

I CAN

NEWSLETTER

Fighting cancer through science, healthy living, and prevention

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It Takes a Team

This issue of Texas Oncology's I Can newsletter focuses on the many people who play vital roles on your cancer treatment team. Cancer care is complicated and different from other diseases, and often requires that patients receive care from a collaborative, diverse team of healthcare professionals. Learn more inside...

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Your Cancer Care Team

Cancer is a life-changing diagnosis, but no patient fights it alone. Texas Oncology patients have a cancer care team fighting alongside them.

“Every member of the cancer care team brings an important and different perspective to the fight against cancer.”

**– Kristi McIntyre, M.D., Medical Oncologist
Texas Oncology–Dallas Presbyterian Hospital**

Understanding the roles – not to mention names and faces – of your cancer care team is important. Every patient won't need all of the team members listed here, but this overview can help patients understand the many players that come together to deliver cancer treatment. Patients will interact directly with some team members, while others are behind-the-scenes. At Texas Oncology, everyone works in concert to deliver high-quality, personalized cancer care.

You – The Patient

As a patient, you are the most important member of the team. It is crucial to remember that you play a vital role and should take an active role in your treatment.



“Texas Oncology gave me hope after my diagnosis. Everyone at the practice makes me feel good – I see that not just with myself, but in how they treat every patient.”

**– Randy Miller, Patient
Texas Oncology–McAllen**

Medical Oncologist

For many patients, the medical oncologist is the leader of the cancer care team. Your medical oncologist will map out your cancer treatment and coordinate your care with other medical specialists, which may include surgeons or radiation oncologists. Ongoing communication is critical throughout the treatment process.



“As a physician, I rely heavily on the team approach and every member plays an integral role in taking care of the patient.”

**– Kristi McIntyre, M.D., Medical Oncologist
Texas Oncology—
Dallas Presbyterian Hospital**

Radiation Oncologist

Radiation oncologists use advanced treatment planning systems and radiation technology to deliver radiation to cancerous cells, making treatments quicker, safer, and more precise than ever. Physicians and staff work closely together to ensure continuity of care and a cohesive treatment approach.



“Everyone is an equal and integral part of the cancer care team. The practice staff is an extension of the physician and can reassure the patient and answer questions.”

**– Bernard Taylor, M.D.,
Radiation Oncologist
Texas Oncology–Longview**

Surgical Oncologist and/or Surgeon

Surgical oncologists use surgery to diagnose, stage, and treat cancer, coordinating with primary care physicians, specialists, and medical oncologists. In some cases, a surgeon who is not an oncologist may be on the team. A new, integrated approach specifically for breast cancer patients offers a cohesive treatment path by having the medical team evaluate the patient together and up front before collaboratively charting the course of treatment. Some surgeons may specialize in the types of cancer they treat.



“It takes a tremendous coordinated effort from the staff behind the scenes to make it happen.”

**– Martin Koonsman, M.D.,
Surgical Oncologist
Texas Surgical Specialists–
Methodist Dallas Cancer Center**

Radiation Therapist

Radiation therapists work with radiation oncologists to delivery radiation treatments. Once the treatment is prescribed by the physician, they coordinate with dosimetrists (physicists who plan each patient's radiation treatment) and with nurses who keep the team informed of the patient's progress.



“Cancer is not normally a happy thing, but as you are treating patients, you really get to know them and develop relationships. It is important to me to help patients and make a difference.”

**– Melissa Munn, Radiation Therapist
Texas Oncology–Fort Worth 8th Avenue**

Oncology Nurse

Nurses fill many roles, from a physician's primary nurse, to answering patient questions, to administering chemotherapy. Nurses care for each patient, anticipating needs, facilitating communication, and working with insurance companies.



“We are a team and it takes of all of us to care for the patient. As nurses, we hug, love, and advise patients.”

**– Valeri Williams, RN, OCN,
Primary Nurse
Texas Oncology–Amarillo**

Medical Technologist

Medical technologists conduct tests and run lab work on patients throughout their care. These tests provide insights for doctors in diagnosing cancer and managing ongoing treatment.



“Patients need the support of everyone. We listen and get to know the patients, and make sure that test results are delivered quickly.”

**– Pat Westbrook, MT (AMT),
Laboratory Services Supervisor
Texas Oncology–Baytown**

Pharmacist

Pharmacists dispense medication and provide education to patients with a focus on safety. They confirm drug dosages, ensure lab work is completed, review charts for potential drug interactions and to confirm recommended doses. Pharmacists may recommend supportive medications to help reduce treatment side effects or pain.

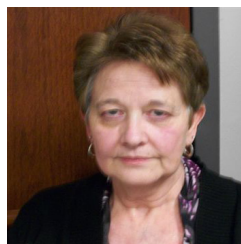


“It is truly about being a good team and doing what is best for the patient.”

**– Reba Williams, Pharmacist
Texas Oncology–Plano West**

Patient Service Representative

Patient service representatives are the business managers for your treatment experience. They schedule appointments and coordinate care, provide financial counseling, coordinate insurance payments, connect patients with outside resources and research additional resources as needed.



“The business side of the practice works hand in hand with the clinical team. We couldn't do one without the other.”

**– Edna Haile, Business Office Manager
Texas Oncology–Paris**

Clinical Research Coordinator

Clinical research coordinators serve as educators and navigators by assuring that each patient enrolling in a clinical trial has a full understanding of the study and lead patients through the often complex process that is involved in research under the guidance of a physician investigator.



“Research staff works closely with patients throughout their treatment to ensure that they understand all aspects of participating in the clinical trial and are constantly interacting with the patients.”

**– Kaelyn Kappeler,
Clinical Research Manager
Texas Oncology–Austin**

Patient Educator

Patient educators are cancer care guides, helping patients understand their cancer diagnosis and treatment plan, what to expect during treatment, answer questions about medications, provide advice on how to manage side effects, and other treatment details.



“Patients are more at ease when they understand what to expect and know that they have someone who will be a resource throughout treatment.”

**– America Cantu, RN, Patient Educator
Texas Oncology–McAllen**



Go [Your Name Here] Team!

There's no "I" in team. Or in cancer treatment.

The old saying sums up choosing your treatment team.

Notice that we said "team" – not just doctor. Fighting cancer requires an all-hands-on-deck approach from physicians, nurses, radiation therapists, caregivers, friends, and many others.

This team effort usually begins with choosing a medical oncologist, who blends the roles of coach and quarterback. When choosing a physician, consider the following:

- Find physicians with considerable experience in your type of cancer. You may need more than one doctor, but it is important to have a leader.
- Ask your friends and family for recommendations.
- Find out if your physician participates in your health insurance plan and determine if your plan requires a second opinion.
- Even if it's not required, seeking a second opinion can be very helpful in charting your treatment with certainty.
- Having good personal chemistry with your physician is critical to establishing a trusting relationship.

"Finding out that you have cancer is frightening. You may want to move quickly. But there's no overstating the importance of being thorough in your search for a cancer team," said Dr. Kristi McIntyre, medical oncologist.

You and your primary oncologist will work together to build your team. You are partners in your cancer treatment journey.

Specialized Care Just For You

As part of comprehensive cancer care, some patients may receive care from one of Texas Oncology's specialty practices. These practices offer patients seamless coordination of care between physicians.

Texas Breast Specialists is a practice dedicated to diagnosing and treating cancer and other diseases of the breast. For more information, visit www.TexasBreastSpecialists.com.

Texas Oncology Surgical Specialists focuses on the surgical management of cancer. For more information, visit www.TexasOncology.com.

Texas Urology Specialists provides comprehensive urologic care for both men and women, including urogenital cancers. For more information, visit www.TexasUrologySpecialists.com.

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For more information about cancer treatment and other topics, visit www.TexasOncology.com.

About Texas Oncology

As an independent oncology practice, Texas Oncology is comprised of more than 300 physicians and more than 100 sites of service throughout Texas and southeastern Oklahoma and is a pioneer in community-based cancer care. Patients are treated with today's most advanced, effective cancer technologies and treatments, and have the opportunity to take part in some of the most promising clinical trials in the nation for new drugs and treatments for a broad range of cancers, near the support of family and friends. Texas Breast Specialists and Texas Urology Specialists are a part of Texas Oncology.

Learn more at 1-888-864-ICAN (4226) or www.TexasOncology.com.

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