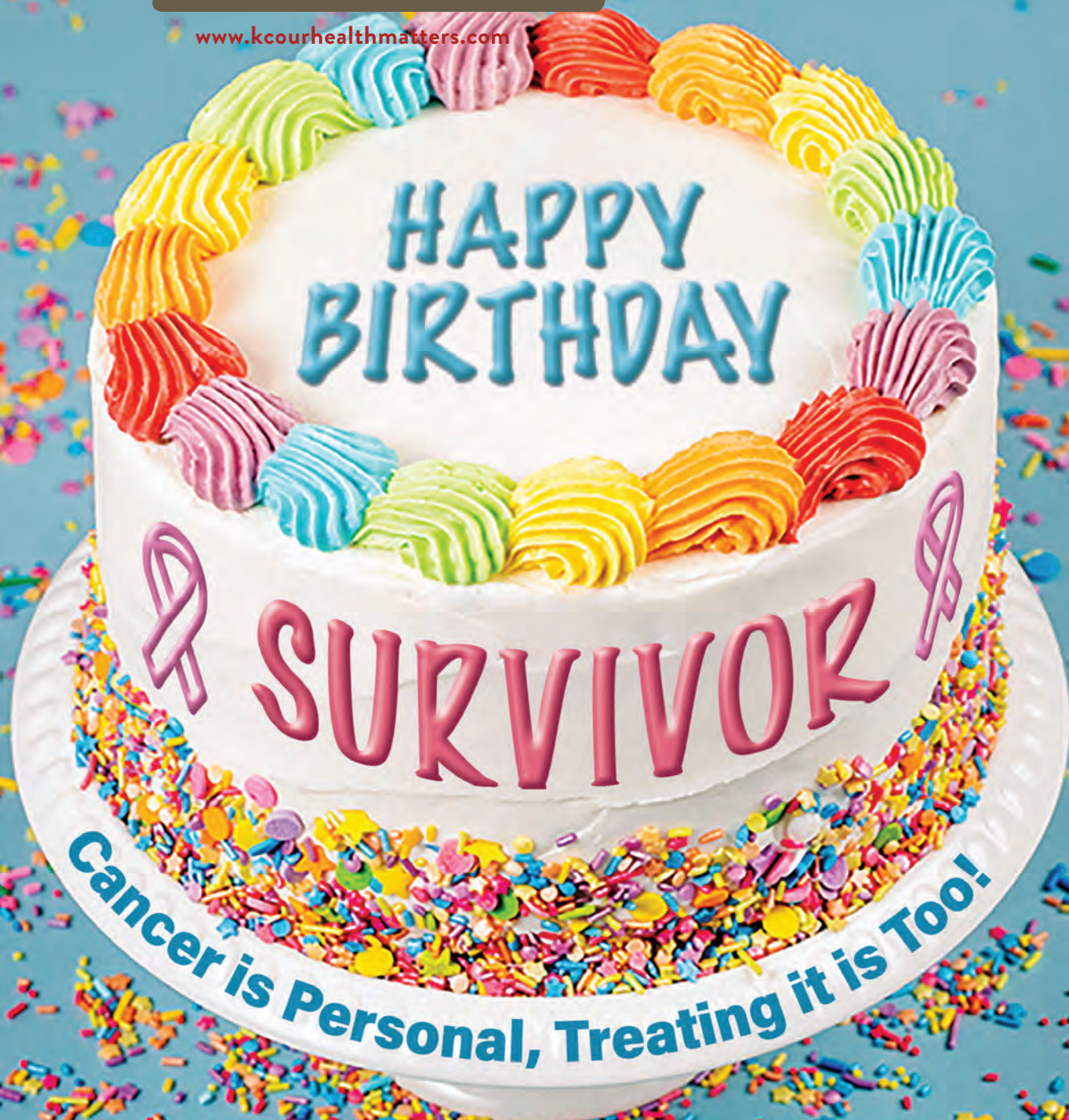
OCTOBER 2021

# HEALTH

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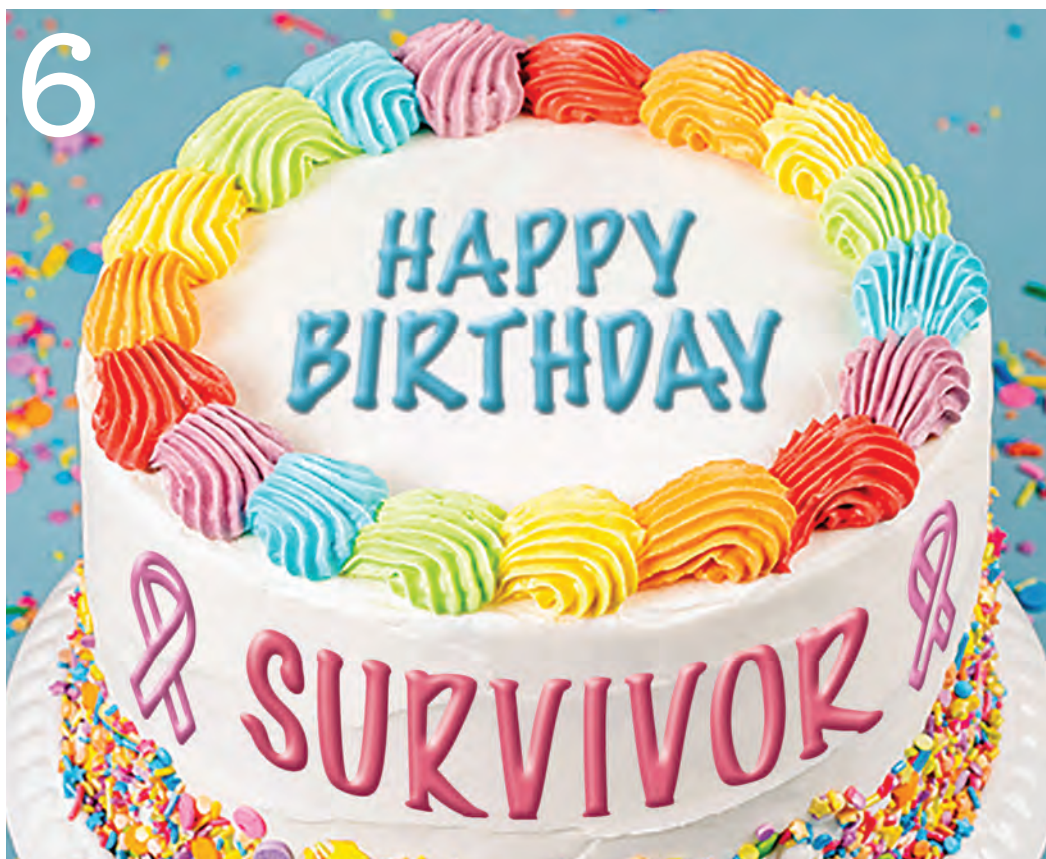


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# HOPE, LOVE, COURAGE

We salute cancer **SURVIVORS** for their  
determination to fight cancer.  
And for displaying resiliency that inspires others!

**A**dvances in early detection and personalized cancer treatment have produced millions of cancer survivors and more people living longer with cancer. For those living with cancer, stay strong and know that you are not alone. There are people and organizations to help you during your journey (see pages 15 and 21) with resources and support.

October is a great time to schedule annual checkups for breast cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer and others. Check with your doctor regarding age- and gender-related screenings for you and your family members.

**Our Health Matters™** continues to support organizations that engage families about the importance of getting COVID-19 vaccinations. See page 16 to learn about vaccine events through November. Anyone who wants the vaccine can receive it. Children 12 and older are also approved to get vaccinated.

If you are uninsured or underinsured, be sure to see pages 18 and 19 to learn about new income guidelines that could make you eligible for low- or no-cost Medicaid insurance.



Fall has arrived. Continue to wear a mask where mandated and maintain social distance between yourself and others.

Stay safe and healthy.

**Ruth Ramsey**, Publisher and CEO

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## WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Send us your suggestions for health topics you would like to see in *Our Health Matters*. Also share what you enjoy about the magazine. Email us at [info@kcourhealthmatters.com](mailto:info@kcourhealthmatters.com) or write to us at

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# Sometimes You Have to Drive a Little Farther

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When it comes to your rehabilitation after an illness or injury, you want the best outcome with the fastest results—just like you find at MidAmerica Rehabilitation Hospital.

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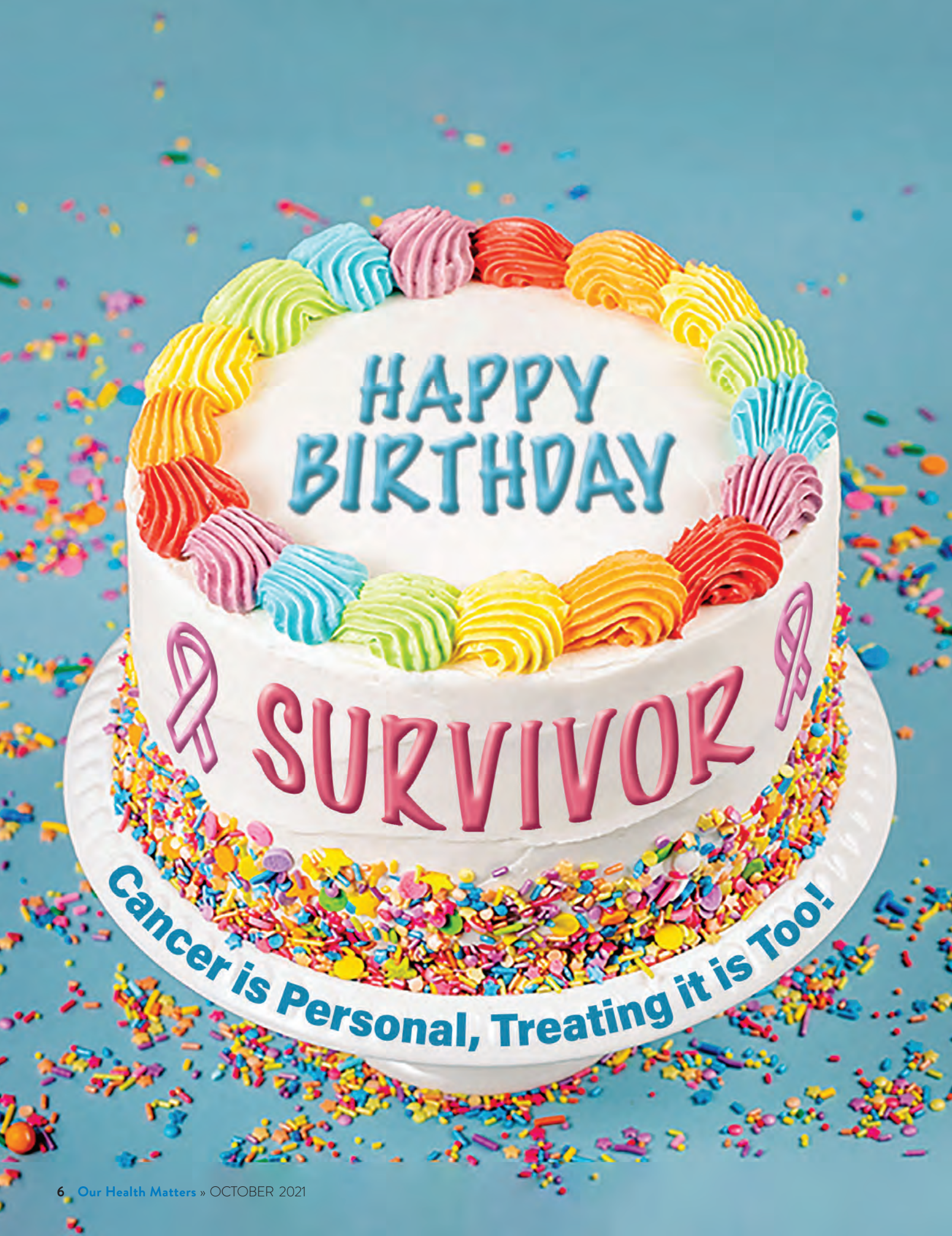


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**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**SURVIVOR**

**Cancer is Personal, Treating it is Too!**



# Personalized Medicine Shows Promise in Treating Some Cancers

October is Cancer Awareness Month. Thousands of cancer survivors are celebrating more “Birthdays” and know they are blessed to have benefited from advancements in personalized cancer medicine and treatment. We should applaud scientists, researchers and cancer medical specialists for their relentless drive to find cures and treatments for all types of cancer. And don’t forget the brave volunteers with cancer who step up for cancer clinical trials, so scientists can learn in real time how to target drugs and cancer treatment more precisely for racially diverse populations—you are true HEROES!

—Ruth Ramsey,  
Publisher, *Our Health Matters*

## How cancer treatment is improving

You are probably hearing a lot about “personalized medicine.” What exactly does that mean? Personalized medicine uses information about a person’s own genes or proteins to prevent, diagnose or treat disease. For example in cancer, personalized medicine uses specific information about a person’s tumor to help make a diagnosis, plan treatment, find out how well treatment is working, or make



a prognosis (forecast or likely outcome). Genes are the information that tells the cells in your body how to grow and develop. Many cancers affect or involve specific genes.

Personalized cancer medicine can have fewer side effects than other types of treatment because it is designed to be more targeted. This method of personalized treatment may affect healthy cells less and cells involved in cancer more. It also helps in predicting how likely the cancer is to come back. Doctors call this “risk of recurrence.”

### How personalized medicine is changing cancer treatment

Before personalized medicine, people with the same type of cancer usually got the same treatment. Over time, doctors noticed the treatments worked better for some people than others. Researchers began finding genetic differences in people and their cancers. These differences explained a great deal about why cancers responded differently to the same treatment.

Today, you may still have the usual treatment for your type and stage of cancer. However, your doctor may personalize it based on information about your genes and the cancer’s genes.

### Cancers identified for targeted therapy

Targeted therapy treats specific genes and proteins that allow a certain cancer to grow and survive. Researchers find new targets for



**Ronald C. Chen, MD, MPH**

Chair, Radiation Oncologist  
The University of Kansas  
Health System

Advances in precision and personalized medicine continue to benefit prostate cancer patients. Prostate cancer patients can now have sophisticated genomic tests to more accurately

determine the aggressiveness of their prostate cancer. This information can help the patient understand his prognosis, or likely course or outcome of a disease. It has the potential to help him and his doctor make the best treatment decision. Advances in medical technology are another important way precision medicine is helping prostate cancer patients.

Radiologic technology continues to help physicians to better see exactly where the cancer is in the body. Likewise, radiation treatment, such as proton therapy, also continues to become more accurate in targeting tumors. These advances will lead to higher cure rates and reduced side effects for patients with prostate and other cancers.

more cancers each year. Then, receiving targeted treatment options they create and test new drugs for include: these targets. Some of the cancers

### GENOMIC TEST

is a type of medical test that identifies changes in genes, chromosomes, or proteins. The results of a genetic test can confirm or rule out a suspected genetic condition or help determine a person’s chance of developing or passing on a genetic disorder.



- Bladder cancer
- Brain cancer
- Breast cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Colorectal cancer
- Endometrial cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Head and neck cancer
- Gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST)
- Kidney cancer
- Leukemia
- Liver cancer
- Lymphoma
- Lung cancer
- Melanoma
- Multiple myeloma
- Neuroblastoma
- Neuroendocrine tumors
- Pancreatic cancer
- Prostate cancer
- Soft tissue sarcoma
- Stomach cancer
- Thyroid cancer
- Some childhood cancers

You may receive targeted therapy if your cancer has the target that a treatment was designed for. Your doctor needs to test a sample of blood, bone marrow, or tumor tissue to learn this. They then make recommendations based on these results, as well as other factors.

## The future of personalized cancer medicine

Personalized cancer medicine can make cancer treatment more effective, with fewer side effects. But there are still some challenges. These include:

- Personalized treatment is not available for all types and subtypes of cancer.



## Jun Zhang, MD, PhD, Thoracic Medical Oncologist

The University of Kansas Health System

I am a thoracic oncologist and specialize in treating lung cancer. Precision medicine is important because everyone's lung cancer is different. With

precision medicine, we ensure you receive tailored and personalized therapy to maximize your treatment response and simultaneously minimize toxicities. We are revolutionizing lung cancer treatment — targeted therapies or immunotherapies based on your tumor's genetic makeup and immune profiling. As a result, we are seeing significant improvement in the 5-year survival for lung cancer.

## PERSONALIZED

cancer medicine can make cancer treatment more effective, with fewer side effects.





The 2021 Annual Report to the Nation (ARN)\* provides updates of rates for new cases and deaths as well as trends for the most common cancers in the United States among adults, children (aged 0-14), and adolescents and young adults (AYAs aged 15-39). Several notable trends in rates of new cancer cases (incidence) and death rates (mortality) in the United States show:

- Overall, cancer death rates decreased 2.2% per year (on average) among males and 1.7% per year (on average) among females.
- Overall cancer incidence rates are leveling off among males after earlier declines and increasing slightly among females and AYAs.
- Cancer death rates decreased an average of 0.9% per year among AYAs, and an average of 1.4% per year among children between 2014 and 2018.

- These trends reflect population changes in cancer risk factors (such as excess body weight), screening test use and diagnostic practices.
- The most common cancer types among children included leukemia, brain and other nervous system, and lymphoma, with increasing incidence trends for all three from 2001 to 2017.

The annual report is a collaborative effort among the American Cancer Society (ACS); the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health; and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR).





**AMONG COMMON**  
**cancers with declining death rates, lung cancer and melanoma**  
**are decreasing the most.**  
**— National Cancer Institute, [Seer.cancer.gov](https://seer.cancer.gov)**

- Some personalized treatments are only available in clinical trials.
- Genetic testing can be expensive. Insurance plans do not always pay for it. Also, testing your genes and the genes in your tumor takes time. This can mean you wait longer to get the personalized treatment.
- Some personalized treatments, such as targeted treatments, can be expensive.

Researchers are still developing personalized medicine for cancer. They want to learn more about:

- The gene changes that happen in cancer cells.
- How personalized cancer treatments work.
- Why some targeted therapies stop working.

**Source: Approved by the  
Cancer.Net Editorial Board, 01/2020**

# Why Some Keep Their Cancer Diagnosis Secret

The reasons may (or may not) surprise you.

By **Jeanene Dunn**, OHM Staff Writer

It's hard to believe that anyone would keep a cancer diagnosis a secret, especially from their closest loved ones. It is not the norm, but it does happen.

Retired mental health nurse, Nancy, shares a couple of reasons why. "When a person hears the word 'cancer,' it's scary and overwhelming," she says. "The cancer they have may be treatable, but they don't hear that," she explains. "All they hear in that moment is cancer."

It's not so much that people don't want to share their diagnosis, but here are some reasons why they may need a moment:

- They don't want their life to be defined by their illness.
- They don't want pity.
- They don't want to constantly talk about it.

## It can be hard for patients to process

A cancer diagnosis naturally brings a lot of questions and a range of feelings. Some may feel concerned, angry, sad, depressed, overwhelmed, scared and alone. They may

need time to fully process the diagnosis themselves before sharing the information with others, including family.

## Work through your feelings first

You may need a moment to come to terms with your feelings before you share your diagnosis with family and others. Most people don't want to carry that burden alone but may need a little time. If you're struggling with your own feelings, it's okay and completely normal.

## Make a list

Tell your spouse or partner first. If you're unsure who else needs to know outside of family, you may want to make a list of others you can confide in. Consider telling a few key family members who can contact others with the news. As for friends, separate close friends from people you know casually. If you don't have family members or children who live near, you may find support through your circle of friends. Such was the case with Ana\*.



Ana was a single, childless woman whose parents had died years ago, and her siblings lived out of state, halfway across the country. Even though she remained in her hometown, she was a private person with a small circle of close friends. When she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer five years ago, she told her brothers first and then reached out to trusted friends, who loved and supported her.

When Ana started losing her hair due to chemo, her hairstylist (and best friend), Kara, booked her an appointment after hours. There were no other stylists or clients in the salon. “We laughed, talked and cried,” Kara says. “It is a moment I will never forget. I was honored to be there for her.”

### Be sure to tell your employer

If you are employed, notify your supervisor, as well as Human Resources. Depending on your length of service on the job, you may qualify for paid time off or medical leave for doctor’s appointments and treatments, if necessary. Coworkers can be a great support system, too. When you’re making your list, include

your work family, if you have those type of relationships.

### Maintain your routine

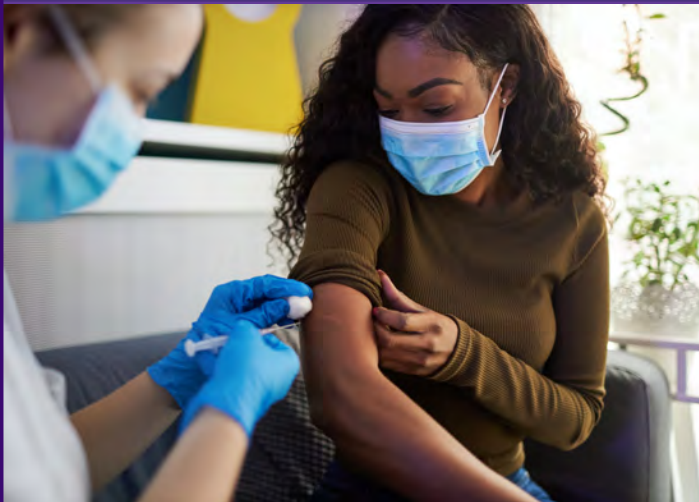
Keep life normal as much as you possibly can while you’re going through treatment. Encourage caregivers and family to take time for themselves and take care of their physical and mental health. This is especially important if there are children in the home. Try to keep their routine as normal as possible.

### Get help

If you need help talking to your loved ones about your cancer diagnosis, consult your healthcare provider for guidance. If you are struggling with your mental health, don’t hesitate to ask for the help you need. Support groups are also an excellent resource for information and support. Visit [cancer.org](https://cancer.org) and search for “telling others about your diagnosis.”

\* Ana and Kara are not the real names of the women in this article.

## “I’ll protect you, you protect me.”



Register online  
at [MoStopsCOVID.com/navigator](https://MoStopsCOVID.com/navigator)  
or call the COVID-19 hotline  
at 877-435-8411.

### COVID-19 Vaccines Are Safe

- Get vaccinated.
- Wear a face mask.
- Stay 6 feet apart.
- Wash your hands.

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services  
Office of Minority Health



[MoStopsCOVID.com](https://MoStopsCOVID.com)  
[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)



AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a non-discriminatory basis. Individuals who are deaf, heard-of-hearing, or have a speech disability can dial 711 or 1-800-735-2966.



# Make Early Detection of Cancer a Priority

It is well documented that some cancers can be found early, before they cause symptoms and when they may be easier to treat successfully.

The following are a several screenings your doctor may recommend either annually or at other scheduled times depending on your gender, age, race, family history or symptoms:

## COLON CANCER SCREENING

Colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy and stool tests (high-sensitivity fecal occult blood tests and stool DNA tests) detect colorectal cancer early, and also help to prevent the disease in the first place. People who are at average risk for colorectal cancer (have family history, blood in stools) should discuss getting screened as early as age 45 through age 75.

## DRE AND PSA PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING

Digital rectal examination (DRE) is a test that allows the doctor to feel the surface of the prostate for any irregularities. Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) is a protein produced by normal as well as malignant cells of the prostate gland. The PSA blood test looks for higher-than-normal PSA levels to detect the presence of cancer. African-American men or men with a family history of prostate cancer are at higher risk and should start screening early.

## LUNG CANCER SCREENINGS

Low-dose computerized tomography (LDCT) screens for lung cancer and have been shown to reduce lung cancer deaths among heavy smokers ages 55 to 74. If lung cancer is detected at an early stage, it's more likely to be cured with treatment.

## MAMMOGRAPHY BREAST CANCER SCREENINGS

Mammography is the process of using low-energy X-rays to examine the human breast for diagnosis and screening of cancer. Early detection has been shown to reduce deaths from the disease among women ages 40 to 74, especially those over age 50.

## PAP TEST AND HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV) TESTING

These tests, which can be used alone or in combination, can lead to both early detection and prevention of cervical cancer. Testing is generally recommended to begin at age 21 and to end at age 65 in women who have had adequate prior screenings and are not otherwise at high risk for cervical cancer.

## SKIN CANCER SCREENING

Doctors recommend that people examine their skin regularly for changes such as a new mole or a change to an existing mole and promptly consult with a doctor if they find something of concern.

Check with your health insurance plan to find out which cancer screenings are covered and whether you will have any out-of-pocket expense.

**Source:** [cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov) and [mayoclinic.com](https://www.mayoclinic.com)



# Cancer is a Journey You Don't Have to Experience Alone

For over 60 years Cancer Action, a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has provided services and support to meet the physical, financial, social and emotional needs of cancer patients and their families when they need it most. Cancer Action believes that no one should face the challenge of cancer alone. Their mission is to reduce distress and promote well-being for those living with, through and beyond cancer. Cancer Action's caring and professional staff offers comfort, education and support through every step of a person's cancer journey.

Cancer Action serves persons diagnosed with cancer of all ages and all types of cancer in Kansas (Johnson and Wyandotte counties) and in Missouri (Jackson, Clay and Platte counties).

## Cancer Action Offers Practical and Direct Services

- Nutritional supplements
- Small medical equipment and supplies
- Mastectomy supplies
- Wigs, turbans and scarves
- Volunteer-made comfort items

## Emotional and Educational Support

- One-on-one emotional support
- Navigation and referral services
- Educational resources

## Financial Assistance Programs

- Prescription assistance
- Professionally fitted lymphedema sleeves

## How you can help?

Cancer Action welcomes donations and memorials from individuals, businesses and foundations.



For more information about programs and services call 913-642-8885  
[www.canceractionkc.org](http://www.canceractionkc.org) | [www.facebook.com/canceraction](https://www.facebook.com/canceraction)

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# VACCINATIONS AND MORE!

**Neighborhoods, churches,  
youth organizations  
and businesses  
answer the call and  
make a difference.**



**R**ecently, residents from several Kansas City neighborhood groups — Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council, the Key Coalition, the Santa Fe Area Council, and the Boston Heights and Mount Hope Neighborhood Association — combined their efforts to host a mega-COVID-19 vaccination event. The event centered around administering COVID-19 vaccines and providing health services and family entertainment.

One of the first people to get vaccinated was Nicolas Alvarez, who works for the Ivanhoe Council maintaining its community center and dozens of lots in the neighborhood.

“I’ve been meaning to get vaccinated and this was the perfect opportunity,” he said. “I live with my parents, and I didn’t want them to get COVID.”

Alvarez’ girlfriend and his younger brother joined him in getting vaccinated.

“And there’s another event like this in a few weeks, where we can get our second shots,” he said.

Throughout the day, more people from the area joined Alvarez in getting vaccinated as well as getting screened for other health issues including high blood pressure and diabetes. Attendees took advantage of opportunities to use and get connected to health services and community resources. They also completed a survey on health beliefs and behaviors regarding COVID-19 and participated in several research studies.

The event — as with others planned during the next two months — was a collaborative effort with Our Healthy KC Eastside, an initiative funded by Jackson County and conducted by the University of Missouri-Kansas City in collaboration with University Health-Truman Medical Center, Children’s Mercy Kansas City, the Black Health Care Coalition, and multiple businesses, neighborhood associations, youth organizations and churches on KC’s Eastside.

For 18-year-old Marcus Martin, having health professionals at the event to explain how the vaccine works helped him decide to get his first shot. Concern for his family was also a big motivator, he said. “Everybody else in our household is vaccinated now, and I didn’t want to possibly hurt them.”

Several students from UMKC’s nursing and health studies, dental, medical and pharmacy schools participated as well. Cameron Lindsey, PharmD and chair of the UMKC Pharmacy Practice and Administration, and Stefanie Ellison, M.D., associate dean for learning initiatives at the School of Medicine and a professor of emergency medicine, have coordinated student volunteers throughout the pandemic.



**Participants attending Our Healthy KC Eastside vaccination events also receive screenings for high blood pressure, diabetes and other health issues.**

**For future dates and times  
of vaccination events visit  
[www.healthykceastside.org](http://www.healthykceastside.org).**





UMKC's Dr. Stefanie Ellison (right) talks with medical student volunteers working at the Our Healthy KC Eastside vaccine event.

UMKC students' willingness to help and to learn has shined in response to the pandemic, which Ellison said has provided several real-time chances to promote interprofessional education. "It's gotten us to do what we've wanted to do all along" in terms of having students from the different health sciences schools learn together and from one another.

The event also was a chance for community health researchers to be in touch with people in the community. A researcher from Children's Mercy, for example, gathered contact information so she could check later with participants to see whether they had acted on information from the event, and what barriers they might have encountered. Other researchers looked for people who had already had COVID-19, to possibly study their mental health challenges and other after-effects of the pandemic.

According to Marquita Taylor, president of the Santa Fe Area Council, there's power in numbers. "We can have

that if we talk with each other and stand together. It's hard work but it's also an honor to serve these strong neighborhoods with great histories. In time of need, let's come together."

Though providing vaccines and other health care services and advice was the focus of the event, several booths provided entertainment and refreshment. From a hotdog stand and a photo booth, to DJs broadcasting live and a backpack giveaway contest for children, there was something for everyone.

"This is the biggest event we've been able to have since COVID," said Dennis Robinson, the board president for the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council. "It's frustrating and sad to have an effective vaccine and not have more people take advantage of it."

**"I've been meaning to get vaccinated and this was the perfect opportunity."**  
— Nicolas Alvarez, event participant





## Medicaid Insurance Available for More Adults — Find Out If You Qualify

**M**ark is one of many who are now eligible to apply for **MO HealthNet Medicaid** insurance. Everyone deserves access to quality healthcare and resources that enable them to get the medical attention they need. In August of 2020 the ballot issue for Medicaid Expansion that increased the income eligible amount of adults was approved by voters. This means that approximately 200,000+ more adults could be eligible for coverage.

### Moving health equity forward

Never forget the “Power of YOUR Vote.” It’s not a secret that there is strength in numbers. By uniting our efforts to advocate for more healthcare access that helps the disadvantaged, we can influence public officials to act in our best interest.

**To find out if you qualify for Medicaid insurance and to locate enrollment assisters in the Kansas City metro area, visit [CoverMissouri.org/help](https://CoverMissouri.org/help) or CALL 1-800-466-3213.**

“I’ve been a blue-collar worker all my life. Plus, my income has suffered since the pandemic of 2020. I understand I’m eligible now for Medicaid insurance under this expansion. I have some serious health issues. This is coming at a great time because I need surgery on both of my shoulders and right knee. I’m not good at filling out applications like this. I’m so thankful there are places like Samuel Rodgers with staff to help people like me get through the Medicaid application process. Now I don’t have to worry about my health as much.”

—Mark D., Medicaid Applicant,  
Samuel Rodgers Health Center





# THE RULES HAVE CHANGED.

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Missouri Medicaid now covers more people. Today, more adults can get **low-cost or free** health insurance through Missouri Medicaid.

**Even if you have tried to get Medicaid before and couldn't, check again today.**

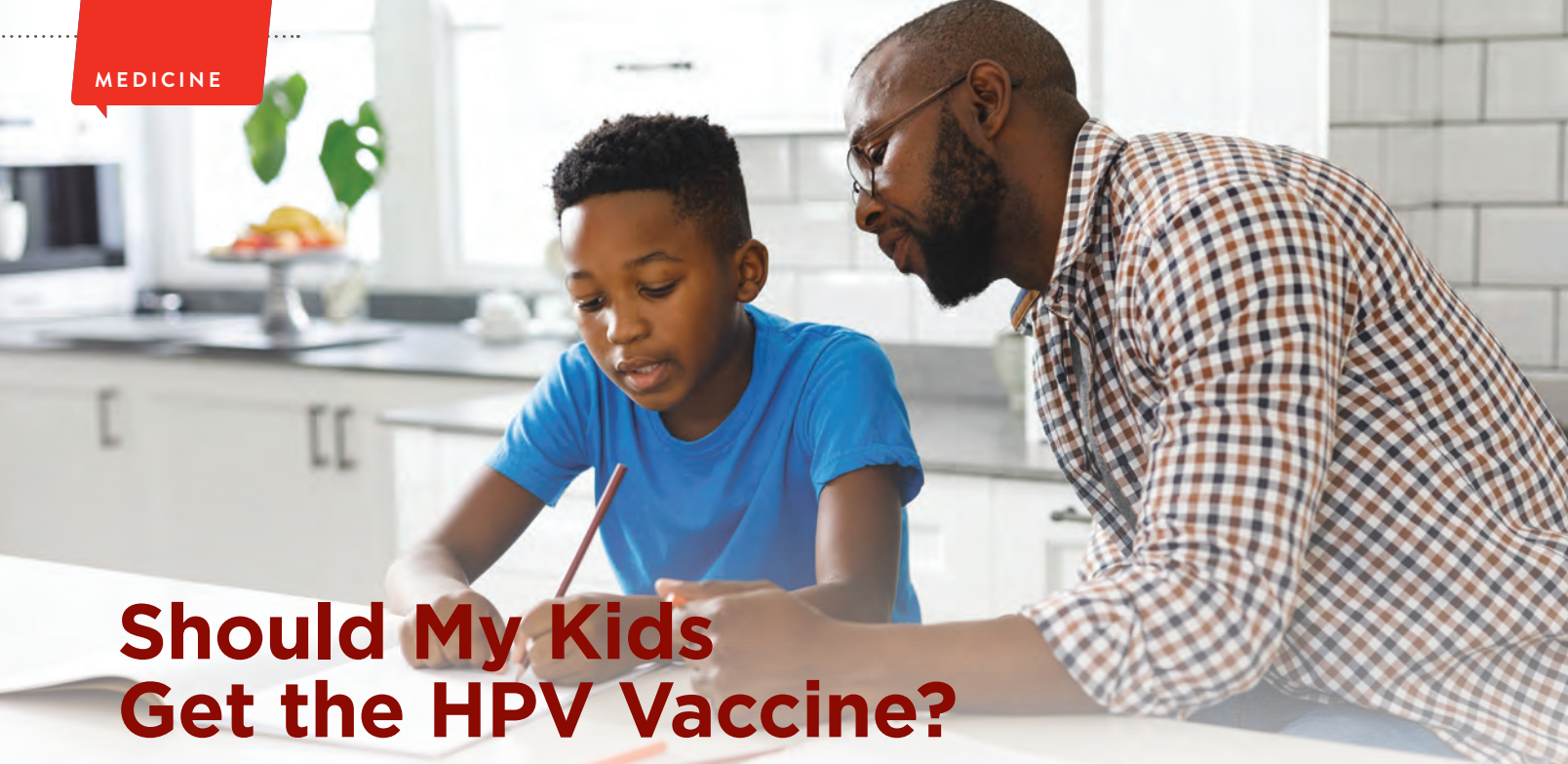
With health insurance through MO HealthNet, you can get the care you need when you need it. MO HealthNet covers doctor visits, yearly checkups, prescription medicines, and more.

Cover Missouri assisters are ready to help determine if you qualify for Medicaid under the new rules, and understand your health insurance options.

**Visit [CoverMissouri.org/help](https://CoverMissouri.org/help) or call 1-800-466-3213** to set up a free, virtual, or in-person appointment with a trained assister.



**Health Forward**  
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# Should My Kids Get the HPV Vaccine?

**H**uman papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). HPV is responsible for causing certain types of cancers and genital warts. The CDC recommends vaccination for pre-teens to protect them from HPV before they ever come in contact with the virus.

## At what age should children receive the HPV vaccine?

The CDC recommends the HPV vaccine for girls and boys aged 11-12. It should be given along with their routine Tdap and meningitis vaccines. Children as young as 9 years old may also receive the vaccine.

## Are the HPV vaccines effective?

Yes, the HPV vaccines are very safe and effective. In fact, infections with HPV that cause HPV-related cancers and genital warts are 88 percent lower in teen girls since the vaccine was first used 15 years ago.

## Am I giving my child an unnecessary shot by getting the HPV vaccine?

The key thing to remember is that HPV is common, and it can cause harmful diseases that can be prevented, such as cervical cancer. This is especially important in communities of color, since HPV-associated cervical cancer rates are higher in Black and Hispanic women.

## I thought only women had HPV-related cancers. Why should I vaccinate my son?

Boys are at risk of HPV-related illnesses too, so they should get the HPV vaccine. According to a report at the 2021 American Society of Clinical Oncology meeting, HPV led to five times more head and neck cancers in men than in women.



**By Tenille L. Lawson**  
PharmD, BCPS  
Medical Writer

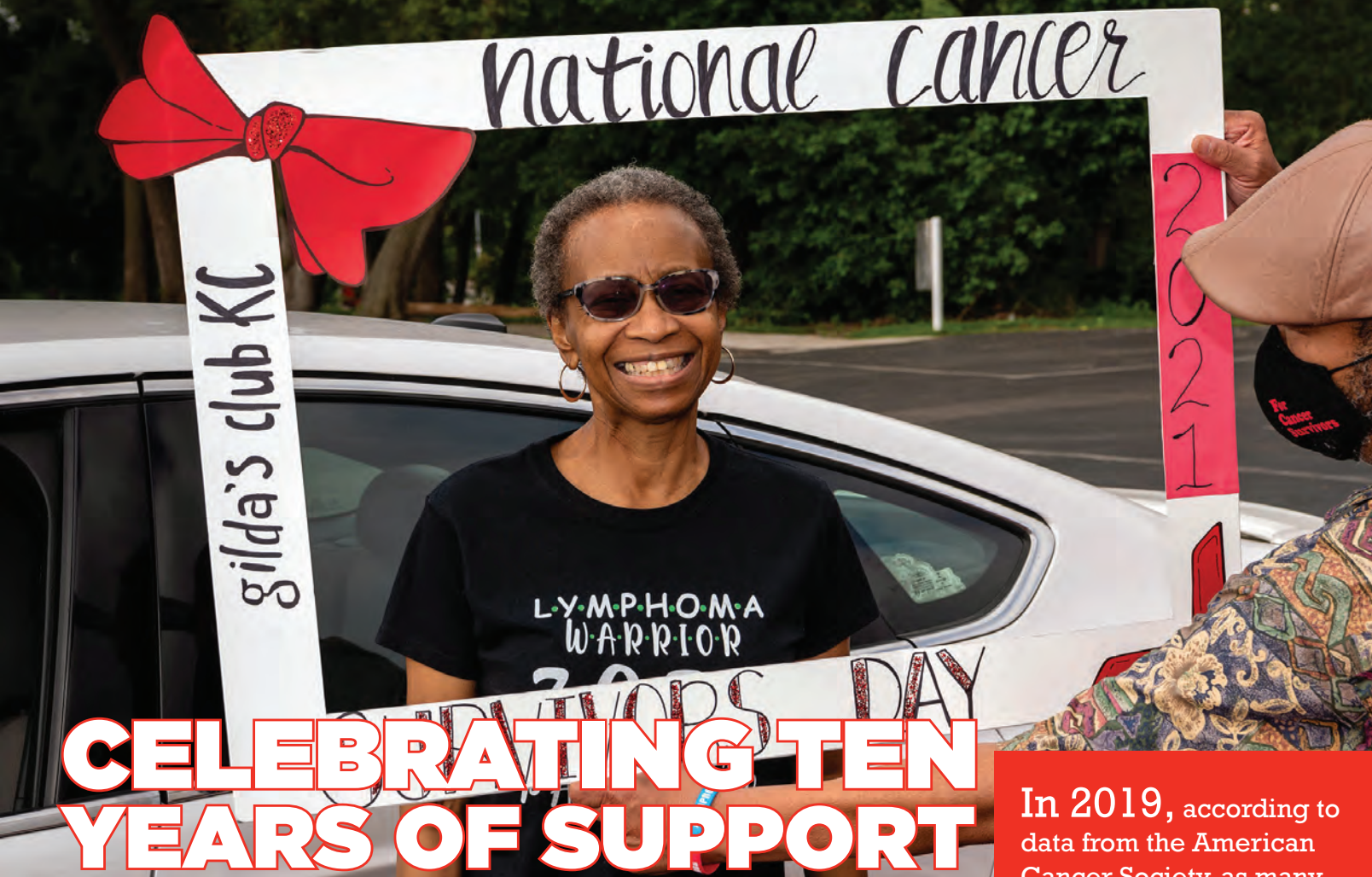
## What are the side effects of the HPV vaccine?

Side effects are generally mild. They include pain or swelling where the shot was given, dizziness and headache. Fainting has occurred and is more common in teens than it is in adults, similar to the effects of other vaccines. Your child may be asked to lie down for 15 minutes after the shot. The HPV vaccine is not recommended for children who have a yeast allergy.

***This information is provided for educational purpose only. ALWAYS consult with your child's medical provider to determine if the HPV vaccine is right for your child.***

For more information, visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) website and search for Human Papillomavirus information for parents. •





# CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Research shows that psychosocial programs of education and support for cancer patients contribute to the recovery of people living with cancer. Gilda's Club Kansas City has a proud history of helping people decrease distress, reduce healthcare utilization, increase immunity and experience better health outcomes.

Gilda's Club Kansas City is the only program in the metro area solely focused on meeting the educational and support needs of people impacted by cancer.

## PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Educational workshops and materials such as the Frankly Speaking About Cancer series
- Healthy lifestyle classes such as nutrition, exercise and expressive arts
- Short-term individual counseling and support groups
- Resource and referral assistance using Open to Options™ (treatment decision model) and CancerSupportSource® (distress screening tool)

Every program offered by Gilda's Club is supervised by a licensed mental health professional. Services are free of charge for women and men with any type of cancer, from any healthcare system.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Gilda's Club KC relies on the generous donations of individuals and businesses. For more information visit: [www.gildasclubkc.org](http://www.gildasclubkc.org) or contact Executive Director, Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley at 816.531.5444.

In 2019, according to data from the American Cancer Society, as many as 88,000 people in the greater Kansas City metro area were living with or had survived cancer.

— Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley,  
Executive Director,  
Gilda's Club Kansas City



SO THAT NO ONE FACES  
CANCER ALONE.®







# LEVELING THE PLAY

KANSAS CITY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT MAKES SOCIAL EQUITY A PRIORITY.

“Creating a more equitable parks system is the most important and significant work we can be doing at this moment. All of our residents deserve parks they can be proud of no matter where they live.”

— Roosevelt Lyons, KC Parks Interim Director

## Urban Community Parks Get Facelift

A new KC Parks system called The Quality of Life Investment District (QLID) is tasked with improving the way they maintain low-income neighborhood parks. New KC Parks leadership acknowledges that past practices and policies may have intentionally or unintentionally contributed to neglect of parks located in these neighborhoods.

*“I am very happy they are doing this, I think it will really improve the neighborhood...”*

— Virginia Flowers, Vineyard Neighborhood Association

Upgrading and beautifying these parks has become a top priority to combat past maintenance inequity. Families in these neighborhoods can take pride in safe and well

maintained parks. There are a total of 38 parks (out of 221) within the QLID district.

QLID will manage all KC Parks located within the five zip codes identified as having the lowest life expectancy. In 2012 the KCMO Health Department determined that residents who live in zip codes 64126, 64127, 64128, 64129, 64130 and 64132 have a life expectancy of 12-15 years less than those who live in other zip codes throughout the city.

The QLID will be a one-stop shop that includes forestry, park maintenance, building maintenance and landscape staff who will meticulously tackle all park needs.

## Park Improvements Make a Difference

Major improvements to VINEYARD PARK located at East 40th Terrace and Vineyard Drive included:

- Removing truckloads of trash and litter
- Trading out picnic tables and grills at the shelter
- Placing new mulch and trimming back all the brush

Virginia Flowers, with the Vineyard Neighborhood Association, shared, “I am very happy they are doing this,





# ING FIELD... LITERALLY!



I think it will really improve the neighborhood because we will feel safe here and it will really do wonders for our neighborhood.”

KC Parks also has plans to replace 10 playgrounds across the city within the year. Four of the playgrounds in the QLID District are on the east side of Troost Avenue.

The ultimate goal is to bring all 221 parks within the system to a level of excellence where everyone will feel safe and proud of the parks in their neighborhood.

## Major Partnership Sparks Excitement

A major partnership with the Mahomes Foundation (founded by KC Chief, Patrick Mahomes) donated \$1 million towards a park — 15 and the Mahomies Playground, Martin Luther King, Jr., Square Park. KC Parks also received support of \$1 million from the Kauffman Foundation to install educational signage along Brush Creek to highlight Kansas City's civil rights journey. A donation of \$467,000 from the Sunderland Foundation will be used to improve the parking lot.



## ROOSEVELT LYONS

Roosevelt Lyons is currently KC Parks Interim Director. Prior to that appointment in July, he was the first African American to serve as Deputy Director for KC Parks. Lyons' professional background includes stints in former Mayor Sly James' office, political organizing, youth programming, and personal training. He joined KC Parks in 2014 as a manager of recreation and was promoted to community services division manager in 2016. He has served as the Deputy Director of Operations since January of 2019 and advocated to provide virtual learning sites to many in KCMO during the pandemic.

For more information about the city's parks and community recreation centers' programs and services visit [kcparks.org](https://kcparks.org)

# YES. YOU. CAN.



## Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation in Communities of Color

**M**any people with chronic illnesses are surprised to learn they are eligible to register as an organ and tissue donor. In fact, everyone is a potential donor, regardless of their age, race or health status. Even someone with a serious illness can sometimes donate their organs or tissues. Each donor will be evaluated on an individual, case-by-case basis, and the medical team will assess the potential donor's overall physical health, medical history and social background, as well as the

donor's general health at the time of death.

Organs are not matched by race or ethnicity. People do have a better chance of receiving an organ transplant if there are larger numbers of donors from their racial and ethnic background, since compatible blood and tissue types are more likely to be found among members of the same ethnicity. Therefore, it is especially important for people from communities of color to register as organ, eye and tissue donors.

### 2020 NATIONAL DONATION STATISTICS\* FOR BLACK PEOPLE

**13%** of the population was Black.

**35%** of all patients receiving dialysis for kidney failure were Black.

**32%** of those waiting for a lifesaving kidney transplant were Black.

### 2020 NATIONAL DONATION STATISTICS FOR HISPANIC PEOPLE

**20%** of patients awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant were Hispanic.

**17%** of all those who received transplants were Hispanic.

**21%** of those waiting for a lifesaving kidney transplant were Hispanic.

### 2020 NATIONAL DONATION STATISTICS FOR ASIAN PEOPLE

**9%** of patients awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant were Asian.

**6%** of all those who received transplants were Asian.

**9%** of those waiting for a lifesaving kidney transplant were Asian.

Midwest Transplant Network is honored to share donor and recipient stories that highlight the diversity and beauty of the gift of life through organ, eye and tissue donation. We invite you to follow us on social media to learn more about donation and read stories of our donor heroes and transplant recipients. It truly takes us all working together to help save more lives and to give hope to those awaiting a lifesaving or life-enhancing transplant.

**Join the organ, eye and tissue donor registry today at [ShareLifeMidwest.com](https://ShareLifeMidwest.com).**

**\* Source for all referenced statistics: [aopo.org](https://aopo.org); data from Feb. 10, 2021**



# Together,

we save more lives



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# What is Complementary and Alternative Medicine?

**C**omplementary and alternative medicine are medicines and health practices that are not normally used in standard medical practices. Complementary medicine is used in addition to standard treatments, and alternative medicine is used instead of standard treatments.

If you have been diagnosed with cancer, talk with your healthcare providers **BEFORE** using any complementary health approach. It's important for your medical providers to know about everything you're doing to manage your health to ensure that all aspects of your care work well

- Share information you have from CAM sources to help communicate your interests with your doctors.

## During your visit:

- It may be helpful to acknowledge your commitment to conventional or standard treatments if you think your healthcare providers are concerned about your use of complementary therapies.
- Inform your healthcare providers of any additional symptoms you may be experiencing as a result of your treatment, such as cancer-related fatigue.



It's not uncommon for people with cancer or other diseases to search for alternative ways and methods to help with their condition. Complementary and alternative medicine are two of them.

together. Before each visit, think about what you would like to discuss. Here are a few suggestions.

## Preparing for your visit:

- Prepare a list of questions before each visit regarding your interests in CAM therapies.
- Sometimes it may be up to you to "start the conversation." Some easy ways to bring up CAM use with your healthcare providers would be to say, "I'm looking for your thoughts on how I can include complementary and alternative therapies in my treatment plan" or "I've been thinking about acupuncture, starting a yoga routine and taking herbal supplements."

- Discuss the CAM therapies you are using.
- Ask to be directed to additional CAM therapies or providers.

## After your visit:

Remember, obtaining a second opinion is always an option. Second opinions can help strengthen your relationship with your current doctor, clarify diagnoses, provide different options for treatment, and may even lead you to a doctor who is better suited to address your needs. Source: National Cancer Institute (NCI) [cam.cancer.gov](http://cam.cancer.gov)  
NOTE: *Our Health Matters* does not endorse or make any claims about the effectiveness of complementary and alternative therapies. This information is provided for educational purposes only.



# — FIGHTING FOR — JOBS AND FREEDOM

NO JUSTICE  
NO PEACE

In court with tenant on left, Attorney Gina Chiala, middle and and Intern, Kevin Jean Paul.



Naming an organization Heartland Center for Jobs and Freedom (HCJF) was not an afterthought. The words, heart, land, center, jobs and freedom resonated and had a deeper meaning for executive director and staff attorney, Gina Chiala. HCJF opened its doors in 2017 with the mission to change the landscape of social injustice towards disadvantaged individuals and families. HCJF declared all-out war against unfair wages and working conditions, substandard housing, sexual harassment, race discrimination and exploitation by predatory businesses. It's working. HCJF is the only organization in Kansas City that brings together legal advocacy and grassroots movements to create change.

## THE SOLUTION

HCJF represents hundreds of tenants being sued by their landlords, and they stop evictions in nearly every case. Their target audience is low-wage workers making less than \$15 an hour or less than a living wage. These include fast-food workers, CNAs, custodial workers, warehouse workers, Uber drivers, retail workers and workers in manufacturing.

Workers are informed of their legal rights and how to protect them. For example, if a tenant is living in unhealthy housing conditions, HCJF walks them through the process of documenting the conditions, reporting them and seeking change.

The key to HCJF's success is its strong connection to their principles — a willingness to take risks and pioneer new programs.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

The work of Heartland Center for Jobs and Freedom is outmatched by the demand from hundreds of people lacking legal representation. They also need funding to sustain staff. For more information, visit [jobsandfreedom.org](http://jobsandfreedom.org).



**TO LEARN MORE, CALL 816-278-1092  
EMAIL [INFO@JOBSANDFREEDOM.ORG](mailto:INFO@JOBSANDFREEDOM.ORG)**

# RACE AND ETHNICITY AS CANCER RISK FACTORS

According to the American Cancer Society, the incidence of cancer (those who are diagnosed with the disease) in the United States is highest in African Americans followed by Caucasians, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans. Deaths (those who die from the disease) are highest in African Americans followed by Caucasians, Native Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans.

More importantly, eliminating health disparities for minorities starts with awareness. The chart below includes recent data from the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society on the three most common types of cancer: lung, prostate and breast.

	<b>LUNG CANCER MEN AND WOMEN</b>	<b>PROSTATE CANCER MEN</b>	<b>BREAST CANCER WOMEN</b>
<b>Highest Incidence Rate</b>	<b>African-American males</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>
<b>Lowest Incidence Rate</b>	<b>Hispanic females</b>	<b>American Indian/Natives</b>	<b>Korean American</b>
<b>Highest Death Rate</b>	<b>African-American males</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>African American</b>
<b>Lowest Death Rate</b>	<b>Hispanic females</b>	<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	<b>Chinese American</b>

Research indicates that there are many factors, including ethnicity, that may contribute to the differences in survival rates for some people with cancer.

## Some factors identified:

- Lifestyle behaviors including diet, physical exercise, sun exposure, smoking, alcohol use and sexual practice behaviors
- Socioeconomic factors including education and income level, access to health insurance and routine medical screening and services
- Genetic factors involving inherited genes and a family history of certain diseases
- Cultural factors involving practices, beliefs and in some instances, mistrust of the healthcare system, which may prevent some from seeking preventive screening services
- Age, which supports the concept that cancer is a disease largely associated with aging; so, the longer one lives, the greater that person's risk for developing the disease

There are more than 200 types of cancer, and treatment for one type might not work for another. Some cancers can be prevented or detected at their earliest and most curable stage. Prevention and early detection is the key.

**Source:** [National Cancer Institute](#)





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## WHAT'S NEXT?

- DECEMBER 2021 -

# Understanding the Impact of Stress on Physical and Mental Health

**Some stress is normal and manageable. However, when stress becomes overwhelming and prolonged, the risks for developing a mental health disorder increase. When left untreated, stress contributes to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and more. Long-term stress may also increase the risk of uncontrolled anxiety, depression, substance use disorders and sleep problems.**

**We help you recognize when it may be time to seek medical intervention and share resources to guide you towards a healthier mind, body and spirit.**

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# MAKE PLANS TO GET VACCINATED TODAY!

## VISIT OUR WALK-IN CLINICS:

### TRUMAN MEDICAL CENTER - UNIVERSITY HEALTH

2211 Charlotte St., Kansas City, MO 64108

7 am - 3 pm; Mon - Fri

### CLEAVER FAMILY YMCA

7000 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64131

9 am - 3 pm; Tues and Wed

3 pm - 7:30 pm; Thurs

9 am - 1 pm; 4th Saturday of each month

### Stop by our Eastside Pop-up Vaccination Clinic Events!

For dates and times, visit [www.healthykceastside.org](http://www.healthykceastside.org).



For more information,  
call 816-404-CARE (2273)

Relay Missouri: 800-735-2966 (TTY)

SOM 21085663

**FOR FUTURE DATES AND TIMES OF  
VACCINATION EVENTS VISIT  
[WWW.HEALTHYKCEASTSIDE.ORG](http://WWW.HEALTHYKCEASTSIDE.ORG)**



## HELP SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

When you wear a mask, you protect others as well as yourself.

Masks work best when everyone wears one.

A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially when indoors around people who don't live in your household.

**FOR THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION  
ON MASK GUIDELINES, VISIT THE KCMO  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE AT [KCMO.GOV](http://KCMO.GOV)**