

July/August 2025

Cancer Wellness

Newsletter

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Photos from this Year's Relay for Life

Georgia Power Shines!

July is Sarcoma Awareness Month

...and more, inside!



For more information about the Loran Smith Center programs or to register for a class, please email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org or call **706.475.4900**.


This newsletter is made possible by the Thomas J. & Sara Cooney Endowment.

Empowering cancer care close to home.

LORAN SMITH CENTER
for cancer support



Real change lives here



At Piedmont Athens Regional, we treat the patient—not just the disease. Because cancer treatment involves more than medical care, free programs such as yoga, cooking demos, expressive art classes, and counseling are available to anyone affected by cancer at any phase in his or her journey. The Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support at Piedmont Athens Regional serves anyone regardless of where they received treatment.

What's Happening at the Loran Smith Center

Sandy Pyle, BSN, RN, ONN-CG

While we are fully into summer, this spring we had some great events here at The Center! Our friends from Georgia Power provided a work day in the Healing Garden and we had the chance to participate at The American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life"! Look for photos from both activities in this newsletter.

We held our fourth annual National Cancer Survivors Day block party on Sunday, June 1. Hopefully you had a chance to join us for some music, bbq, fun, games, and raffles! It was a lovely day giving us a chance to celebrate our survivors, caregivers, and healthcare providers (look for photos in the next newsletter).

Something that I have been trying to get started at The Center is beginning to take shape! I had the honor of meeting with professors from The UGA School of Music Therapy to explore what we could possibly provide here at the Center. Look for my article that discusses the impact of music on the brain and join us on Thursday, July 17 for our next Lunch & Learn as we further explore the benefits of music therapy (please RSVP by Monday, July 14)!

In this issue, Robin explores the importance of Sarcoma Awareness Month (July). and Abbey writes on National Immunization Month (August) and the impact of vaccines on numerous cancers. I've included one of my go to summer recipes for low fat and sugar zucchini muffins and Brooke has included another mindfulness exercise – Body Check-In!

We hope to see you sometime this summer!

With Peace and Love,

Sandy

For more information about the LSCCS programs or to register for a class, please email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org or call **706.475.4900**.



LUNCH & LEARN: MUSIC THERAPY

Join faculty from the **University of Georgia's Music Therapy Program** to learn how music can support emotional and physical well-being for people affected by cancer.

This evidence-based approach uses music to **reduce stress, ease symptoms, and enhance quality of life** during the cancer journey.

RSVP BY MONDAY JULY 14th

THURSDAY, JULY 17TH
FROM 11:30 - 1:00PM

Presented by:

**Faculty of the Music
Therapy Program,
Hugh Hodgson
School of Music,
University of Georgia**

The Loran Smith
Center for Cancer
Support, Piedmont
Athens Regional



240 Talmage Dr Athens, GA 30606



706-475-4900



Piedmont
ATHENS REGIONAL

LORAN SMITH CENTER FOR CANCER SUPPORT

Georgia Power Shines!

On April 17th our friends at Georgia Power volunteered to do some work in The Healing Garden and made a huge dent in clearing out overgrowth on the west end of the garden! They did great work and have made the garden look even that much larger. We are grateful for their effort!!



Relay for Life Recap

On May 2nd we participated in the American Cancer Society's "Relay For Life" for Clarke, Oconee, and Barrow counties. Piedmont Athens Regional's own Tammy Gilland put together a fabulous dinner, and organized the touching pinning ceremony for survivors and caregivers. We saw old friends, new friends and lots of smiling faces. Enjoy the photos!









Music Therapy

Sandy Pyle, BSN, RN, ONN-CG

"If music be the food of love, play on" from Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" expresses that music has the power to stir emotions and bring people together. The benefits of music abound and can be a valuable tool in cancer care, both physically and mentally. It can be used to promote relaxation, reduce anxiety and stress, reduce the experience of pain and offset some treatment related symptoms. It can also promote movement, something that studies have shown increases the benefits of cancer treatment.

Through years of research on brain function, it has been determined that music engages every region of the brain and enhances "brain plasticity" also known as "neuroplasticity." This data shows that music unlocks neural pathways and engages the brain increasing the ability to learn. For older adults, music has shown to improve cognitive function by boosting and connecting memories, enhancing mood, reducing stress and anxiety, promoting a sense of wellbeing.

Music can stir powerful emotions; try listening to Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings", John Williams "Theme from Schindler's List", or "O Mio Babino Caro" from Puccini's opera Gianni Schicchi, or try AC/DC "Thunderstruck", Derrick and The Dominos "Layla", The Allman Brothers "Melissa". Maybe you'll find something in there that inspires you or share with us something that inspires you musically.

Join us on **Thursday, July 17th from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** for our next lunch & learn as we further explore the impact and benefit of music in healing. RSVP by calling **706.475.4900**.

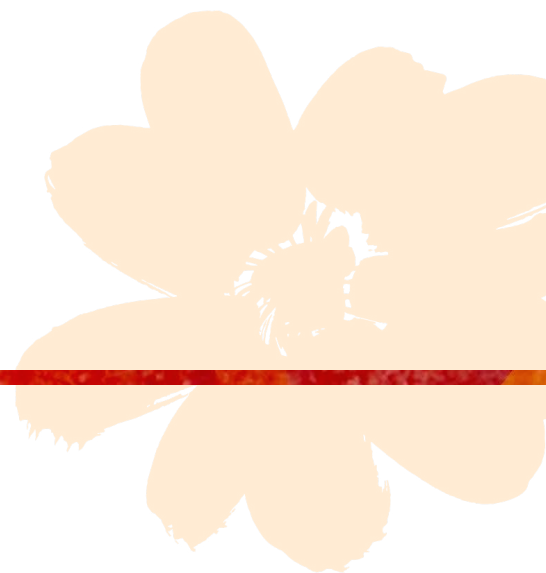
July is Sarcoma Awareness Month

Robin Black, RN

Sarcoma is an extensive group of rare cancers that develop in soft tissues and bones. Soft or connective tissue includes fat, blood vessels, muscles, tendons, nerves and tissues surrounding joints and bones. Sarcoma, is considered to be a widespread cancer involving different parts of the body. Statistically lower extremities occurrence ranks as 40%, torso/ chest wall/ abdomen and pelvis – 30% and upper extremities – 15%. One of the first signs of a soft tissue sarcoma is a painless mass or lump often accompanied by swelling in nearby tissues. Sarcomas can be mistaken for lipoma, hematoma, or abscess. Despite the fact that the majority of masses are not sarcoma, it is crucial to be aware of the following:

- Masses (lumps) larger than a golf ball
- Masses that grow larger in size
- Increasingly painful (ex., tumors close to the abdomen may cause abdominal pain)

It has been said that a primary physician should adhere to the 2-week rule that states if a lump increases in size within a 2-week period an ultrasound should be ordered. Scientific research has concluded that sarcoma, like many other cancers, result from DNA mutations. Patients with a family history of inherited diseases including neuro fibromatosis, retinoblastoma and Li Fraumeni syndrome have an increased risk of developing sarcoma. Generally, sarcoma treatments include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and surgery.



Mindfulness Corner

Brooke Bidez, LMSW

The Body Check-In is a mindfulness technique that involves systematically focusing attention on different parts of the body. This helps calm your mind and develops awareness of the body and its sensations.

1. Start by finding a comfortable position, either sitting or standing.
2. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
3. Beginning with the toes and feet, start to notice any sensations, tension, or absence of sensation.
4. Gradually work your way up from the feet to the top of the scalp, observing sensations in each area without judgement.
5. If your mind begins to wander, gently bring your attention back to the body.
6. Finish by bringing your awareness to the body as a whole and thank yourself for taking this time for yourself.

Greek Yogurt Zucchini Muffins

Sandy Pyle, BSN, RN, ONN-CG



With zucchini season upon us, I wanted to share my favorite zucchini muffin/mini-muffin recipe! This recipe freezes well and is low fat & sugar along with being absolutely delicious. Hope you have a chance to try and enjoy.

Ingredients

Wet:

- ½ cup (80ml) melted coconut oil
(can use canola or vegetable oil)
- ½ cup (120 ml) organic blue agave syrup
(I use ⅓ cup)
- 1 large egg (room temp)
- ½ cup plain Greek Yogurt at room temp
(I use low fat or no-fat)
- 1½ tsp pure vanilla extract

Dry:

- 1½ cups (190 grams) all-purpose flour
(I use whole wheat flour)
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 cup shredded zucchini (blot with towels if too wet—does not have to be completely dry)
- Optional: 2 tsp orange zest (so good!!),
chopped walnuts, raisins, or chocolate chips

Instructions

Preheat oven to 425 F. Grease 12 or 24 count muffin tin or use liners.

Whisk wet ingredients together and separately, whisk dry ingredients together, then pour wet into dry and mix with a large wooden spoon or spatula (avoid overmixing). Fold in zucchini and orange zest.

Fill muffin tins until batter is nearly to the top.



Bake for 5 minutes at 425 F, then keeping the muffins in the oven, lower temp to 350 F and continue baking another 13–15 minutes until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Allow to cool in the pan for 5 minutes before serving. Makes about 10–12 muffins.

Freezes well for up to 3 months.

Recipe adapted from Sally's baking addiction.



August is *National Immunization Awareness Month*

Protecting Against Cancer: The Power of HPV and HBV Vaccines



Did you know that some cancers are preventable through vaccination? While many of us are familiar with preventative vaccines like the seasonal flu vaccine or the COVID-19 vaccine, August is the perfect time to shine a spotlight on two important vaccines

that help prevent cancer: the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine and the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) vaccine!

What is HPV, and why does the vaccine matter?

HPV is a common virus that spreads through intimate skin-to-skin contact. Most people will get HPV at some point in their lives, but in some cases, it can lead to several types of cancer, including cervical, throat, anal, and penile cancers. The good news? The HPV vaccine can prevent most of these cases.

The CDC recommends HPV vaccination starting at age 11 or 12, but it can be given as early as age 9 and up to age 26. Some adults up to age 45 may also benefit, so ask your provider. Since the vaccine only prevents new infections and doesn't treat existing ones, it's especially important to get vaccinated before exposure, ideally before becoming sexually active or starting a new relationship.

What about HBV?

HBV is transmitted through infected bodily fluids. HBV affects the liver and can lead to serious health problems like liver cancer. Like HPV, HBV often shows no symptoms until the damage is done. The hepatitis B vaccine is a safe, effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones.

This vaccine is part of routine childhood immunizations but is also recommended for adults who haven't been vaccinated, especially those at higher risk.

Why this matters

At our cancer center, we see the effects of cancers that could have been prevented. Vaccines like HPV and HBV are safe and powerful tools in reducing the burden of cancer in our community.

Take Action

Not sure if you or your child is vaccinated? Talk to your healthcare provider, or visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find pharmacies near you vaccinating our communities against HPV and HBV!

Together, we can make cancer prevention a reality.



Citations:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, November 16). *HPV vaccination recommendations*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/hpv/hcp/recommendations.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, December 20). **Hepatitis B vaccine administration**. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis-b/hcp/vaccine-administration/index.html>

Thank you to our donors!

Gifts in support of Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support guide patients and their families through their cancer journey. To make a donation and help continue to make these programs possible, visit give.piedmont.org/lscs or checks may be made out to The Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support.

Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support

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EPIC
Jessica Baker

Loran Smith Center Tribute

In memory of Elanor Knight
Kelly and Rachel Kerner



Programs

Please keep in mind that all of our program dates and locations are subject to change.

KNOWLEDGE

Hormone Therapy Class

This class is for women on hormone therapy for estrogen receptor positive breast cancer (Tamoxifen, Arimidex, Aromasin, Femara, etc). In this class you will learn the science behind the treatment and discuss methods for managing side effects. **RSVP required. Call 706.475.4900**

Mondays, 8/18, 10/13; 4–5:30 p.m.

Lunch & Learn - Music Therapy

Music is as old as time and engages every aspect of the brain in humans and animals. Listening to or creating music can improve cognitive function, reduce stress, enhance communication, reduce pain and discomfort. Join us as we further explore the benefit of music therapy. **Registration required. Call 706.475.4900.**

Thursday, 7/17, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

MOVEMENT

Tuesday Tai Chi: Deepen Your Practice

Warm up with qigong exercises and practice forms from the Tai Chi for Health Institute. Forms are gentle but include some longer sequences with more complicated movements and direction changes.

Contact Katie at katherine.calkin@piedmont.org or 706.475.5633 for more information.

Drop-ins welcome, but some prior experience with tai chi suggested for best experience.

Tuesdays, 11–11:45 a.m.

Wednesday Tai Chi: Keep it Simple

Warm up with gentle qigong exercises and practice forms from the Tai Chi for Health Institute. Classes include plenty of review and cues for short forms with no direction changes.

Drop-ins welcome, no tai chi experience necessary.

Wednesdays, 11:30–11:30 a.m.

PEACE

Healing Touch and Reiki

Individual sessions that focus on the energy system of the body to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and minimize side effects.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

Hypnotherapy

Facilitated by Melissa Yonce-Hayes

A safe, non-invasive process that helps individuals tap into their inner strength to navigate the challenges of cancer treatment and recovery. It is designed to reduce stress, manage pain, improve sleep and boost emotional resilience.

Every Thursday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Out of respect for others, we ask that you do not enter class after 10:25 a.m.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (Online)

Facilitated by Mike Healy, Ed.D.

Learn ways to reduce stress, lessen physical and emotional pain and cope better with everyday demands.

Call Mike at 706.248.8918 for more information.

Second Friday of every month



SUPPORT

Breast Cancer Support Groups

Facilitated by Sandy Pyle, RN, BSN, ONN-CG, and Robin Black, RN Nurse Navigator

A group for women with a diagnosis of breast cancer to share information, resources, and experiences.

Second Thursday of every month, 5:30 p.m.

Women's Cancer Support Group

Facilitated by Robin Black, RN and Brooke Bidez, LMSW

A group for any woman with any type of cancer diagnosis. A group to discuss treatments, side-effects, coping, stress reduction and survivorship in a safe, confidential setting.

Second Tuesday each month 1-2:30 p.m.

Mondays for Men, Cancer Support Group

Facilitated by Joel Siebentritt, LCSW

A confidential setting for male cancer patients to discuss treatment, side-effects, and survivorship. Any man from any diagnosis, currently in treatment through long-term survivorship is welcome.

Fourth Monday of every month, 12-1:00 p.m.

Illness Adjustment Counseling

Individual sessions to address issues such as stress, anxiety, treatment decisions, and family communication.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

Grief Support

Individual and group support for grieving adults.

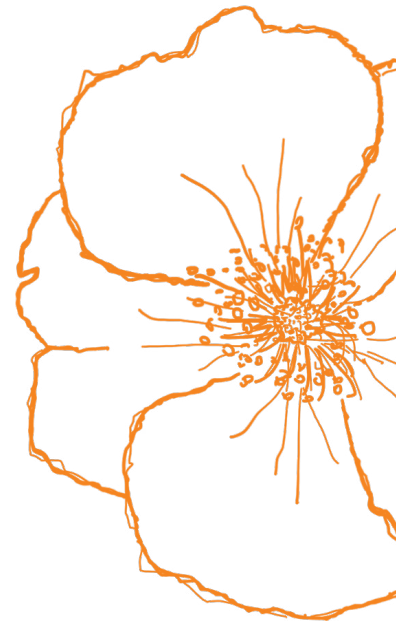
By appointment only, 706.475.4900

SUSTENANCE

Nutrition Counseling and Side-Effect Management

Individual sessions by physician referral.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900



"You have no idea how much this means to me, I appreciate everything you've done."

— a grateful patient



July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	2 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	3 Mindfulness- Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt.	4 <i>Happy 4th of July!</i>	5 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
6	7 Healing Touch, by appt.	8 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m. Women's Cancer Support Group, 1 p.m.	9 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	10 Mindfulness- Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt. Breast Cancer Support Group, 5:30 p.m.	11	12 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
13	14 Healing Touch, by appt.	15 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	16 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	17 Mindfulness- Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m. Lunch & Learn, 11:30 a.m.	18	19 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
20	21 Healing Touch, by appt.	22 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	23 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	24 Mindfulness- Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m.	25	26 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
27	28 Healing Touch, by appt. Men's Cancer Support Group, 12 p.m.	29 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	30 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	31 Mindfulness- Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m.		



August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
3	4 Healing Touch, by appt.	5 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	6 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	7 Mindfulness-Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt.	8	9 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
10	11 Healing Touch, by appt.	12 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m. Women's Cancer Support Group, 1 p.m.	13 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	14 Mindfulness-Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m. Previvors Support Group, 5:30 p.m.	15	16 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
17	18 Healing Touch, by appt. Hormone Therapy Class, 4 p.m.	19 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	20 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	21 Mindfulness-Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m.	22	23 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
24	25 Healing Touch, by appt. Men's Cancer Support Group, 12 p.m.	26 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	27 Beginner Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	28 Mindfulness-Hypnotherapy, 10 a.m.	29	30
31						





Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support
1199 Prince Avenue
Athens, Georgia 30606

*"Hope and encouragement through
support and information"*



BEAUTIFUL Y♡U BOUTIQUE

*Beautiful You is a cancer wellness boutique
specializing in products for women who have
had or are going to have breast surgery.*

For more information and to learn more about all
that we offer, please visit our website!

piedmont.org



706.475.4811



Piedmont Athens Regional
Medical Services Building



BeautifulYou@piedmont.org

