

Coping with Breast Cancer in Northwest Ohio

By Barb Manning, Guest Writer @cidesignservice

Breast cancer touches almost everyone's life. Having access to correct information and vital resources when you address the question of cancer in your life is essential. In America, only lung cancer accounts for more deaths among women. Unfortunately, breast cancer continues to be the number one cause of cancer in women, with over 230,000 new cases diagnosed annually. In Northwest Ohio, and Toledo, in particular, there are a number of resources to assist you, including the ProMedica Breast Care Center, Toledo Radiation Oncology, Susan G Komen Northwest Ohio and the YWCA's EncorePlus Program.



The ProMedica Breast Care Center within Toledo Hospital offers access to a full range of the latest clinical breast care diagnostic and treatment services in the community. The Center provides 3D mammography (tomosyntheses), dedicated breast MRI, digital mammography, breast ultrasound, image-guided real-time breast biopsy, and molecular breast imaging (MBI). Digital breast tomosyntheses provides a higher diagnostic accuracy than conventional mammography, especially for women with dense breast tissue. Using these state-of-the-art tools, ProMedica Breast Care Center staff can consult with a woman and her physician to ensure optimal care. Any woman receiving a mammogram in a ProMedica facility that has a questionable result will receive a referral to the Breast Care Center.

"Once a woman comes to ProMedica Breast Care, our goal is to get answers quickly," says, Dr. Robin Shermis, Medical Director. "We are the only breast imaging facility in the region that gives same day results for ALL studies, including breast MRI and MBI. Most of our biopsies are done on same day visits. Our doctors and technologists are specialists and we are even open on Saturdays."

At Toledo Radiation Oncology physicians can treat certain patients in the prone position. This utilizes a custom prone breast board which can significantly decrease the skin reaction from radiation and can decrease radiation dose to the heart and lungs. At some of our radiation centers, select patients may also be candidates for partial breast radiation therapy, which allows physicians to deliver radiation to a tumor bed using a balloon device. For the majority of women diagnosed with breast cancer, radiation therapy is a critical component of their treatment and cure. For a typical patient, this is often 6.5 weeks of daily treatment. Recent developments allows select patients to receive accelerated courses that can be no more than 3 weeks. We are very fortunate to have state of the art radiation therapy equipment readily available throughout Northwest Ohio.

"We understand that the diagnosis of cancer changes a woman's life." Dr Kara Hertzfeld of Toledo Radiation Oncology stated. "Our goal is to provide local women with compassionate, quality care to help make this challenging time a bit more bearable."

Once you receive an actual diagnosis of breast cancer, you can find support and community from Susan G. Komen Northwest Ohio. Founded in 1982, Susan G Komen is one of the world's largest fundraisers for cancer research (\$800 million) and cancer screening (\$1.6 billion). Over the past 21 years Komen Northwest Ohio raised \$11 million in local grants to support screening, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship.

Komen offers a wealth of resources to women and men dealing with the question of cancer --from transportation to breast exams to gift incentives for completing mammograms to annual reminders of upcoming tests. This year Komen Northwest Ohio's Race for the Cure plans to raise \$1,000,000 through its September 2015 event. These funds will provide health fairs, inform the public about clinical trials, and host support groups, such as the Newly Diagnosed Breast Cancer Survivor Support group in over 20 counties in Ohio. During a scary and tumultuous time, Komen can help make you stronger in the fight against cancer and its effects on your life.

The YWCA's EncorePlus Program offers breast cancer awareness, screenings, and outreach programs for the individuals lacking sufficient insurance in Northwest Ohio. The EncorePlus program offers one-to-one support after questionable screening results and women on Medicaid and Medicare can learn about their annual mammogram screening benefits. Access to language translation and appointment transportation services are available to help women and men coping with cancer diagnoses.

Every year, YWCA's EncorePlus host a free health fair and Pollyball event. Pollyball is a large beach volleyball event held every August at International Park in Toledo, Ohio. The Pollyball event honors Polly Hylant-Tracy, a young wife and mother who lost her fight with cancer in 1990. Over 20 teams compete in this fun family activity to raise funds for breast cancer detection and awareness programs, as well as research.

If the question of cancer enters your life, the four resources detailed above can provide valuable, if not life-saving assistance in the struggle to regain your health.

Web Sources

American Cancer Society, *Breast Cancer Facts & Figures*

(<http://www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/breast-cancer-facts-figures>)

PromMedica Breast Care Center (<https://www.promedica.org/womens-services/pages/breast-health/>)

Komen Northwest Ohio (<http://komennwohio.org>)

YWCA EncorePlus Program (<http://www.ywcanwo.org>)

Pollyball (www.Pollyball.com)