

MetroHealth CANCER CENTER NEWS

216-77-TREAT
(216-778-7328)



Varian TrueBeam: Advancing Technology for Improved Patient Outcomes

MetroHealth has made a \$5 million investment in advanced radiation technology that can target a broad range of cancer cells with high level precision and accuracy. Known as the Varian TrueBeam linear accelerator, the technology allows oncologists to deliver high-energy X-rays or electrons to the region of the patient's tumor while sparing healthy organs and tissues from radiation exposure.

The Varian TrueBeam radiotherapy system will provide patients the care they need when and where they need it — right here on MetroHealth's Main Campus in the Outpatient Pavilion Cancer Care Center. We are privileged to serve our patients in Northeast Ohio with this world-class treatment.

Cancer Center Offers New Programs Through a Collaborative Partnership

The MetroHealth Cancer Center is excited to announce our partnership with The Gathering Place, an organization that offers free programs and services to help individuals and families cope with the impact of cancer in their lives. In the coming months, staff from The Gathering Place will be on site at the Cancer Center twice a week to help answer questions about support services and programming.

At this time, many of the services will be done virtually, but their team is happy to navigate patients on how to enroll for their virtual activities or connect by phone. Also, our Cancer Center wig salon will now be called The Gathering Place Regina Brett Wig Salon at MetroHealth. Though the Cancer Center has temporarily closed the wig salon due to COVID-19, we hope to provide wigs to those in need in the upcoming months.

In the meantime, if you want to know more about The Gathering Place and their services, please contact Beth Bennett, Chief Program Officer, via email at bennett@touchedbycancer.org or at 216.455.1517. Visit touchedbycancer.org for more information and connect with The Gathering Place on Facebook and Instagram @touchedbycancercl.



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Improving Patient Care Through a Commitment to Oncology Research

Part of our mission at the MetroHealth Cancer Center is to be explorers of the frontiers in cancer treatment. We are committed to bringing the most advanced and comprehensive cancer therapies to our patients. I am delighted to welcome four new cancer researchers and clinician researcher to our team.

Chengfeng Yang, PhD, and **Zhishan Wang, PhD**, both from the University of Kentucky, **Xiaonan Han, PhD**, from the University of Cincinnati, and **William Tse, MD**, from the University of Louisville, will help bolster MetroHealth's Cancer Biology Program, as well as initiate a cancer cell therapy program. Their efforts will contribute to our knowledge in cancer biology and advance new approaches to cancer treatments.

Drs. Yang, Wang, Han and Tse are nationally and internationally known for their work in cancer research. Working together with the cancer researchers already here, their efforts will result in a better understanding of why triple-negative breast cancer are more prevalent in African American women,

how environmental toxins can cause normal cells to become cancer cells, and what biological signals will allow us to detect lung cancer at an earlier stage.

They will also study new applications of existing drugs and pursue the development new medications to treat cancer. Notably, Dr. Tse, MetroHealth's new Division Director of Hematology and Medical Oncology, has started his laboratory efforts at investigating CAR-T cell therapy in cancer. CAR-T therapy is a novel FDA-approved targeted therapy for some forms of blood cancer, including B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Dr. Tse's work will study whether it can be applied to other types of malignancies and whether it can be improved to achieve a more sustained cancer remission.

To ensure that new cancer knowledge will result in improved health in our community, our scientists are also collaborating with the Population Health Research Institute at MetroHealth and Case Western Reserve University to better understand how local social determinants of health (conditions in which people in our community

live, work and play) impact cancer care and health. Funds from the Edward G. Mansour, MD, endowment are used to support studies in implementation science to understand the best way to translate our research findings into improving patient health outcomes for our community.

These are just a few ways that our Cancer Center is leading the charge in discovering innovative ways to improve cancer care. If you wish to be part of our efforts to improve patient care through research, check with your doctor on how you can help.



CONTRIBUTOR
BENJAMIN LI, MD, FACS
Cancer Center Director

“We are committed to bringing the most advanced and comprehensive cancer therapies to our patients.”



MetroHealth Center for Cancer Research Brings Cutting-Edge Treatments to the Community

It's an exciting time for cancer research, with remarkable advances being made every day in the development of new treatments. But many patients do not have access to the latest cancer treatments because of where they live or their financial circumstances. MetroHealth is bringing the latest and most innovative cancer treatments to underserved communities in the Cleveland area with the formation of the new Center for Cancer Research.

"A lot of people can't access the most advanced cancer care because clinical trials are not being conducted in the community setting," said **William Tse, MD**, who joined our team last year as the division director of hematology/oncology. "However, because of MetroHealth's location, we have the capacity to make outstanding medical testing, screening and cancer treatment available to a large, diverse population and, in many cases, to patients who haven't had access in the past."

More patient diversity in clinical trials has been a goal in cancer research for decades because racial and ethnic minorities carry a heavier burden of cancer risk and incidence and may experience poorer clinical outcomes than whites, including higher morbidity and mortality rates. Increased enrollment of minority groups can help to combat these health disparities.

Recruitment of several nationally and internationally recognized oncology researchers

MetroHealth's clinical trials program also spans a range of cancers that minority populations, most notably African Americans, are at a higher risk of developing. These include studies of new approaches in:

- cervical cancer
- colorectal and gastric cancer
- head and neck cancer
- multiple myeloma
- non-small cell lung cancer
- pancreatic cancer
- prostate cancer
- renal cell carcinoma
- triple negative breast cancer

is crucial to the success of the Center for Cancer Research. **Bingcheng Wang, PhD**, director of basic sciences at the MetroHealth Research Institute, is assembling a new team of scientists with expertise in blood, breast and lung cancers, among other malignancies. The group is developing a better understanding of the biology of these cancers, which in turn drives treatment advances, including new medications and novel applications of existing therapies to test in clinical trials.

The research team, which is backed by millions of dollars in support and grants, will also focus on the social determinants of health and ending the racial, ethnic, social, and economic inequities that impact cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Underserved patients in the Cleveland area are impacted differently by cancer. For example, they have a higher chance of being diagnosed with aggressive forms of breast and prostate cancer, according to Dr. Wang. "Because of this, MetroHealth is uniquely positioned to contribute to the understanding of racial disparities in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer," he said.

To help improve underserved patients' access to treatment, administrators at MetroHealth's Clinical Trials Unit (CTU), including **Deborah Strater, BSN, RN, OCN**, manager of clinical research, and **Lisa Humbert, MSN, RN, CCRC**, assistant director, are working to bring the health system's high-quality, state-of-the-art research to Cleveland Heights Medical Center and Parma Medical Center.

"Thanks to these individuals at CTU, we can now directly enroll patients who receive care at these two centers into our clinical trials program," said Dr. Tse. The CTU offers a centralized infrastructure to support clinical research, in addition to ready access to research nurses, research study coordinators and regulatory support specialists. These factors make the implementation of clinical trials possible at both the Parma and Cleveland Heights locations, which largely serve diverse populations.

A large part of caring for cancer patients is striving for better outcomes in everyone, said Dr. Tse. "Our dedication to the discovery of new and more effective treatments for the underserved people in our community through clinical trials is integral to this mission."



CONTRIBUTOR
WILLIAM TSE, MD
Division Director,
Hematology/Oncology

CANCER CENTER UPDATES

BREAST/Amigas Program Community Breast Screening with the Mobile Unit

Free Screening Mammograms

Location: La Sagrada Familia Church
7719 Detroit Ave, Cleveland, 44102

Date: April 29, 2021

Time: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Patients must contact our BREAST/Amigas Program to schedule their mammogram appointment for the event.

Please contact Patricia Tousel at **216-778-8557** or ptousel@metrohealth.org.

3rd Annual Survivorship Symposium in partnership with The Gathering Place

This will be a free virtual event for cancer patients, survivors and their families. Registration is required.

Theme: Learn how to use art, music, mediation and exercise to cope with cancer during and after treatment.

Date: June 10th

Time: 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

For questions or to register, please contact Patricia Tousel at **216-778-8557** or ptousel@metrohealth.org.