



Providence Portland Medical Foundation

Eva Joseph converses with Stacie Mellinger, RN, while receiving immunotherapy treatment for her metastatic breast cancer.

Beating Breast Cancer

In 2014, Eva Joseph learned her breast cancer had spread to her lungs and sternum. First diagnosed in 2002, she underwent chemotherapy, radiation treatment and had a mastectomy. She persevered through hair loss and weight gain and was declared cancer-free.

Eva was accepted into a clinical trial at Providence Cancer Institute for a new immunotherapy drug to fight her deadly type of breast cancer. The drug was proven effective and, in 2019, received early approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in breast cancer for the general public.

Because of your support, we are able to conduct clinical trials that benefit breast cancer patients like Eva. David Page, M.D., an oncologist with the Robert W. Franz Cancer Center at Providence Portland Medical Center, is the lead investigator in two significant trials that were underway in 2019, including Eva's.

In one trial, Dr. Page evaluated the effects of chemotherapy over time in women with early-stage breast cancer during and following chemotherapy, and whether adding an androgen (hormone) blockade can help the body regenerate immune cells and enhance immunotherapy response. Early results showed great promise in promoting T-cell (a type of immune cell) production.

The second trial, a pilot study, led by Dr. Page evaluated whether injecting cytokines (a type of protein) into the tumor can activate immune cells to fight cancer and improve the response to chemotherapy in stage II-III triple negative breast cancer. The completed study again showed promise, that cytokine therapy is safe and potentially helpful in activating immune cells.

Today the cancer in Eva's lungs has shrunk so much it can't easily be seen in X-rays. "Basically, I'm healthy," she said.

Thanks to you, Providence Cancer Institute can begin and continue promising research and collect data that may one day save lives.

2019 Highlights

More beds for patient care

The newest patient-care unit at Providence Portland Medical Center opened on Dec. 9. Eleven patients were cared for that first day, and the 21-bed unit has been full since the first week. "I am so grateful for the new unit at PPMC," said Krista Farnham, chief executive, Providence Portland Medical Center. "Because of your generous donations we have been able to care for an additional 500 patients since it opened. Thank you for making this a reality and giving us the opportunity to better serve our community."

2019 was a banner year

Your generosity in 2019 was record-breaking, with those at the Providence Creating Hope Dinner raising a record \$1,023,260 for immunotherapy research and clinical trials. In addition, the Safeway Foundation announced its annual campaign for cancer research at Providence raised \$453,909 in customer contributions at the check-out. Next, about 12,000 people (including 100 Providence employees) participated in the 2019 Providence Hood to Coast Relay, running and walking from Mt. Hood and Portland to Seaside, Ore. This year's event raised more than \$900,000 to support cancer research at Providence Cancer Institute.



2019 total dollars raised by fund

- Area of Greatest Need | 2%
- Cancer Support | 10%
- Cancer Research Operations | 84%
- Heart | 1%
- Hospice | 1%
- Long Term Care | 1%
- Other Funds | 1%

