



Memorial Sloan-Kettering  
Cancer Center

# Community M A T T E R S

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NEWS FROM MEMORIAL SLOAN-KETTERING CANCER CENTER

## New Outpatient Rehabilitation Center Helps Patients Regain Skills

Memorial Sloan-Kettering's Outpatient Rehabilitation Center located at 515 Madison Avenue provides an expanded state-of-the-art environment to help patients with cancer regain physical function and a sense of well-being. "This new center allows us to improve our quality of care and help patients maximize their physical potential," said Teresa W. Fitzpatrick, Manager of the Outpatient Rehabilitation Center. "With more space and a larger staff, we can also meet the increased demand for our services."

Cancer and its treatments can interfere with the proper function of nerves and muscles. As a result, patients may have trouble regaining strength and mobility after treatment and can struggle with everyday tasks such as walking, dressing, and showering. To help patients relieve symptoms and improve their ability to function well, Memorial Sloan-Kettering physicians refer patients to rehabilitation specialists. These specialists include physiatrists (physicians who specialize in physical medicine and rehabilitation), physical therapists, and occupational therapists.

Physiatrists are doctors who help to manage a patient's long-term functional recovery and chronic pain conditions. They evaluate a patient's physical condition to determine and treat the cause of impairments, and refer patients for necessary physical and occupational therapy. Physical therapists plan and oversee personalized exercise programs to help patients recover function, reduce pain, build strength, and improve mobility and balance. Occupational therapists help patients regain indepen-



*Therapists use hands-on treatments to help patients regain mobility.*

dence in daily activities such as buttoning a shirt, using a pen, cooking, or bathing.

The Outpatient Rehabilitation Center occupies 22,500 square feet, housing 15 treatment bays, where the staff provides hands-on care in a private setting. The most eye-catching feature of the facility is a spacious gymnasium, which resembles a full-service health club with advanced equipment. Many of the machines

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### COMMUNITY EVENTS

#### Free CancerSmart Lectures

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

The "New" Biology of Breast Cancer and What It Means to You

*With Larry Norton, MD, Deputy Physician-in-Chief for Breast Cancer Programs*

TUESDAY, APRIL 5

Leukemia: New Biologic Understandings, Advances in Treatment

TUESDAY, MAY 3

Prostate Cancer: Making Sense of Your Options, From Diagnosis to Treatment

All lectures will take place from **6:00–7:30 PM** in the **Rockefeller Research Laboratories** building, **430 East 67th Street** (between York and First Avenues). Please call 212-639-3074 or visit us at [www.cancersmart.org](http://www.cancersmart.org) to register for our lectures. To view previous CancerSmart lectures and discussions, please visit [www.cancersmart.org/webcasts](http://www.cancersmart.org/webcasts).

## Caring Canines Deliver Rounds of Love

Every other Monday, Upper East Sider Nancy George-Michalson and her apricot toy poodle, Callie, make the rounds at Memorial Sloan-Kettering to visit patients and offer to cuddle. Owner and pet are part of Memorial Sloan-Kettering's Caring Canines Program, which seeks to provide patients with a therapeutic experience that will enhance their quality of life and their response to illness and treatment.

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*Nancy George-Michalson and pet Callie (middle pair) pose with other Caring Canines Program volunteer dog/handler teams who see, on average, five to ten patients per visit.*

## Caring Canines *Continued from page 1*

Nancy and Callie are one of seventeen volunteer teams that visit with patients upon request three days a week on select in-patient floors. "For dogs who enjoy people and who are calm, this program is a way to help bring patients temporarily out of the realm of illness and treatment," said Ms. George-Michalson. "The dogs bring unconditional love to patients, and receive love and attention in return." In addition to her work at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, Callie also visits with patients at Ronald McDonald House and Mary Manning Walsh Home, and is read to by children at the 67th Street Library.

Interactions with therapy dogs have been shown to provide some medical and psychosocial benefits to patients. Petting a therapy

dog may help release positive hormones into the bloodstream, which is associated with healing and feelings of well-being. Therapy dogs can take a patient's mind off pain or discomfort through the relaxation experienced at each session. Research has also shown that interaction with pets can help to decrease depression and anxiety.

Memorial Sloan-Kettering's therapy dogs are part of the Angel On A Leash program, which was founded as a charity of the Westminster Kennel Club, and have received training at one of the three nationally recognized therapy dog organizations: Delta Society, Therapy Dogs International, or Good Dog Foundation. For more information about therapy dog training, visit [www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org). ☼

## Outpatient Rehabilitation Center *Continued from page 1*

are wheelchair compatible or have other adaptations to accommodate people who have physical impairments. A simulated kitchen with a dishwasher and refrigerator and a bathroom with grab bars are available so patients can practice routine household tasks safely. The remaining floor space houses the center's clinical component, including offices for four physicians.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the need for rehabilitative services will become increasingly critical over the long term as new treatments

continue to transform cancer into a more chronic disease. In addition, the new center will allow Memorial Sloan-Kettering's specialists to increase their expertise in the field of rehabilitation therapy. Physiatrist Michael D. Stubblefield said, "Therapy is a major component of cancer care, and we expect that our experience in taking care of the unique issues cancer patients face will help to advance care at Memorial Sloan-Kettering and beyond." ☼

## FREE CANCER SCREENINGS

THURSDAY, APRIL 21  
9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

### Head and Neck Cancer Screenings

Enid A. Haupt Pavilion  
425 East 67th Street  
Fourth Floor, Suite 5  
(between York and First Avenues)  
*By appointment only.* To make an appointment, call 646-497-9161.

THURSDAY, MAY 12  
9:30 AM – 3:00 PM

### Skin Cancer Screenings

MSKCC Hauppauge  
800 Veterans Memorial Highway  
Second Floor  
Hauppauge, NY  
*By appointment only.* To make an appointment, call 631-863-5100.

TUESDAY, MAY 24  
THURSDAY, MAY 26  
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

### Skin Cancer Screenings

MSKCC Basking Ridge  
136 Mountain View Boulevard  
Second Floor, Dermatology Suite  
Basking Ridge, NJ  
*By appointment only.* To make an appointment, call 908-542-3400.

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