

January/February 2025

Cancer Wellness

Newsletter

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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

 **Piedmont**
ATHENS REGIONAL

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

After ringing in the new year, we are back to work here at the Center and I hope you can find time in the coming months to stop by, for a visit, to say hello or try out one of our classes. Katie Calkin is offering her beginner Tai Chi series again, look for more info further in the newsletter!

With January designated as Black History month and cervical cancer awareness month, this intersection brings about an important lesson in the history of cancer research. In 1951 a young African American woman by the name of Henrietta Lacks was diagnosed with cervical cancer at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD and her diagnosis changed the course of cancer research. Henrietta's tumor cells from her biopsy showed outstanding survival capabilities with their numbers doubling almost daily. Scientists were able to study the impact of drugs, viruses, radiation and other treatment without testing on patients. However, as was common practice at the time, Henrietta's cells were used for research without her or her family's knowledge or consent.

Today Henrietta's cells, the HeLa cell line, continue to be used by researchers, not only in cancer research, her cells were crucial in the development of the vaccines for polio and Covid. You can find more on her fascinating story in the 2010 book by Rebecca Skloot "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" (the book was made into a Netflix film in 2017 starring Oprah Winfrey).

In February, Valentine's Day and Heart Health coincide in Lauren Liverman's article "Cardiac Health and Cancer Treatment". Lauren notes the importance of monitoring and being proactive before, during, and after cancer treatment.

In this issue, we meet Tanvi Reddy, our new public health intern that will join us for her spring and final semester before graduating from UGA. We're excited to tap into Tanvi's skills. We also have a new massage therapist, Traci Daly-Smith, who joined us this fall. We have changed our massage program and are now serving only those in treatment, allowing Traci to spend time in the hospital with patients. If you are currently in treatment and interested in a massage, please don't hesitate to reach out for an appointment.

Wishing you all the best in 2025!

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**.



January is *Cervical Cancer Awareness Month*

Amber Davis RN, BSN

In honor of cervical cancer awareness month, PPG Athens Gynecologic Oncology would like to bring several key points to the forefront of this gynecologic disease process.

Cervical cancer is the third most common gynecologic cancer diagnosis and cause of death among gynecologic cancers in the United States. While cervical cancer is most frequently diagnosed in women between the ages of 35 and 44, it rarely develops in women younger than 20. The key to discovering cervical cancer early is to perform regular screening tests. The HPV screening test and Pap test (also known as a Pap smear) can help detect cervical cancer in the early stages, as well as help prevent it by detecting abnormal cells that could potentially lead to cancer formation, allowing for preemptive treatment. According to the CDC, individuals should start receiving Pap tests at age 21.

The screenings listed above can assist in testing for the Human Papillomavirus (HPV); HPV can be detected in 99.7% of cervical cancers. Several of the associated risks factors for acquiring the HPV virus include early onset of sexual activity, multiple sexual partners, high-risk sexual partners, and a history of sexual transmitted infections. Fortunately, a vaccine known as Gardasil 9 is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is available to patients for use in the prevention against 9 high-risk strains of HPV that are known to cause cancer. Additional factors, such as cigarette smoking, are associated with an increased risk of cervical cancer. Routine screenings, early detection, and safe sex practices are excellent ways to help prevent cervical cancer.

Although early cervical cancer is frequently asymptomatic, the most common symptoms may include:

- Irregular or heavy vaginal bleeding
- Postcoital bleeding
- Watery, mucoid, or purulent and malodorous vaginal discharge

If you were to experience any of these symptoms, please schedule a visit with your OB/GYN at your earliest convenience. In order to receive a definitive diagnosis of cervical cancer, your doctor may perform a pelvic exam and a biopsy.

References: UpToDate, World Health Organization, American Cancer Society, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

At PPG Athens Gynecologic Oncology, we are dedicated to providing exceptional care and support for our cancer patients throughout their journey. We hope this article has been informative and empowering, offering valuable knowledge to promote personal health and well-being. Remember, as our motto says, *"Cancer can't wait!"*



Welcome, Tanvi!

My name is Tanvi Reddy and I'm a pre-dental student at the University of Georgia working toward my Bachelor's degree in Health Promotion. As a Public Health Intern at the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support, I'm excited to explore the intersections of public health and healthcare while connecting with patients and listening to their stories. I believe that empowering patients to take control of their health and promoting wellness in our community is a powerful way to create positive change!



Lunch & Learn

Join us **Thursday, January 23rd at 11:30 a.m.** for our next Lunch & Learn series on spirituality.

What is spirituality? According to *Psychology Today*: "Spirituality is a broad concept that can involve belief in God, non-religious experiences, or a search for meaning." Join us as Chaplain Brenda Burton discusses the impact of spirituality and your wellbeing. A light lunch will follow. RSVP is required.

Call 706.475.4900 to reserve your spot.





Cardiac Health and Cancer Treatment

Lauren Liverman, LCSW, Oncology Social Worker

Whether you're a fan of Valentine's Day or not, you can't go many places during the month of February without seeing red and pink hearts all over town. Regardless of your feelings about the heart-focused holiday, I imagine you DO care about the heart located in your ribcage. Given this, it seems appropriate to address the importance of attending to cardiac health while undergoing cancer treatment. While this may come as a surprise to some patients, undergoing cancer treatment can have an impact on your heart, depending on the type of treatments you receive and your baseline cardiovascular health. Here are some things to consider to maintain and optimize heart health during your treatment, according to Yale University's staff of cardio-oncologists (www.yalemedicine.org/news/heart-and-cancer-treatment):

- **Be proactive** – make sure that your blood pressure and cholesterol are under control prior to beginning cancer treatment. Hopefully this is a part of your regular health screenings, but if not, getting these checked out will help protect your heart during systemic cancer treatment.
- **Know if you're at increased risk for heart issues** – various chronic health conditions such as diabetes and obesity can put your heart at greater risk for problems during cancer treatment, as can behaviors such as smoking.
- **Childhood cancer survivors** – anyone who underwent cancer therapies in childhood should have their cardiac health assessed, as sometimes developing heart tissue can be impacted by treatments and manifest as health problems in adulthood.

Some healthcare communities, including Athens, have cardio-oncologists who focus on the intersection of heart health and cancer treatment. It is likely that your medical oncologist will refer you if they have any concerns about your ability to tolerate certain treatments, however it is also important to be an advocate in your care and ask any questions you may have prior to starting cancer treatment.

Wishing you a healthy (and joyful) heart!

Welcome, Traci!

Hello, my name is Traci Daly-Smith, and I am a Licensed Massage Therapist and Licensed Esthetician with over 25 years of experience. I am also oncology-trained in both massage and esthetics, and I am deeply passionate about supporting individuals on their cancer journey, including survivors and caregivers.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working closely with cancer patients, using specialized techniques that are safe and effective for those undergoing treatment. My approach focuses on promoting relaxation, managing stress, and helping alleviate some of the physical discomforts that may come with treatment, all while being mindful of your specific needs and conditions.

Whether you are here for a moment of self-care or looking for ways to feel more at ease during your treatment process, I am here to help. I understand how challenging this journey can be, and my goal is to provide a space of care, comfort, and healing for you at the Healing Lodge or while in the infusion center.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your support system.



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, checks may be made out to The Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support or visit give.piedmont.org/lscs.

Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support

706Together

Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Black

Andrea J. Dineen

Athens Ford

Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Wilson

Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Gearing

Charlotte Williams

Delena C. Brockmann

Frank S. Bachelder

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Canfield

Mrs. Jeannine M. Collins and Mr. John Workman

Kristina Schultz Tanner

Primrose School of Athens

Mr. and Mrs. George Bonner

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Cooney

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley L. Cinnamon

University Cancer & Blood Center LLC

Watkinsville 1st United Methodist Church

“Sometimes there is so much darkness and then the light appears. You are the light, and I am so grateful”

— a grateful patient

Honey Jalapeño Salmon

Eileen Lilly, Cancer Data Registrar



Ingredients

3-4 salmon fillets
1 Tbsp olive oil
½ tsp paprika
1 tsp garlic powder
½ tsp salt
½ black pepper

2 tbsp butter
1 tbsp honey
2 tbsp lemon or lime juice
1 jalapeño pepper chopped
Salt & pepper
1 – 2 tbsp chopped parsley to top



Instructions

- Season the salmon with the paprika, garlic powder, salt and pepper
- Heat a medium sized pan on medium heat then add tbsp of olive oil. Place salmon fillets into pan and let them sear for about 3 – 4 minutes before flipping. After about 4 minutes flip the salmon. Remove salmon from the pan and set it aside.
- In the same pan, add the jalapeno to remaining oil and cook on medium for 1 minute.
- Next add the butter, honey, salt and pepper. Cook for another 2 minutes until the butter melts and the sauce thickens.
- Add the salmon fillets back into the pan, then pour lemon/lime juice over the fish. Let the salmon cook in the sauce for about 2 minutes until cooked to your liking. Spoon the sauce over the fish while it continues to cook.
- Garnish with fresh parsley and lemon slices

Healing Grief Workshop

Facilitated by Lauren Liverman, LCSW

A nine-week workshop for those who have lost someone through death. The loss does not have to be a cancer related death.

The next workshop begins Wednesday, February 12th. All sessions are from 3-4:30 p.m. every Wednesday through April 9th.

Topics Include: Getting Acquainted, Stress Management, Understanding Grief, Anniversaries, Remembering, Memorialization, Accepting, Role Changes, Closure & Evaluation.

Registration is required.

Call us at 706.475.4900 to register or to ask questions.

A romantic couple embracing outdoors. The woman is wearing a pink tank top and a white headscarf, and the man is wearing a blue shirt. They are smiling and looking at each other. A large, stylized heart graphic is overlaid on the right side of the image. The background is a warm, orange-toned outdoor setting with trees and a wooden fence.

Couples and Cancer

Eryn Marsh, MSW Intern

Valentine's Day is coming up on February 14th! This day celebrates love, affection, and friendship. Celebrating this holiday may look different for relationships involving cancer. Cancer can affect connections, pose new challenges, and introduce complicated emotions and conversations. If you are diagnosed with cancer, it may be more difficult to prioritize the relationship, you may become more dependent, and side effects of treatments may affect intimacy which all stirs difficult emotions. For someone in a relationship with someone diagnosed with cancer, more caregiving may be a new role to take on, you may feel helpless and have a bunch of questions, and also may struggle with intimacy. The experience is unique to everyone and every individual relationship, but you are not alone and there are strategies to adapt to a cancer diagnosis and navigate how a relationship may change. Here are some tips:

1. Keep communication open, discuss feelings, confront difficult emotions, remain honest and non-judgmental, listen, express needs, and encourage one another.
2. Be flexible with the potential that roles and responsibilities may change and communicate about what each other needs instead of assuming. Work as a team!
3. Express gratitude towards your partner by offering a kind word or small acts of kindness.
4. Be open about how cancer affects intimacy in the relationship, share concerns with your doctor to help find solutions, practice self-care, and find other ways to show love and maintain your bond.
5. Plan dates that are special, yet manageable. It doesn't need to be extravagant, just about spending quality time together doing something you all like.
6. Seek couples counseling or a support group if you need help from a professional.

If you have any more questions or want to speak with one of our Social Workers, reach out to the Loran Smith Center. You are not alone and we are here to help!

References:

Endeavour Health. (2024, February 8). Facing cancer as a couple. NorthShore and Endeavour Health. <https://www.northshore.org/healthy-you/cancer-challenges-couples/#:~:text=The%20American%20Cancer%20Society%20recommends,you%20or%20your%20loved%20one>

National Cancer Institute. (2018, September 26). Facing cancer with your spouse or partner. National Cancer Institute. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/adjusting-to-cancer/spouse-or-partner#:~:text=Your%20spouse%20or%20partner%20may,Not%20feeling%20connected%20sexually>

Piedmont Healthcare. (2024). 7 Ways to Strengthen Your Marriage During Cancer Treatment. Piedmont Healthcare. <https://www.piedmont.org/living-real-change/7-ways-to-strengthen-your-marriage-during-cancertreatment#:~:text=To%20combat%20feelings%20of%20guilt,ways%20to%20strengthen%20your%20relationships.>

Thank You!



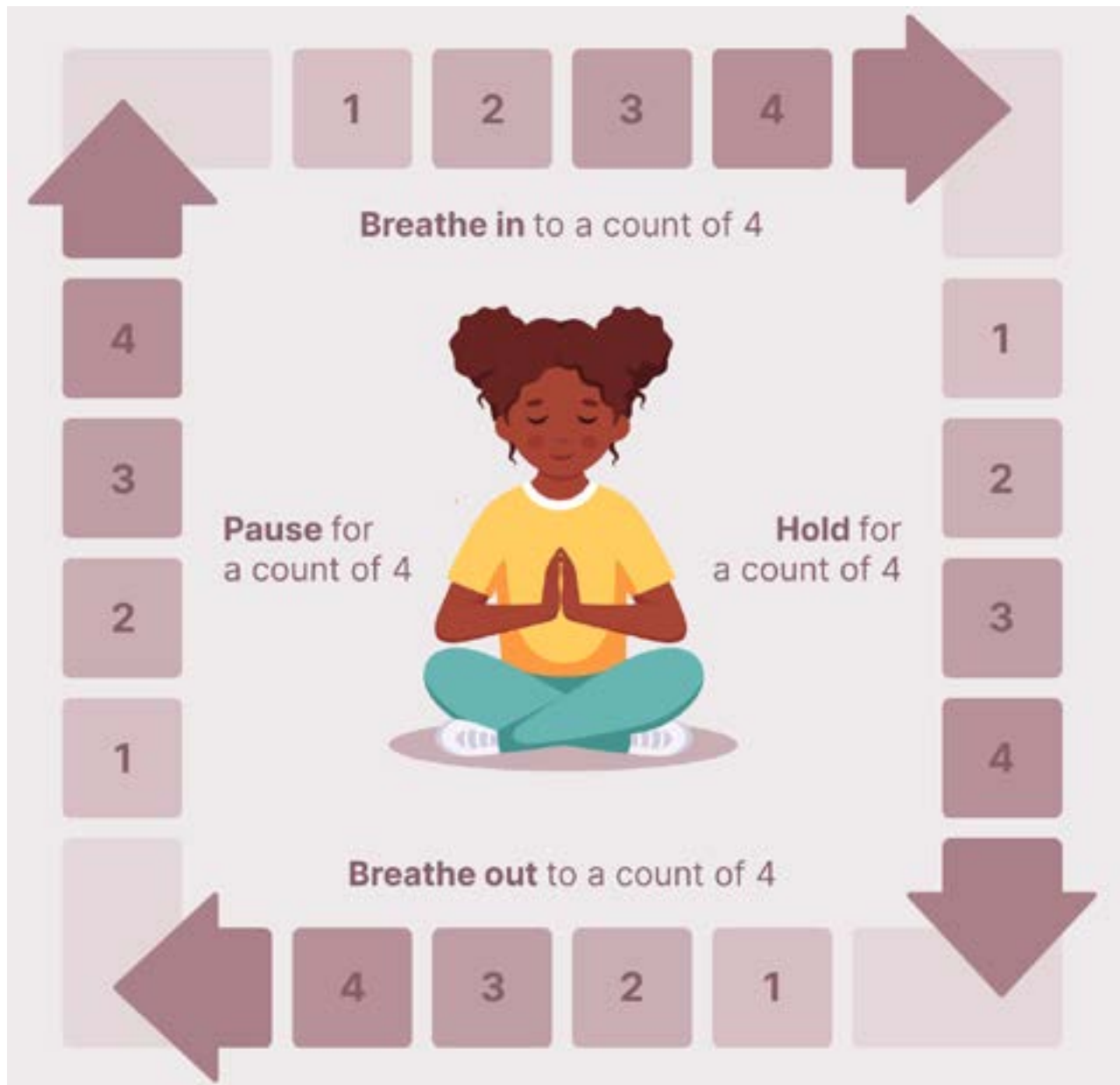
Robin Black, RN had the pleasure of meeting the Women's Group of the Watkinsville United Methodist Church in late November. Earlier in the year, the fourteen amazing ladies from this group donated \$500 to The Loran Smith Center. Robin discussed the services of the Center with the group: the complimentary therapies, individual counseling and education, and the support groups available to any one in the community at no cost. The discussion of our services led these generous ladies to provide an additional r \$200 in donation. The Loran Smith Center cannot thank them enough for this heartfelt assistance. Contributions like this assist the Center in providing services to our clients who have been impacted by a cancer diagnosis.



Try This: Box Breathing

Brooke Bidez, LMSW

Box breathing is a simple technique to help you slow your breathing and calm your mind. You can try this at home or while sitting at your desk at work. Start by getting into a comfortable position, allowing your eyes to either close or finding a soft gaze on the floor. Slowly count to 4 as you inhale, hold the inhale for 4 seconds (or as long as you comfortably can), slowly count to 4 as you exhale, and then pause for 4 seconds before starting again with the inhale. Pay attention to the rise and fall of your chest and belly with each inhale and exhale. Notice how your breath begins to slow as your nervous system regulates itself. You can continue this pattern for as long as you like. You can also try holding one hand over your chest and one hand over your belly to help you observe the rising and falling of the breath throughout the body. Give it a try and let us know what you think!





Gallbladder Cancer

Robin H. Black, RN

The gallbladder is a small pear-shaped organ on the right side of the abdomen just beneath the liver.

The main function of the gallbladder is to store bile which aids in the digestion of food. Gallbladder cancer, much like other cancers, occurs when the cells grow uncontrollably. This type of cancer is particularly aggressive and somewhat rare. It is often not diagnosed until it has metastasized to other areas primarily because initially it may not cause any symptoms and the location of the organ.

When symptoms eventually appear, they include:

- Mass that is palpable through the skin
- Unintentional weight loss
- Upper abdominal pain
- Yellow discoloration of the skin or whites of the eyes called jaundice

Gallbladder cancer is more common in men than women and is suggested that estrogen is a contributing factor. Although typically it is diagnosed after the age of 65, there are some childhood cases noted. Gallbladder cancer is more common in people with a history of gallstones, those who have a history of polyps, infections, and chronic inflammation

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, 2/3, 4/21, 6/16, 8/18, 10/13; 4–5:30 p.m.

MOVEMENT

Tuesday Tai Chi: Deepen Your Practice

Warm up with gentle 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. Email katherine.calkin@piedmont.org or call 706.475.5633 with any questions.

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, 9–9:30 a.m. beginning January 8

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

Mindfulness for Mind and Body (In person)

Facilitated by Brooke Bidez, LMSW

Learn a variety of techniques focusing on the breath, observing your body for tension or discomfort and noticing all five senses. Studies suggest many positive benefits of mindfulness including reduced stress, help in coping with pain, improved cognitive ability and increased sense of well-being.

Every Thursday, 10:30–11:10 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)

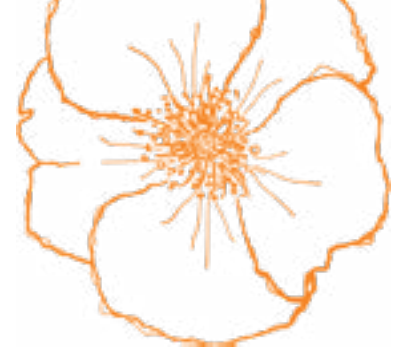
Facilitated by Mike Healy, Ed.D.

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.

Previvors Support Group for Women

Space for women ages 18-50, diagnosed with a genetic mutation for breast cancer but have not been diagnosed. A place to gather for peer support, discuss education and risk management and share unique challenges in relation to work and family life.

Third Thursday each month, 5:30-7:30 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

Healing Grief Workshop

Facilitated by Lauren Liverman, LCSWs

A nine-week workshop for those who have lost someone through death. The loss does not have to be a cancer-related death.

Please contact the center at 706.475.4900 for more information and to register. Registration required.

Next workshop begins 2/12

Every Wednesday through 4/9, 3-4:30 p.m.

Individual Grief Support for 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

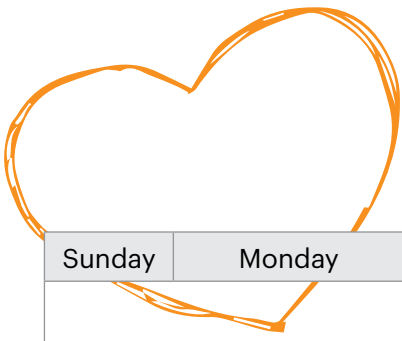
In the event of inclement weather:

Monitor Athens-Clarke County schools. If ACC schools cancel, our programs and classes will be cancelled as well.

January 2025

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





February 2025

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



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

*“Hope and encouragement through
support and information”*



BEAUTIFUL YOU 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