

# *your* JOURNEY

January-March 2024

**A publication of the Eastern  
Connecticut Cancer Institute**

A Cancer Survivors Newsletter



## **Meet Your Navigation Team**

Meet the team who provides free navigation services to help you with the many challenges you face and act as advocates for you and your family.

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## **How to Read Your Imaging Report**

Screening Mammograms are important to detect cancer early but the imaging reports are hard to understand. Let us help explain them!

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January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month; February is American Heart Month; March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month.

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## **Welcome to the Inaugural Edition of 'Your Journey'**

This is a publication of the ECHN Eastern Connecticut Cancer Institute at the John A. DeQuattro Cancer Center! This newsletter is designed for you, the cancer survivor, to be kept up to date on the events, education, and information that are available to you.

If you have ideas of what you'd like to see featured or want to be added or removed from the mailing list, please call 860.533.2929, or email [KFiume@ECHN.org](mailto:KFiume@ECHN.org).

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# Meet Your Navigation Team

*ECHN's Cancer Navigation team at the DeQuattro Cancer Center provides free navigation services to help you with the many challenges you face and act as advocates for you and your family. We can assist you, your loved ones, and caregivers in finding the support and the resources you may need, including: coordinating care, emotional support, financial resources, getting second opinions, managing symptoms, and referrals for home care. We are available throughout your survivorship journey. Remember that survivorship begins at diagnosis!*

## Karen Fiume, RN, OCN, CBCN, CHPN

Karen has been with ECHN for 15 years, the last 6 as an Oncology Nurse Navigator at the DeQuattro Cancer Center. She loves engaging with patients and their families, and providing support and advocacy during one of life's most difficult journeys. She loves reading, cooking, crafting, and hanging out with her 4 grandchildren! She lives in East Hartford with her dad, her best friend, and two crazy dogs. Karen can be reached at 860.646.1222 ext. 1408, or [KFiume@ECHN.org](mailto:KFiume@ECHN.org).



## Amy Janofsky, CN-BA

Amy is a patient navigator in the Breast Collaborative program at the Women's Center for Wellness in South Windsor. She has been in women's health at ECHN for 7 years. She helps guide patients through the healthcare system, and helps them overcome healthcare barriers. Amy loves volleyball, traveling, and photography. She and her partner have 4 amazing kids and 4 dogs! Amy can be reached at 860.533.4696 option 2, or [AJanofsky@ECHN.org](mailto:AJanofsky@ECHN.org).



## Leslie Juliani, RN, OCN, CBCN

Leslie has been with ECHN for 25 years! She has been an Oncology Nurse Navigator at the DeQuattro Cancer Center for the past 7 years. She provides compassionate care and a supporting environment for patients and their families. While she works with all cancer patients, she provides unique support for those with breast cancer. Leslie loves to hike and ski, and cheer on her boys at their various sporting events! She is very involved in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, and captains her own team, The DeQuattro Cure-saders! She grew up in Manchester, and lives just outside of town with her husband, two teenage sons, 2 dogs, and 1 nutty cat! Leslie can be reached at 860.646.1222 ext. 1406 or [LJuliani@ECHN.org](mailto:LJuliani@ECHN.org).



## Ellen Leslie, MSW, LMSW

Ellen started at the DeQuattro Cancer Center in 2024. Ellen has a background in Skilled nursing facilities and Homecare. Ellen brings experience providing psychosocial support to individuals and families navigating cancer diagnoses and treatment. With a background in social work and a compassionate, patient-centered approach, she is dedicated to addressing the emotional, practical, and resource-related needs of patients throughout the continuum of care. Ellen brings a deep understanding of the challenges faced by oncology patients and works collaboratively with interdisciplinary teams to improve quality of life and access to care. Ellen grew up on the shoreline and now resides in Middlesex county with her husband, two sons, 2 rescue mutts and 1 cat. Ellen enjoys gardening and spending time with friends and family. Ellen can be reached at 860-646-1222 ext.2957 or [ellen.leslie@echn.org](mailto:ellen.leslie@echn.org)







# Breast Cancer Screenings

## How to Read an Imaging Report

One in eight women in the U.S. are diagnosed with breast cancer annually, with 350,000 women in 2023 alone. The rates are rising by half of a percent each year. Breast cancer is often curable when diagnosed in its early stages. This is why screening mammograms are a vital part of women's health care.

However, breast imaging reports can be confusing and incomprehensible to the lay person. You may see a report on the patient portal and think, "What does this mean? Am I ok?" Radiologist Matthew Mikhail, MD, mammogram technologist Kristen Dydyn-Basil, RTR (M), and sonographer Stacy St. Louis, BA, RDMS, RVT gave a virtual presentation on December 7 titled, "Can't Read Your Breast Imaging Report? We Can Help!"

The providers gave a comprehensive presentation on breast anatomy, types of screenings, what to expect when you have imaging done, the

most common reasons for a recall and what they mean, risk factors, and the BiRADS reporting system, including how to read the report.

A link is available if you'd like to see the presentation. Please email Karen Fiume at [KFiume@ECHN.org](mailto:KFiume@ECHN.org), and she will send you the link.

If you do not have access to the patient portal, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on the Patients and Visitors link, followed by Patient Portals. The website will guide you in creating your account.

If you do not have a health care provider, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Find a Provider.

If you are uninsured or under insured, please contact the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program at 866.660.8837.



## Freedom from Smoking (FFS) Program

FFS was developed by the American Lung Association in the 1970s. The program is designed to help you first prepare to quit smoking before actually doing so, and learn how to maintain not smoking. We will work to discover your smoking triggers, and develop a personalized quit plan for you, while learning different ways to manage stress and those triggers.

There are 8 sessions over 7 weeks (session 4 - Quit Day - and session 5 are in the same week). The program is led by oncology nurse navigator Karen Fiume. The next session starts January 15, 2024. For more information, contact Karen at [KFiume@ECHN.org](mailto:KFiume@ECHN.org), or 860.646.1222, ext. 1408.



## Monthly Health Observances

**January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month!** The American Cancer Society estimates that approximately 14,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2023, and over 4,000 will die from it. Cervical cancer screening with PAP smears are a vital part of women's health care. The guidelines for testing vary depending on your personal history.

If you do not have a health care provider, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Find a Provider. If you are uninsured or under insured, please contact the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program at 866.660.8837.

**February is American Heart Month!** Your cardiovascular system is one of the most hard-working in your whole body, and it pays to treat it right with physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight. A heart-healthy diet includes lots of whole grains, lean proteins, and lots of fresh veggies. Try the delicious Mediterranean Greek Lentil Salad recipe on the last page!

**March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month!** The National Institutes of Health estimates that in 2023, over 153,000 people were diagnosed with colon cancer, with 52,500 deaths, and 3,750 of those deaths in people under age 50. There are risk factors you can change, like diet and lifestyle, and some you can't, such as inherited factors or age. The thought of a screening colonoscopy can be intimidating, but really, the worst part is the preparation (hemorrhoid wipes are your friend). Colon cancer, like many cancers, is curable in its early stage. If you are over age 50, have a personal or family history of colon cancer, or a genetic predisposition, ask your health care provider for a referral for a screening. A "peak between the cheeks" can save your life!

If you do not have a health care provider, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Find a Provider.

**For the following events, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Classes and Events to register!**

### **Building Your Stress Management 'Tool Box'**

January 25, 2024 @ 12:00 - 12:30 p.m. ; FREE

Stressful times are inevitable, and despite our best efforts, we cannot completely erase stress from our lives. However, we do have the power to create an individualized toolkit of resources and strategies to access during times of stress. In this brief program, we will delve into a variety of stress management techniques. Add the ones you like to your personal "toolbox" and forget the rest!

### **Its Heart Health Month! Let's Focus on Cardiovascular Health**

February 13, 2024 @ 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. ; FREE

Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading cause of death globally, taking an estimated 17.9 million lives each year. Join Cardiologist Dr. Daniel Korkmaz as he shares information about the main causes of cardiovascular diseases, 5 ways to improve your cardiovascular health and 3 lifestyle changes one can make to improve and maintain cardiovascular health.

### **Heart Healthy Eating Cooking Demonstration**

February 6, 2024 @ 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. ; FREE

Join Registered Dietitian Bridget Sutherland, RDN as she kicks off the month by discussing heart health. She will review the basic science behind heart disease, and how to minimize and monitor risk. There will also be discussion on healthy eating and how to make a heart healthy diet not only delicious, but affordable and easy! To add some practical fun, there will be a cooking demonstration and samples. Registration is required.



# Classes & Events

## Fit for the Journey

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Contact MPesce@ECHN.org to learn more.

## Freedom From Smoking

Mondays, January 15, 22, 29, and  
February 5, 7(Wed), 12, 19, and 26

Contact KFiume@ECHN.org to register.

## American Cancer Society Daffodil Days

Help the American Cancer Society fight cancer by supporting their Daffodil Days program. Each bunch purchased supports their lifesaving mission to end cancer.

Bunch of 10 Daffodils - \$12

Bunch of 10 Tulips - \$15

Mini Pot of Daffodils - \$15

Provide a gift to a local cancer patient receiving treatment - \$25

To order, email LJuliani@ECHN.org or call 860.646.1222 ext. 1406

Orders due by February 13. Delivery will be the week of March 18.

## American Cancer Society Relay for Life

Friday, May 30 – Saturday, June 1, 2024  
Ellington High School

Contact LJuliani@ECHN.org to learn more.

## 20th Annual Cancer Survivors Day

Save the date: Sunday, September 29, 2024

## Fit for the Journey Program

Cancer treatment often leaves people weak and deconditioned, and the more we don't use our bodies, the weaker we become. ECHN offers a program called Fit for the Journey, a physical activity program designed to help cancer patients regain their baseline physical status, or even improve on that! Mary Pesce, PTA, assesses each participant, and designs an individual program done under her supervision. She is specially trained to rehabilitate cancer patients! The group meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at MMH, from 2:30pm to 4:40 pm., and is free of charge. For more information, please contact Mary at 860.647.6485 (prompt 2) or MPesce@ECHN.org.

## Massage Therapy

By appointment only  
DeQuattro Cancer Center  
Contact LLavertu@ECHN.org or call 860.306.5822 to learn more!

## Community Acupuncture

DeQuattro Cancer Center  
Tuesdays, 10:00am – 2:00pm  
Walk-ins welcome, registration recommended.  
Contact DZitserman@ECHN.org or call 860.533.4646 to register and learn more!

## Try it, You'll Like It! Heart Healthy Recipe

### Mediterranean Greek Lentil Salad

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 1/2 cups cooked, drained, and cooled French green or brown lentils
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup sliced Persian cucumbers
- 1 cup diced red or yellow bell peppers
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, halved
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup crumbled soft cheese, such as feta
- 1/4 cup Italian parsley, chopped

Whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, mustard, oregano, and salt in a small bowl. Set aside.

*Note, the vinaigrette will probably separate and need whisking again before dressing.*

In a large salad bowl, arrange the cooked lentils, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell pepper, olives, onions, cheese, and parsley.

Dress with desired amount of vinaigrette. Cover and refrigerate, or enjoy right away.

#### John A. DeQuattro Cancer Center

100 Haynes Street  
Manchester, CT 06040

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