



Cancer Support Services wishes to thank the contributors to this edition: L to R: Dr. Stephanie Wellington, MD, CPC., Dr. Derek B. Thorpe, Rev. Haynesley Griffith, MSC., LMFT, Ms. D'Borah Blenman and Ms. Alexia C. Edwards, MS, RDN.



CANCER SUPPORT SERVICES

# NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 | February 2020



## Upcoming Events

**March 21** - Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Screening, 10am -1pm at Cancer Support Services, Dayrells Road, Christ Church, only \$50.

Future dates for PSA Screening are as follows:

- May 9
- July 18
- September 5
- November 7.

**April** - Fundraising Tea Party, follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates.

**June 27** - 9th Annual Conference at the Accra Beach Hotel & Spa, the theme this year is 'Living By All Means Necessary - Weighing All Options'.

For more information on any of our events or for conference registration and fees call us at 228-7081.

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*"In the midst of life's challenges, blessings are revealed. Thank you Cancer Support Services of Barbados for the resources, support, and hope."*

S.W.

## The Patient at the Core of Care

Samuel Deane

A chance meeting with an old primary school friend caused me to reflect on the Cancer Support Services' 8th Annual Conference on July 6, 2019. The theme 'Quitting is Not in Sight, I'm Still Fit to Fight!' suggested to me that while we put a lot of emphasis on the professional context of the case - the medical diagnosis and the physiological changes that may be occurring in the body, - that often, the patient's emotional wellbeing may be left to chance. My reflection was triggered when he said: "I feel kind of numb, surreal, like this is happening to someone else and I am an

onlooker. I can't believe that I have cancer. But, I believe I have a fighting chance."

I felt fearful for my friend as I pondered how would I have handled that diagnosis if it was me? My notes provided a guide for dealing with a complex emotional issue. A critical point made by Pastor Paul Leacock was that there was a person behind the diagnosis. That meant that in addition to a physical body, a human being is also made up of emotions, thoughts, beliefs, experiences and relationships (a person may be a father or mother, a sister or a brother, a son or a daughter, or maybe a conscientious worker or an employer, or maybe even

an avid exercise participant). It is understood that these factors - beliefs, thoughts, relationships and practices - shape the individual thus contributing to how he or she would respond to the diagnosis and ultimately to the treatment regimen, however due consideration should be given by professionals at the time the diagnosis is given so that the appropriate support system could be activated immediately.

My take-away point was that a holistic approach is best for the patient. Holistic means the core of professionals including nurse, nutritionist, psychologist and spiritual advisor providing support as the patient's needs require. Thankfully, Cancer

Support Services has been filling this healthcare niche, providing counseling for patients and families who require emotional support, palliative care for patients at home and support for those in hospital, and home health aides when required.

As Cancer Support Services enters the third decade of the 21st Century, I hope we can build the organization into one which continues to be responsive to the needs of its many stakeholders, catering to the physical, emotional and psychosocial care of all patients and their families, and responsive to the needs of all professionals in the delivery of care to persons affected by cancer.



## Healing God's Style

Rev. Haynesley Griffith,  
MSC., LMFT.

"Haynesley, I am setting up an appointment for you to see a neurologist urgently." Those were the chilling words coming from the mouth of my doctor during the month of November 2010. My doctor was unaware I was out of the island.

To receive that news hundreds of miles away from home could be nerve-racking. In a flash, a million thoughts began to run through my mind. Cancer, prolonged sickness, chemotherapy, travel restrictions, and death were some negatives that intruded and initially stayed around in my head. Since I had no major illness during my then 57 years on planet earth, I did not know what to expect. It was not long, however, that my neurologist informed me that there was a cancerous tumor present in my prostate. They informed me that within a few months my PSA (a protein produced by the prostate) moved from what my doctor said was a relatively normal 4.02 reading to a reading of 9.7. As I understand it, the male who reaches his 40s

and fifties, his PSA annual maximum rise of 0.73 is normal. Mine had more than doubled within four months.

Prior to the discovery of cancerous growth, I had no physical symptoms that showed there was a problem. No bladder problem, pain in the pelvic area, blood in urine, back pain, hip pain, loss of weight, a fatigue problem or swelling of the prostate.

I never experimented with my health and therefore got my PSA checked regularly from my early 40s and observed normal levels. When they jumped abnormally, I asked God to heal me miraculously without my having to go the route of surgery. God did not choose my preferred method, but told me I had to have the tumor surgically removed. God had something bigger in mind, because as I told Him that if He could make the massive universe out of nothing, cancerous growth in a small area of my body was absolutely nothing for Him to remove. I had committed my life to God at age 16 and He reserved the right to do whatever He desired. I had no worries. For me, if death came it meant I had served my generation by the will of

God and He wanted me to be with Him.

I also told God, however, that this is not a time to lose a prophetic voice in my Nation, the Caribbean or the world and that the rubbish that is taking place within the religious, social, moral and political environment must not go on without His intervention. I reminded Him, He had called me when I was full of rebellion, anger, and self to serve Him when I could represent Him within the church and across the world.

On June 01, 2011, I went to surgery and my neurologist told me all went well surgically during the two and half hour operation and that those nerves that make a man a man he also spared so I could rise again.

I want to thank Dolores, my wife who, before my surgery, had lost her mother. She took excellent care of me and did it admirably, lovingly and unselfishly. During my recovery, I chose not to tell her some of my very painful experiences. I bore them alone.

I returned to my doctor on August 08, 2011, about 10 weeks after my medical procedure. My early morning devotion to which

God led me, came from HAGGAI: 2: and highlighted verses 9 which He said: "the glory of this latter house (He told me that meant my body) shall be greater than the former." I am now living proof of that declaration.

The doctor looked at me that morning and asked me how I was doing. I told him very well. He then informed me that my PSA report and the pathologist report, were back and both gave me a clean bill of health. He looked at me and said that my PSA had moved from 9.7 to 0.0 and that there was no need for any chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

He also told me from his examination that I was healing ahead of schedule. Today, 9 years and 7 months later, my PSA is still at zero and I am in the pink of health.

I am eternally grateful for the many healthcare professionals, family, friends, and members of the church community for their love and care. I, however, reserve the highest praise to my loving Heavenly Father God who has given me an extension of life to add value to the lives of others.

*Thanks! Is not enough to express to your organization. On behalf of our family in St. Vincent we say thank you for your support that you have been giving to our dear relative MC, we are forever grateful for the kind touch you've given him over the months when hospitalized on Ward C12, QEH.*

*We know the work wasn't part of your normal responsibilities, but your assistance was invaluable in helping our family in our hardest time. Your expertise and enthusiasm were both appreciated during a time which was stressful for us.*

*M is now home with loved ones that he longed to see after so many years abroad and is very happy with the warm welcome that he received upon arrival and is continuing to get better.*

*We sincerely appreciate your efforts and we say thank you once again for meeting our needs and his in such short time. We will forever be grateful and we wish God's continuous blessings to the management and staff of Cancer Support Services.*

*J.C. (St. Vincent)*

## Supplements for Pressure Sores

Alexia C. Edwards, MS, RDN

Pressure sores (also known as pressure injuries or bedsores) are a result of prolonged pressure to the skin resulting in skin breakdown. When the skin is breaking down, it's important to supply the body with adequate nutrition for the wounds to heal. Research has shown there are key nutrients that play a part in wound healing of pressure sores. Firstly, protein is extremely important for wound healing. When we eat protein, it is digested and broken down into amino acids. Amino acids such as arginine, glutamine as well as collagen protein are essential in order to support blood flow and increase collagen production to aid in wound healing. Secondly, vitamins such as vitamins C, E & B12 are extremely important to the wound healing process. Together these vitamins aid in collagen & connective tissue production and getting enough of these vitamins mitigates delays in wound healing. Thirdly, minerals such as zinc are essential for the synthesis of DNA & protein.

Juven serves as the best wound healing supplement by supplying you with all the minerals, vitamins and amino acids that are needed for wound healing. Juven contains vitamins C, E, B12; amino acids glutamine, arginine; collagen protein and minerals like zinc and calcium. Available as unflavoured, orange or fruit punch, it's recommended you take 2 packets each day. Mix each packet with water, because fluids are also vital for wound healing.

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## Coping with a Cancer Diagnosis

Learning that you have cancer is a difficult experience. After your cancer diagnosis, you may feel anxious, afraid, depressed or overwhelmed and wonder how you can cope in the days ahead.

Here are a few tips that can help patients to adjust.

1. Finding a source of spiritual support. Surround yourself with positive people and meditate on the scriptures daily. A person's faith or spirituality provides a means for coping with illness and reaching a deeper kind of inner healing. It also provides comfort for the fears and pain that illness brings and a sense of direction.
2. Talk to other people with cancer. Sometimes it will feel as if people who have not experienced a cancer diagnosis cannot fully understand how you are feeling. It may help to talk to people who have been in your situation. Other cancer survivors can share their experiences and give you insight into what you can expect during treatment.

3. Consider how the diagnosis will affect your finances. Many unexpected financial burdens can arise as a result of a cancer diagnosis. Your treatment may require time away from work or an extended time away from home. Consider the additional costs of medications, medical devices and traveling for treatment. The questions to ask include but are not limited to: Will my insurance pay for treatment and the cost of medications? How much will my out-of-pocket costs be? and If insurance won't pay for my treatment, are there assistance programs that can help?
4. Try to maintain your normal lifestyle. Maintain your normal lifestyle, but be open to modifying it as necessary. Take one day at a time. It's easy to overlook this simple strategy during stressful times. When the future is uncertain, organizing and planning may suddenly seem overwhelming.

J.C.

## On the Cusp of Life and Death

*Dr. Stephanie Wellington,  
MD, CPC.*

As a neonatologist and a life coach I spent my career delivering medical care to preterm and sick term newborns while supporting their parents as they live on the cusp of life and death. At times the conversation would shift from cure to care. I wasn't fully prepared for the day when this conversation would hit so close to home. When it came to my uncle's illness I danced between my role as niece and my knowledge as a doctor. I knew I couldn't do it alone.

I entered my uncle's journey with cancer 16 months ago. During that visit in Barbados I vividly remember him questioning why I wanted to explore treatment options. My reply was, "If you had diabetes or another chronic illness you'd have a care plan so let's think of cancer

in the same way".

It was not about finding a cure. The goals of care were to decrease his pain and optimize his quality of life. Initially his body responded to the medications. But that was short lived.

At that time I was in New York. We talked about it on the phone and I promised to see him through to the end. I'd make two more trips to Barbados to support him.

My emotions were raw. Did I have the strength to do what I had done for so many other families in the hospital? This time was different. I was part of the family.

As a doctor I knew that no care was not an option. As a niece I was called to advocate for him. After a series of inquiries I learned of Cancer Support Services here in Barbados. I had a brief initial consultation on

my way to the airport before boarding the flight back to NY. I was able to fly back to NY knowing I had found the resources that would have a positive impact on the days ahead.

Cancer Support Services provided the guidance we needed to direct his care. They recommended fruits and vegetables to juice to optimize his nutrition. They recommended supplements and alternative pain remedies to improve the quality of each day. They educated us on the importance of allowing him to have a voice in his daily care as his body grew weaker. They had medical referrals when a doctor and medical interventions were warranted.

Through Cancer Support Services my uncle received the spiritual counseling to strengthen his faith as he watched the active, vibrant, youthful man he once was forever change. He lived 11

weeks after that day in the doctor's office when he was told nothing more could be medically done for him.

There was more to be done. There was hope. His doctor asked me what my expectations were. It was threefold: to optimize his nutritional status, to manage his pain, and to promote his spiritual well-being.

His journey, the family's journey is blessed with the support and resources from Cancer Support Services. Thank you for partnering with us. You took a very difficult time and made it easy to talk about. With your help and support I witness God's work and God's love. This is a faith walk.

Dr. Stephanie Wellington is a physician and life coach in New York with Barbadian heritage. She writes a blog on physician wellness at [www.NurturingMDs.com](http://www.NurturingMDs.com).

# 15 Ways to Live in Vitality Well into Your Nineties

*Dr. Derek B. Thorpe*

Recently I visited a friend; let's call him Mark, as he was unpacking a brand new flat screen TV. He ripped off the box, threw away the instruction manual and set it on a flimsy table on his patio. It got wet and was exposed to direct sunlight and wind gusts all day, causing it to fall occasionally. A fortnight later he texted me, saying he was upset that his brand new TV stopped working. Mark was never the sharpest tool in the shed but if he had read

the operation manual, he would likely still be enjoying his TV.

It is my proposition that 90% of us humans treat our bodies like Mark's TV because we are not curious about our individual instruction manuals for healthy living. To be sure, one manual does not fit every human model but the recommendations that follow can't be far off. We must become active stewards of our health.

The foundation supporting

these recommendations come from this doctor's philosophy that the body is perfectly capable of a robust self-defense from its immune system against bad bacteria and viruses. But one has to treat it correctly. It also comes from the philosophy that one must maintain and support the vascular integrity of all sized vessels, such that delivery of blood and oxygen is maximized to each of our cells. In other words; The Pursuit of Perfect Perfusion.

Disease begins at the cellular level when there is dysfunction of the tiny "power plants" all cells have (mitochondria). Too many cells get dysfunctional and the organ is affected. Too many organs get dysfunctional and our life span is shortened by chronic progressive disease. This doctor maintains that the root of the problem is chronic unrelenting inflammation. All efforts made to reverse or reduce chronic inflammation will pay healthy dividends.

## **Here is my human "instruction manual" listing 15 ways to live in vitality well into your 90's!**

### **Lifestyle Modifications:**

1. Don't start, and if you have, quit smoking yesterday.
2. Heavy alcohol consumption has no benefit. The sweet spot (depending on weight) is somewhere between 1-2 glasses over three days. (I recommend red wine because of the resveratrol, polyphenols and flavonoid content).
3. Intelligent exercise. Do what you can, but do something daily which takes you outside and makes you sweat and/or breathe deeply. Movement in the sunshine is essential. Riding, racquet sports or brisk beach walks are great. If there are painful joints find a pool and workout.
4. Don't pressure your doctor to prescribe unnecessary antibiotics as they are useless against viruses. The damage done to the beneficial gut bacteria is tremendous when treating a viral infection. It's ok to challenge him or her in asking which infection is being treated.
5. Seek out and give love and appreciation to family and friends. Those who live the longest in health have a network of social activity where they interact with loved ones daily. Immerse yourself in the currency of loving and caring and being loved and cared for.
6. Meditate. Pray and be conscious within your divinity.
7. Boost and stimulate your microvascular circulation with approved electromagnetic field exposure. A new device called, BEMER, achieves this. The smallest blood vessels are most susceptible to chronic inflammation thus decreasing oxygen and nutrient delivery.
8. Sleep is a vital restorative function especially for the brain. The metabolic brain waste is dealt with during sleep and accumulation of this waste between neurons leads to dementia. Get at least six hours, more is better.

### **Dietary Modifications:**

9. Eat a mostly plant based diet as free from pesticides as possible. Colourful leafy vegetables and most fruit are fantastic. Limit animal protein consumption.
10. Engage in deliberate calorie restriction. We as humans don't need to eat nearly as much as we do. Try to eat and snack in a definitive time window of about 5 hours.
11. Intermittent fasting is a healthy practice. Twice a week of perhaps 16-18 hours of fasting is one of the best gifts you can give your body. Putting your body under this stress is beneficial and releases growth hormone and stem cells when done properly.
12. Throw away highly processed, high sugary foods which encourage chronic inflammation such as; vegetable cooking oils, cereals, cakes, white bread, sodas etc.
13. Do not fear healthy fats (as in the ketogenic diet) and cholesterol. They have been wrongly identified as dietary culprits and this is not the case. Eggs are healthy along with extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil and real butter. Margarine has little nutritional value.
14. Add supplements to your diet. A list of my most favourite is here;
  - Resveratrol – anti-inflammatory
  - CoQ10 – heart and overall mitochondrial health
  - Vitamin D3/K2 – directs calcium from soft tissue to bone
  - Magnesium
  - Curcumin/Turmeric – anti-inflammatory
  - Boswelvia – anti-inflammatory
  - Omega3 fatty acid fish oils
15. Coffee and Green tea are helpful because of the high polyphenols and flavinol content.

Dr. Thorpe is a nuclear medicine and functional medicine physician with post graduate degrees from Cornell School of Medicine and the University of Florida. Contact: [mongo505@hotmail.com](mailto:mongo505@hotmail.com) | (246) 244-9555



I write to express my gratitude and sincere thanks for the timely help and support given to my wife Mrs. G, even though she is at a critical stage in her illness, we greatly appreciate the immense help and benevolence to her under such circumstances.

The loving care and humanitarian service received through the Cancer Support Services has been instrumental in alleviating some of the stress and burdens under which our family was placed.

The prompt service and listening ear extended to us

had not gone unnoticed and therefore, we express our heartfelt thanks and God's continued blessings on the organization.

Special thanks go to Ms. Jan Lynton and Mr. David Howard for their outstanding empathy and immense kindness to my family.

Again on behalf of my family and myself I say a heartfelt thank you and pray that God's grace be upon the entire organization.

K.G.

## Hunte, Squires & Reifer Families Make a Donation

The Hunte, Squires & Reifer Families chose to make a monetary donation to Cancer Support Services, in lieu of their Annual Christmas Gift Exchange.



Receiving the cheque from Ms. Hunte and Ms. Squires on behalf of Cancer Support Services is Ms. Jan Lynton.

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## Look Better Feel Better

Though Feelings are fleeting, we often allow them to govern our decisions and hence our lives. However, the good thing about fleeting feelings is, we can also control them.

Despite how we may feel, if we seek to maintain a discipline of caring for and beautifying ourselves, eventually our feelings will conform to how we look.

This becomes a reality, when we receive compliments on our appearance, there is a certain joy that is conveyed that affects our emotions.

*Written by Beauty Stylist D'borah Blenman*

## International Men's Day Initiative

In recognition of International Men's Day on November 19, 2019, CIBC First Caribbean International Bank hosted a PSA Screening Initiative for their male customers and staff at their Broad Street, Warrens and Sheraton Branches. The screenings were facilitated by Cancer Support Services and MediLab Services Inc.



*"On behalf of my family and I, we wish to express our deep appreciation to Cancer Support Services (CSS) for the assistance provided to us during my late father's illness. We are extremely grateful to the Executive and Volunteers of CSS for taking the time to be there for us, whether it was through a listening ear, the provision of advice, counselling or medical services or the loan of equipment. Without your help, we doubt that we would have been able to cope as well as we did.*

*Thank you once again to Jan, David, Pastor Leacock, the Conquering Men's Support Group and all the other Volunteers behind the scenes that we did not get a chance to interact with.*

*We wish you all a healthy and prosperous new year and keep up the good work."*

*R.G.*

### Our Mission

*Cancer Support Services is committed through a spirit of volunteerism to the care of persons with cancer and to bring comfort and support to the affected relatives and dependants.*



**CANCER SUPPORT SERVICES**

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