

NKBCI

NEWSLETTER

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Our lives are dedicated to yours



THE CANCER INSTITUTE AT AUBMC

The Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) is a state-of-the-art adult cancer facility that provides comprehensive cancer treatment and research and is one of AUBMC's four Centers of Excellence.

The NKBCI was made possible through a generous donation by the Naef K. Basile Foundation, which was established in 1995 by the family of the late Dr. Naef Basile, a Lebanese-American obstetrician-gynecologist whose lifelong wish was to give back to his native country through the establishment of a cancer treatment center. He wished to establish an institute that would compare with the best cancer centers in the world, and so, the Basile Foundation reached an agreement with AUBMC and established the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute. Dr. Fady Geara was the first and founding Director of NKBCI, while Dr. Hassan El-Solh is the current Director.

Services

In addition to research and teaching, the NKBCI provides the following clinical services:

- Inpatient diagnostic and therapeutic clinical services
- Inpatient chemotherapy services
- Stem cell transplantation
- Radiation oncology
- Outpatient clinics
- Outpatient Chemotherapy Infusion Center
- Walk-in clinical services

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY NKBCI FACULTY MEMBERS

- **Crosstalk between HER2 signaling and angiogenesis in breast cancer: molecular basis, clinical applications and challenges.** (Alameddine RS, Otrrock ZK, Awada A, Shamseddine A.) (Curr Opin Oncol. 2013 May; 25(3):313-24. Review.)
- **Epidemiology and prognosis of breast cancer in young women.** (Assi HA, Khoury KE, Dbouk H, Khalil LE, Mouhieddine TH, El Saghir NS.) (J Thorac Dis. 2013 Jun;5(Suppl 1):S2-8.)
- **Deferasirox effectively reduces iron overload in non-transfusion-dependent thalassemia (NTDT) patients: 1-year extension results from the THALASSA study.** (Taher AT, Porter JB, Viprakasit V, Kattamis A, Chunchar-uneer S, Sutcharitchan P, Siritanaratkul N, Galanello R, Karakas Z, Lawniczek T, Habr D, Ros J, Zhu Z, Cappellini MD. (Ann Hematol. 2013 Jun 18. [Epub ahead of print])
- **Genetic polymorphisms of CYP2E1, GST, and NAT2 enzymes are not associated with risk of breast cancer in a sample of Lebanese women.** (Zgheib NK, Shamseddine AA, Geryess E, Tfayli A, Bazarbachi A, Salem Z, Shamseddine A, Taher A, El-Saghir NS)
- **A collaborative nationwide lymphoma study in Lebanon: incidence of various subtypes and analysis of associations with viruses.** Otrrock ZK, Saab J, Aftimos G, Nasr F, Farhat FS, Khairallah S, Abadjian G, Ghosn M, Sidani H, Ibrahim A, Tawil A, Ghorra C, Meguerian Z, Mokaddem W, Dayeh W, Salem Z, Chahine G, Bitar N, Mugharbel A, Makdessi J, Khater C, El Hajj M, Abi Gerges D, Sfeir C, Kattan J, Ibrahim K, Saade M, Sadek H, Mahfouz RA, Kharfan-Dabaja MA, Zaatari G, Bazarbachi A. Pathol Oncol Res. 2013 May 8. [Epub ahead of print]

- **Angiogenesis and anti-angiogenic therapy in prostate cancer.** (Mukherji D, Temraz S, Wehbe D, Shamseddine A.) (Crit Rev Oncol Hematol. 2013 Jan 29. [Epub ahead of print])
- **Fight against cancer around the Mediterranean area: "Many hands make light work!"** (Belkacémi Y, Boussen H, Turkan S, Tsoutsou PG, Geara F, Gligorov J.). (Crit Rev Oncol Hematol. 2012 Dec;84 Suppl 1:e1-5. doi: 10.1016/j.critrevonc.2012.10.004. Epub 2012 Nov 21).

FIRST BREAST CANCER CONFERENCE BY AUBMC

The Breast Center of Excellence of the NKBCI at AUBMC held its First Annual AUBMC Breast Cancer Conference (AUBMC BCC-1) on February 8 - 9, 2013, at the Gefinor Rotana Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon. The conference was organized by the AUBMC Breast Center of Excellence and the Continuing Medical Education (CME) Office and was attended by over 150 physicians and surgeons from Lebanon and the Middle East.

The conference speakers were:

- **Dr. Ismail Jatoi of the University of Texas in San Antonio**
- **Dr. Yazid Belkacemi of the University of Paris XII**
- **Dr. David Cameron of the University of Edinburgh**
- **Dr. Nagi Saghir of AUB (Conference President)**

In his welcome note, Dr. Saghir stated that AUBMC organized this conference as part of its mission to disseminate new knowledge and promote better care for patients. Dr. Jatoi discussed breast-conserving surgery, axilla-conserving sentinel lymph node biopsy, and new uses of ultrasound-guided surgery that reduce positive margins. Dr. Belkacemi discussed the new advances from Canada and the United Kingdom on hypofractionation and shortening the duration of radiation therapy over three weeks instead of six weeks in breast cancer. Dr. Saghir presented data showing that neo-adjuvant therapy, which is also called pre-operative therapy and given to patients to shrink tumor size and make it amenable to resection (and even breast-conservative surgery), may improve patient outcome when it induces complete pathological responses. He also presented new results on tamoxifen which resulted in reduced recurrences and improved survival when given after surgery for 10 years instead of only five years. Dr. Cameron presented the results and updates from the North American trials and the HERA trial that confirmed improved survival rates with trastuzumab adjuvant therapy for HER2-positive breast cancer, in addition to showing that two years were not better than one. The French PHARE trial did not show that six months is equivalent to one year, and therefore, one year of trastuzumab remains standard therapy.

Mark your calendars for AUBMC BCC-2 on February 14 - 15, 2014.



“I WEAR PINK FOR MY MOTHER”

Under the patronage and presence of Her Excellency (HE) Minister Leila El-Solh Hamade, the Breast Center of Excellence at NKBCI and the Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation (LBCF) celebrated Mother’s Day for the second year in a row during a fundraising brunch held at the Movenpick Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon. It was attended by mothers, daughters, survivors, advocates, supporters, and members of the press. “The ‘I Wear Pink for My Mother’ event aims at celebrating women’s health every year on Mother’s Day by raising awareness about early detection and better treatment of breast cancer” stated Mrs. Mirna Hoballah, Vice President of LBCF.

HE Minister Solh-Hamade commended the efforts of LBCF and Dr. Nagi Saghir of AUBMC for his continuing efforts to promote breast health awareness on Mother’s Day. HE said she understands the difficulties cancer patients go through since she experienced them when her late husband Majed Hamade suffered from cancer. HE said patients need medical, financial, and psychological support from their doctors and nurses, and we should all stand by them.

Dr. Saghir welcomed the attendees and preferred to refer to Mother’s Day as “Mother’s Health Day.” He said that there are about 1700 new breast cancer cases each year among Lebanese women and that awareness campaigns have decreased the number of advanced cases. Early breast cancer is cured in more than 90% of the cases in statistics from AUBMC and international centers. Women should no longer be afraid of the word “cancer.” They should tell their doctor about any changes they notice in their breasts. Early detection saves lives and saves breasts. He advised mothers to adopt a healthy lifestyle by avoiding weight gain, opting for a low-calorie diet, and eating less animal fat and more fruits, vegetables, and fiber-rich grains.

The event was also attended by Mrs. Manal Bilal Hamad, Mrs. Manal Hassan El Solh, Mrs. Anne Franjeh, President of Association Faire Face, and Mrs. Rima Dandashi, President of the May Jallad Foundation. Members of the Foundation distributed the Foundation’s book “Knowledge Is the Path to Recovery” to the attendees. Raffle tickets were sold to support breast cancer patients at AUBMC.

LBCF and the Breast Center of Excellence organize Patient Support Group meetings every week at NKBCI.



CONFERENCES/COURSES

AUBMC-NKBCI physicians are frequently invited as guest speakers to Lebanese, Arab, and international regional conferences:

- **Lebanese Society of Medical Oncology Annual Congress and CME Lectures:**
Dr. Ali Shamseddine, Dr. Deborah Mukherji, Dr. Arafat Tfayli, Dr. Ziad Salem, Dr. Ali Taher, Dr. Ali Bazarbachi, Dr. Sally Temraz, Dr. Nagi Saghir, and Dr. Fady Geara
- **KHCC/AUB/MDACC Joint Conference – “Update on Genitourinary Malignancies,” Amman Jordan, January 31 – February 1, 2013. Topic: “Treatment of Asymptomatic Castration-resistant Prostate Cancer”:**
Dr. Deborah Mukherji, Dr. A. Tfayli, and Dr. Fady Geara
- **ACHOG Angiogenesis Course, Istanbul, Turkey, February 22 - 23, 2013. Topic: “Angiogenesis and Anti-angiogenic Therapy in Prostate Cancer”:**
Dr. Ali Shamseddine, Dr. Deborah Mukherji, and Dr. Arafat Tfayli
- **PACC-13: Pan Arab Cancer Congress, Amman, Jordan, April 26 – 27, 2013:**
Dr. Fady Geara, Dr. Ali Taher, Dr. Ali Bazarbachi, and Dr. Nagi Saghir

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING CANCER TREATMENT

If you've been diagnosed with cancer, it is true that your lifestyle requires a few modifications, but your life does not necessarily have to be turned upside down. Below are a few useful tips:

Diet:

Although your diet does not have to change, there are some instructions that you should follow:

- You must avoid raw food. This includes raw meat, eggs, and fish. Raw food contains some bacteria that may be harmful to you. Cooking your food at high temperatures ensures that you kill all germs present in it. Use the oven or gas for cooking. Do not barbecue your food since coal does not emanate at high temperatures.
- You may have fruits and vegetables, but only in a home setting. They must be cleaned very well before consumption and even before squeezing or peeling them.
- Avoid deep fried food.
- When buying non-fresh food items, choose the packaged ones. Dairy products (cheese, labneh, yoghurt, etc...), processed meats, cold cuts, juices, etc... It is preferable to buy them canned or in separate packages since it ensures their cleanliness more than ones cut or prepared before you.

Small Frequent Meals:

- When feeling nauseous, eating regular-sized meals three times daily will no longer be possible. Divide your portions smaller and space them out. Choose food with good nutritious value since your intake will decrease. Maintain your weight because neither weight loss nor weight gain is favored.

Infection:

- Chemotherapy may cause decreased immunity. This puts you at risk of getting infections. Fever may be a sign of infection. If you feel sick or have a fever, you need to contact your doctor immediately or go to the hospital's Emergency Room. Do not start medications without asking your doctor and nurse.
- Hand Washing:
The most effective way to protect you from infection is hand washing. Wash your hands with soap and water:
 - a. before preparing meals
 - b. before eating
 - c. after shaking hands with people
 - d. after using the bathroom
 - e. after performing chores (gardening, cleaning, managing foods, etc...)
 - f. after handling public locations (door handles, etc...)
- avoid pets.
- avoid fresh flowers.
- avoid crowds.
- limit the number of visitors in your home. Refrain from too many kisses and handshakes with your visitors.
- wearing a mask will not offer more protection. Do not wear it unless you have to (ex: someone at home is sick and coughing).

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

- Dr. Arafat Tfayli, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Department of Internal Medicine at AUBMC, for being granted the "Teaching Excellence Award" at AUB.
- Ms. Simone Karam, Registered Nurse (RN) at the NKBCI Chemotherapy Unit, for being granted the "Physicians Award for AUBMC-NKBCI RNs."



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