Cancer Health 25: Charles Loprinzi, MD

A medical oncologist who has conducted over 100 clinical trials dedicated to reducing distressing symptoms of cancer and its treatments

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The Cancer Health 25 is an annual list that honors individuals who have made a difference in the lives of people with cancer. This year's theme is quality of life. To see the full list, click here.

Reducing distressing symptoms of cancer and its treatments is the life's work of Charles Loprinzi, MD, 69, a medical oncologist who has worked at the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center in Rochester, Minnesota, since 1985. He leads a team that has conducted more than 100 clinical trials aimed at understanding and minimizing symptoms related to cancer and its treatments. He previously served as codirector of the center's cancer prevention and control program.

Loprinzi's team has conducted the most clinical trials in the world to help treat and prevent chemotherapy-induced neuropathy, chemotherapy-induced hot flashes, and anorexia (appetite loss) and cachexia (weight loss). Other areas of research include skin toxicity (such as rashes), insomnia, fatigue, cognitive dysfunction and mucositis (sores or inflammation of the mouth or gut) related to cancer therapy. Loprinzi's experiments have shown that some treatment-related side effects can be managed successfully. His primary clinical interest is breast cancer, and many of his

studies have focused on the breast cancer population.

One of the main goals of oncology, Loprinzi told OncLive, is to help patients “do as well as possible for as long as possible.” Loprinzi achieves this by following four important steps: making sure patients have the fewest side effects from cancer, helping patients have fewer side effects from treatment, extending survival and ensuring that survival is characterized by the best quality of life possible. He is honored to have led trials that have influenced clinical practices.

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