A Wily Foe

Our spring issue is devoted to the theme of treatment.

March 16, 2020 By Liz Highleyman

We're living in a remarkable era of advances in cancer treatment. Results from clinical trials of new therapies are reported in medical journals every day. There's so much to learn that even people who focus on the field full-time have trouble keeping up!

That's why we've devoted this issue to the theme of treatment.

Many of the new studies are promising, but experimental therapies fail more often than they succeed. Cancer is a wily foe that has found many ways to survive, hiding from the immune system and turning off the body's natural defenses.

But researchers are making progress. Here at Cancer Health, we strive to help you make sense of the avalanche of new information, both by reporting the latest research findings and sharing stories of people's experiences using novel treatments. We're fortunate to work with organizations such as the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation to give us insights into promising research.

Click here to read our feature on Denise Delatorre, a woman with non–Hodgkin lymphoma who became one of the first patients to try CAR-T therapy, a remarkable "living drug" that reprograms an individual's own T cells to fight cancer. Another promising approach is therapeutic cancer vaccines, which aim to halt the progression of existing cancer, prevent relapse and maybe even offer a cure.

But treatment is not just about the latest high-tech approaches. Improving quality of life matters as much as prolonging survival. Click here to read our feature describing how palliative care can help improve people's lives at all stages of cancer.

Learning about new treatments and discussing them with your care team is an important part of self-advocacy. "Disobedience," an excerpt from Anne Boyer's book The Undying, chronicles her difficult choice to change oncologists.

Whether you are newly diagnosed, currently undergoing treatment or a long-term survivor, we hope you'll consider Cancer Health part of your advocacy team. It's been great to work on this treatment issue with editor-in-chief Bob Barnett, who'll be back on this page in the summer issue.

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