

# VISION

## COPING WITH CANCER



VISION, OCTOBER 2014



### Spreading awareness, knowledge and hope

Cancer.vive's annual motor bike ride started off with a huge boost from sponsors SPAR who donated more than a million Rand to promote cancer awareness and education. The ride covered some 2300 kilometres and members addressed many thousands of people.



Two CanSurvive Group members, Grant Pitt and Colin James took part in the Cancer.vive ride to help promote support for patients.

## CanSurvive

### CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS

CanSurvive is affiliated to People Living With Cancer and the Cancer Buddies support network and provides a place where cancer patients can meet with Buddies and receive advice and support from survivors who often have a similar profile, disease and treatment protocol.

CanSurvive remains under the umbrella of People Living with Cancer and organises Cancer Buddy training and other events on their behalf.

#### TO BOOK, PLEASE CONTACT:

Bernice Lass on 083 444 5182 or  
email [bernicelass@gmail.com](mailto:bernicelass@gmail.com)

#### BANKING DETAILS:

Bank: FNB  
Branch: Hyde Park 255805  
Account name: CanSurvive Cancer Support Groups  
Account No.: 62288991906

### Please join us at our annual Celebration of Life Breakfast

Saturday 8 November at 8:30  
at the Prospect Room,  
Sunnyside Park Hotel, Parktown

Our MC for the event is  
Mr Grant Pitt  
and music will be provided by  
Paul Tavares and guest artists

Guest speakers will include  
Dr Trudi Smith  
Dr Jeffrey Glocer

We will also be having raffles and  
auctioning of items such as jewellery, art by  
well known painter Hanlie Kotze & many more

Tickets cost R220 per head  
Corporate packages available  
Booking closes on 17 October  
or earlier if sold out.

# “Medical Dagga” may be legalised

by Dr Cornelia Botha

There are many accounts online of people treating their cancer with something called “cannabis oil” (also referred to as “Phoenix Tears Oil” and “Rick Simpson Oil”), which is basically a resinous extract of the flowering heads of the dagga plant (aka cannabis or marijuana). This is different to smoking dagga, since the cannabis oil is consumed orally. Some accounts are in fact reported in medical journals available online, as in the case of a 14-year-old girl diagnosed with a very aggressive form of acute lymphoblastic leukemia reported in the journal Case Reports in Oncology.

Cannabis has been used medicinally for thousands of years. There were 2000 cannabis medicines and more than 280 manufacturers prior to 1937. A recent search of the word cannabinoid (an active constituent of cannabis) on PubMed, a database of research published in scientific journals, yielded 17,189 published articles. A search on the word cannabis (the whole plant) yielded 12,401 published articles. Scientists are now at the point where they are elucidating the many different ways in which cannabis fights cancer (and other diseases) on a cellular and molecular level.

In order to understand the science behind therapeutic cannabis, one must know more about the plant chemistry. There are a number of different cannabinoids, but the most notable cannabinoid is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). It is the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis. Cannabidiol (CBD), another major constituent of



the plant, is not a psychoactive compound. Both of these compounds, as well as other, have been intensely researched for their therapeutic (including anti-cancer) effects.

Some pharmaceutical drugs based on cannabinoids have been registered and are administered via metered oral sprays or in tablet form. While isolated cannabinoid compounds may present targeted delivery methods, they may be less effective being isolated from the supporting compounds of the whole plant. Many anecdotal reports from patients contend that the natural whole plant works better than single synthetic cannabinoid agents. In vitro (laboratory) research studies seem to confirm this, since a synergistic therapeutic relationship between THC, Cannabidiol and other cannabis plant chemicals has been found.

On 9 September 2014 the ANC motioned to revive the lapsed Medical Innovation Draft Bill, which if passed in its current form, will legalise the use of cannabinoids for medical purposes. Cannabinoids are defined in the draft bill as any part or chemical constituent of the plant known as cannabis, marijuana or dagga.

Passing the bill may take a very long time and there is the possibility it may not be passed. In the meantime, South African patients are already using and seeking out cannabis oil, especially in situations where they have exhausted all conventional treatment options (i.e. they are terminal). Prior to using any form of treatment, one should have an understanding of its expected benefits and associated risks so that you can make responsible decisions regarding its use.

If you are interested in learning more about the physical effects, cautions and potency / quality considerations of cannabis oil you may download the full version of this article from the CanSurvive website at [www.cansurvive.co.za](http://www.cansurvive.co.za). The full version of this article also provides more information on the Medical Innovation Draft Bill, the history of medical cannabis and links to internet resources on the topic.

Whatever your personal opinion may be, I believe that we should all try to broaden our knowledge on the subject beyond our current information sources so that when the opportunity comes to comment on the bill we can adequately participate in the process.

## IT'S OK TO TALK ABOUT CANCER!

Join us at a CanSurvive Cancer Support Group meeting

- have a cup of tea/coffee, a chat with other patients and survivors and listen to an interesting and informative talk.

**NOTE: 8 November - CELEBRATION OF LIVE at the Sunnyside Hotel, Parktown (this replaces November Group meeting)**

**Upcoming meetings: starting at 09:00 at MIDRAND - 25 October -**

**at Netcare Waterfall City Hospital  
PARKTOWN- 13 December Hazeldene Hall  
(opp. Netcare Park Lane Hospital)**

Enquiries:

Bernice 083 444 5182 or [bernicelass@gmail.com](mailto:bernicelass@gmail.com)

Chris 083 640 4949 or [cansurvive@icon.co.za](mailto:cansurvive@icon.co.za)  
[www.cansurvive.co.za](http://www.cansurvive.co.za)



The Groups are run in association with the Johannesburg Branch of Cancer Buddies and is hosted by Netcare. The Group is open to any survivor, patient or caregiver. No charge is made.



The writer, Dr. Cornelia Botha, is a homeopath and is registered with the Allied Health Professions Council of South African and the Homeopathic Association of South Africa. She completed a master's degree research study involving HIV and is registered with the South African HIV Clinician's Society.

Her website is [www.healthinc.co.za](http://www.healthinc.co.za) and office number is 011 787 1221





## Dancing for a cure

Dance for a Cure is a Non Profit Organisation whose main objective is to raise the awareness of cervical cancer in South Africa and to raise funds to vaccinate children and young women against HPV, thereby preventing the disease that is known as the silent killer. Should you have any interest in the organisation, or would like to know more, please contact 083 676 2117.

Dance for a Cure was established in 2007 and has continued to extend their reach each year, vaccinating more children than the year before.

Our photos were taken at the their "Dance for a Cure" show at Gold Reef City on 24 September.

CanSurvive Group member, Daring Bhadais was there to assist show goers with information on support for cancer patients. CanSurvive



members and Cancer Buddies attend a number of events throughout the year to promote awareness and to offer their support to people touched by any form of cancer. If you need advice or support, contact the tollfree hotline - 0800 033 337

**Guest Speakers:**  
Dr. Maritha Kotze • Dr. Adam A Nosworthy

**Panel discussion** with Linda Greef  
Founder of People Living with Cancer and Cancerbuddies

**Guest Artist:**  
Richard Onraet

**Only 100 tickets available**

**Book here:** <https://plwc.worldsecuresystems.com/quick-donation-plwc>  
for direct payment or alternatively contact  
Liesl Moore Admin PLWC (admin@plwc.org.za) Tel 021 565 0039  
A Donation of R20 or more will secure your seat

**Metastatic Breast Cancer BRUNCH**

A multidisciplinary approach that brings Hope

**18 October 2014**

**Come and join us at the Netcare Head Office Auditorium, 76 Maude Street, Sandton for a sumptuous brunch on Saturday 18 October from 8:00 to 12:30 am**

GPS: 26°06'16.98" S 28°03'21.46" E



Hosted by:    

## When I cry . . .

*I do not cry. Well sometimes, but not often.*

*Time past, I cried a lot. Long ago.*

*When I first sat at cancer's bed, death was a tragedy,  
a rip in life's fabric.*

*With each, a part of me died.*

*Not so much, anymore.*

With thousands of cancers, thousands of families, and thousands of deaths, I came to see deep time. I absorbed the finite nature of existence, and gained a long view. Not just yesterday's tests, today's battle and tomorrow's treatment, but the loss to come. I do not know when the reaper will arrive, but understand he will. I mourn each patient before we meet. I have learned not to cry.

Call it professional distance. It is necessary when infinite loss is a daily experience. Cry every day and become a frail crust. To fight an unbeatable foe you must parry from safety. However, I worry that I have lost more than I have gained.

Have I have stopped loving life? Has too much of me died? Are joy, warmth and compassion phantoms; a shell; a fleeting aroma? Perhaps I no longer touch, taste or feel. In order to care for those for whom the path is set, have I stopped caring?

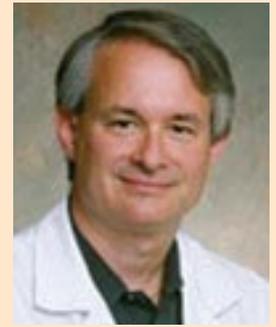
A remarkable event occurred. No miracle treatment or special person saved. No new patient gained or lost. No deeper understanding of the infinite, connection to the divine, nor bravery over death's fear. Nonetheless, from the most unexpected of places, I began to cry.

My grandson is now five months old, with a round face, bald head, bright blue eyes and four limbs in continuous random movement. He has a pure smile, especially at his father's laugh, a fixation on ceiling fans, and a sly way of making believe he is still breast feeding, just to stay close to his mom. He is capable of entertaining an entire room

Dr. Salwitz is a Clinical Professor at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

He lectures frequently in the community on topics related to Hospice and Palliative Care and has received numerous honours and awards, including the Physicians Leadership Award in Palliative Care.

His blog, Sunrise Rounds, can be found at <http://sunriserounds.com>



of adults for hours, making us all laugh. Nevertheless, sometimes, at one special time, he always makes me cry.

When I hold him, rock him and sing a bedtime tune, scrambling the words of a rock melody in a lullaby's lull, and his eyes are on mine and they gently close and his breathing becomes even and deep; that is when I cry. It is not sad, nor a time of loss or pain. It is one of life's most magnificent moments. Yet, that child's optimistic perfection in the purity of the moment reaches inside and pulls up forgotten pain.

I can feel that it is not the loss of one patient; it is the loss of many. It is not a single moment of suffering, but rather the suffering of years. The transcendence of the infant opens my soul to the place from which it came. He shows me who I was before death became my daily companion. His openness to the experience, joy and the potential of life, allows me to open deep places, years buried.

My children have been the great surprise of my life. I expected to raise them, teach them, protect them and help them through the world. I never expected them to raise me, teach me, protect me and help me through life. Nevertheless, they did, changing me through the years and making the journey worth any sacrifice. Now, this perfect baby arrives and helps me find part of myself lost. He makes me naïve. He helps me face today with strength, joy and hope. What a remarkable gift to receive, to be shown, once again, how to cry.

## Get Your Mammies Grammed

For years and years they told me, Be careful of your breasts.  
Don't ever squeeze or bruise them. And give them monthly tests.

So I heeded all their warnings, And protected them by law.  
Guarded them very carefully, And I always wore my bra.

After 30 years of astute care, My gynae, Dr. Pruitt,  
Said I should get a Mammogram "OK," I said, "let's do it."

"Stand up here real close" she said, (She got my boob in line),  
"And tell me when it hurts," she said, "Ah yes! Right there, that's fine."

She stepped upon a pedal, I could not believe my eyes!  
A plastic plate came slamming down, My hooter's in a vice!

My skin was stretched and mangled, From underneath my chin.  
My poor boob was being squashed, To Swedish Pancake thin.

Excruciating pain I felt, Within it's vice-like grip.  
A prisoner in this vicious thing, My poor defenseless tit!

"Take a deep breath" she said to me, Who does she think she's kidding!?

My chest is mashed in her machine, And woozy I am getting.

"There, that's good," I heard her say, (The room was slowly swaying.)

"Now, let's have a go at the other one." Have mercy, I was praying.

It squeezed me from both up and down, It squeezed me on either side.

I'll bet SHE'S never had this done, to HER tender little hide.

Next time that they make me do this, I will request a blindfold.  
I have no wish to see again, My knockers getting steam rolled.

If I had no problem when I came in, I surely have one now.  
If there had been a cyst in there, It would have gone "ker-pow!"

This machine was created by a man, Of this, I have no doubt.  
I'd like to stick his balls in there, And see how THEY come out!

## Laugh a lot - It helps

In a Huffington Post blog, South African-born Dr Frank Lipman who now lives in the US, says laughter is the one prescription he's "always happy to dispense", because it's "safer than any big pharma pill-of-the-moment" – and free of harmful side effects. In his 20 years of medical practice, Lipman says he has found that patients with a sense of humour, and who laugh a lot, "tend to heal better and faster than those who don't". His advice: "If health and wellness are your goals, skip irony, bypass sarcasm and make the conscious choice to add more joyous laughter into to your day."

## LOFOB and Pink Drive - a beacon of hope

October marks breast cancer awareness month and to commemorate this very important campaign The League of Friends of the Blind (LOFOB) and PinkDrive have embarked on an exciting venture. This partnership has given birth to the launch of a braille breast self examination (BSE) booklet "To Feel is to Heal" giving blind women access to much needed information.

Despite the numerous technological advances over the years, access to health information for blind persons is limited. This has been a great contributing factor in placing them at risk of developing and managing certain conditions. It is with this in mind that LOFOB welcomes this partnership giving blind women access and equal opportunity to their sighted counterparts. The "To Feel is to Heal" booklet is the first of its kind in South Africa raising awareness on breast health education and the importance of early detection as it is key to saving lives.

Statistics show that 1 in 29 South African women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime and in an effort to reduce this statistic they are actively promoting the importance of breast health education amongst all.

Noelene Kotschan, Founder and CEO of PinkDrive says that this is a remarkable partnership as this is another first for South Africa. "What a privilege to be involved with this project. With this partnership we are now able to serve another community that was previously neglected with regards to breast care" says Kotschan. She also added that as the aim of PinkDrive is that early detection saves lives, they are confident that this braille book will contribute and enhance breast cancer awareness within this community.

## THIS ONE'S FOR THE GIRLS.

By purchasing this hand crafted Relate bracelet you're supporting and raising funds for PinkDrive, South Africa's well known and much loved breast cancer community carer. It's Anthony Oseyemi's cause of choice. What's yours?



The Relate PinkDrive bracelet is available from the following retailers:

FOSCHINI DONNACLAIRE Markham Edgars [www.shop.relate.org.za](http://www.shop.relate.org.za)

Look out for the signature bead on all Relate bracelets - our mark of transparency.



## Our unrealistic views of death through a doctor's eyes

With unrealistic expectations of our ability to prolong life, with death as an unfamiliar and unnatural event, and without a realistic, tactile sense of how much a worn-out elderly patient is suffering, it's easy for patients and families to keep insisting on more tests, more medications, more procedures.

Doing something often feels better than doing nothing. Inaction feeds the sense of guilt-ridden ineptness family members already feel as they ask themselves, "Why can't I do more for this person I love so much?"

Opting to try all forms of medical treatment and procedures to assuage this guilt is also emotional life insurance: When their loved one does die, family members can tell themselves, "We did everything we could for Mom." In my experience, this is a stronger inclination than the equally valid (and perhaps more honest) admission that "we sure put Dad through the wringer those last few months."

(An extract from an excellent article in the Washington Post by Craig Bowron MD.) <http://tinyurl.com/6t4gh8c>

## Breathe

by Leo Babauta

Breathing can transform your life.

If you feel stressed out and overwhelmed, breathe. It will calm you and release the tensions.

If you are worried about something coming up, or caught up in something that already happened, breathe. It will bring you back to the present.

If you are discouraged and have forgotten your purpose in life, breathe. It will remind you about how precious life is, and that each breath in this life is a gift you need to appreciate. Make the most of this gift.

If you have too many tasks to do, or are scattered during your workday, breathe. It will help bring you into focus, to concentrate on the most important task you need to be focusing on right now.

If you are spending time with someone you love, breathe. It will allow you to be present with that person, rather than thinking about work or other things you need to do.

If you are exercising, breathe. It will help you enjoy the exercise, and therefore stick with it for longer.

If you are moving too fast, breathe. It will remind you to slow down, and enjoy life more.

So breathe. And enjoy each moment of this life. They're too fleeting and few to waste.

Tip: Put the word "Breathe" as a screensaver or desktop pic, or put it up as a note on your wall or fridge or on your desk. Then do it every time you see the word.

Leo Babauta is a creator, a writer, a runner and a vegan and is married with six kids. see his website at [www.zenhabits.net](http://www.zenhabits.net).



Pieter Andersen, Janie du Plessis and Torsten Koehler after the successful meeting to get the "Nuts & Bolts Rally" and the "Love your Nuts" project connected and on the go.

## Love the Nuts and Bolts Rally!

by Torsten Koehler

On the day I was 19 years cancer free I've launched my website ([www.love-your-nuts.com](http://www.love-your-nuts.com)) with my new project "Love your Nuts – Testicular Cancer Education in a Nutshell". (A project of PLWC.)

**My Mission:** Love Your Nuts goal is to raise awareness of testicular cancer by educating communities about the 'rarely spoken about' cancer that often remains undetected in young adults due to the diverse society in South Africa, where cultural taboos, stigmas and lack of knowledge about the subject is plentiful.

### The Nuts & Bolts Rally

I have just started my new project and the first group like to raise funds for "Love your Nuts"! A rally called "Nuts & Bolts Rally"!

Imagine a rally with the following requirements:

Cars must be 25 - 30 years or older!  
Purchase a car that is worth R15000 or less!  
And no ... no tarred road driving allowed!

Visit <http://www.love-your-nuts.com/nutsBoltsRally.html> for details on the rally.

## Welcome visitors



Cancer Buddy, Richard Gush, sent us this story to share this with Cancer Buddies and patients.

"Rashid was in the Bone Marrow ward getting a transplant from his sister. He was coping well with chemo, but had an infection on his line. But all staying positive!!! While I was with him early morning his wife, Widaad, and I organised that his kiddies could say hi to daddy through the window....

It was the coolest thing I have seen in a long time!! "

AND if you think this is a brilliant idea to raise awareness you are welcome to donate some "virtual nuts" for the rally:  
[http://shop.love-your-nuts.com/product\\_ranges/donations](http://shop.love-your-nuts.com/product_ranges/donations) Thank you for your support!

*The photo below was taken at the successful launch meeting for the Nuts & Bolts Rally and Love Your Nuts.*



## Manny de Freitas Foundation hosts successful leukaemia event

Bem Bom in Bedfordview was packed to capacity recently when a ladies breakfast fundraiser was hosted by the Manny de Freitas Foundation (MdFF). This event was in support for the fight against cancer, in particular leukaemia.

One of the MdFF's objectives is to work towards contributing to the decrease of cancers. Information and education in this regard plays an important role.

Ladies at the breakfast were entertained by belly dancer, Tarryn Rego. Some ladies even joined in on the dancing. An auction was held and a leukaemia survivor who is still undergoing treatment, Ana Nathaniel, was honoured.



MdFF CEO, Jeanette de Freitas said that Ana's courage and determination is an example to everyone; irrespective of whether one is a survivor or not. "We plan to use our events as an education opportunity", she explained, "There are still too many people who are misinformed and also people who lack information and therefore understanding about cancer."

## Tollfree service for cancer patients

PLWC Cancer Buddies now has a tollfree number - it is **0800 033 337**

All cancer patients now have access to free cancer support and can ask any questions about cancer and treatment of cancer; the emotional issues related to the cancer journey; questions about side effects of treatment; assistance with accessing resources like wigs, prosthesis, home nursing and hospice. Problems relating to access to treatment or services delivery issues can also be reported.

## HELP CANSURVIVE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR CANCER PATIENTS



CanSurvive & Cancer Buddies  
SUPPORTING

**LIVESTRONG**

**FOUNDATION**

## LIVESTRONG at work in Africa



### Juma Mwesigwa

Tanzanian National Government Leaders visited the exhibit hut to hear about the Huheso Foundation's work at Kahama Town where they educate the community and work for the empowerment of women in Tanzania.

Juma Mwesigwa is the Executive Director of the Foundation and he is also one of LIVESTRONG's African Leaders.

Well done, Juma.

## Dates to diarise

### OCTOBER 2014

#### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

- 18 PLWC Metastatic Breast Cancer Breakfast, Netcare Auditorium, Sandton - details to follow.
- 25 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Waterfall City Hospital, Midrand, 09:00
- 25 PLWC Metastatic Breast Cancer Breakfast, Sun Coast Casino, North Beach, Durban
- 25 Wings of Hope Breast Cancer Support Group at German School, Parktown. 09:30
- 26 iThemba Walkathon, Marks Park Sports Complex, Judith Road, Emmarentia
- 26 Pink Drive "Christa Steyn en ek" at Pretoria East NGK, Clydesdale, Pretoria
- 27 Rondebosch Medical Centre Support Group. GVI Practice 4th floor. 18:00 - 19:30 Contact Linda Greeff 082 551 3310

### NOVEMBER 2014

- 2 PLWC Art Exhibition at Oude Libertas, Stellenbosch
- 3 Cape Gate Oncology Centre, 10h00-12h00
- 6 CanSurvive Head and Neck Support Group, at Rehab Matters, 1 De la Rey Rd. Rivonia at 18h00
- 8 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Celebration of Life Breakfast, Sunnyside Hotel, Parktown.
- 15 CANSA Pretoria Support Group 10:00 32 Lys Street. Rietfontein
- 22 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Waterfall City Hospital, Midrand, 09:00
- 22 Bosom Buddies, Hazeldene Hall, Parktown 10:00
- 24 Rondebosch Medical Centre Support Group. GVI Practice 4th floor. 18:00 - 19:30 Contact Linda Greeff 082 551 3310
- 26 St. John's Catholic Church Awareness Group, North Riding, 10:30. Subject: Ovarian Cancer
- 29 Wings of Hope Breast Cancer Support Group at German School, Parktown. YEAR END FUNCTION

### DECEMBER 2014

- 3 Reach for Recovery, 19 St. Johns Road, Johannesburg. Year end function
- 4 CanSurvive Head and Neck Support Group, at Rehab Matters, 1 De la Rey Rd. Rivonia at 18h00
- 13 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Hazeldene Hall, Parktown 9:00
- 15 Rondebosch Medical Centre Support Group. GVI Practice 4th floor. 18:00 - 19:30 Contact Linda Greeff 082 551 3310

### JANUARY 2015

- 8 CanSurvive Head and Neck Support Group, at Rehab Matters, 1 De la Rey Rd. Rivonia at 18h00
- 10 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Hazeldene Hall, Parktown 9:00
- 24 CanSurvive Cancer Support Group, Waterfall City Hospital, Midrand, 09:00

### CONTACT DETAILS

**Cancer Buddies** Johannesburg branch, and  
**CanSurvive Cancer Support Groups** : 083 640 4949,  
 cansurvive@icon.co.za

**Cancer Buddies/People Living with Cancer**, Cape Town:  
 076 775 6099, info@plwc.org.za, www.plwc.org.za

**GVI Oncology /Cancer Buddies**, Rondebosch Medical Centre  
 Support Group. Contact: Linda Greeff 0825513310  
 linda.greeff@cancercare.co.za

**GVI Cape Gate Support group**: 10h00-12h00 in the Boardroom,  
 Cape Gate Oncology Centre. |  
 Contact: Caron Caron Majewski, 021 9443800

**GVI Oncology Somerset West** Group for advanced and metastatic  
 cancers. Contact person: Nicolene Andrews 0218512255

**Cancer.vive**, Frieda Henning 082 335 49912, info@cancervive.co.za

**Can-Sir**, 021 761 6070, Ismail-Ian Fife, ismailianf@can-sir.org.za  
 Support Group: 076 775 6099.

**Bosom Buddies**: 011 482 9492 or 0860 283 343,  
 Netcare Rehab Hospital, Milpark. www.bosombuddies.org.za.

**CanSurvive Head and Neck Support Group**, Rivonia,  
 Johannesburg. Contact Kim Lucas 0828801218 or lct@global.co.za

**Prostate Cancer Support Action Group**, MediClinic  
 Constantiaberg. Contact Alan Mitchell on 073 560 3067 or  
 alan.mitchell@telkomsa.net

**Wings of Hope** Breast Cancer Support Group  
 011 432 8891, info@wingsofhope.co.za

**St. John's Catholic Church Awareness Group**, enquiries to Pam -  
 011 678 3677 / 083 307 0315

**CHOC: Childhood Cancer Foundation SA**; Head Office:  
 086 111 3500; headoffice@choc.org.za; www.choc.org.za

**CANSA** National Office: Toll-free 0800 226622

**CANSA** Johannesburg Central: 011 648 0990, 19 St John Road,  
 Houghton, www.cansa.org.za

**CANSA** Pretoria: Contact Miemie du Plessis 012 361 4132 or  
 082 468 1521; Sr Ros Lorentz 012 329 3036 or 082 578 0578

**Reach for Recovery (R4R)** : Johannesburg Group, 011 487 2895.

**Reach for Recovery (R4R)** Pretoria Group: 082 212 9933

**Reach for recovery**, Cape Peninsula, 021 689 5347 or 0833061941

**Reach for Recovery**: Durban, Marika Wade, 072 248 0008,  
 swade@telkomsa.net

**Reach for Recovery**: Harare, Zimbabwe contact 707659.

**Breast Best Friend** Zimbabwe, e-mail bbfizim@gmail.com

**PinkDrive**: rina@pinkdrive.co.za, www.pinkdrive.co.za

**Cancer Centre - Harare**: 60 Livingstone Avenue, Harare  
 Tel: 707673 / 705522 / 707444 Fax: 732676 E-mail:  
 cancer@mweb.co.zw www.cancerhre.co.zw

## News in brief

### New method to increase chance of survival for some cancer patients

Researchers from Manchester and other UK centres, working with the Dutch Lung Cancer Group in Amsterdam, studied 247 patients aged 35 to 85 who were treated with thoracic radiotherapy (TRT) after chemotherapy and PCI and compared these with 248 patients who received standard chemo and PCI.

The researchers are now recommending that patients with extensive disease small cell lung cancer are given TRT to treat part of the chest after completing chemotherapy to help extend their lives. The research has been published in the *Lancet*.

The results of the trial showed that patients who had the additional treatment survived longer and had a better chance of not developing further cancer in the chest.

The TRT treatment did not influence survival rates in the first year but led to a significant increase in survival at the two years period – with 13% of patients surviving after TRT compared to 3% of patients in the chemotherapy alone group.

<http://tinyurl.com/qdt36tg>

### Antibiotics resistance: university research may help to tackle threat

Cris Laphorn, Head of American Society for Mass Spectrometry in Baltimore, has helped understand more about the presence of antibiotics in foods, such as meat, fruit and honey. He has combined ion mobility and mass spectrometry techniques with computer molecular modelling.

The technique promises to be able to better understand other problematic residues in foods such as insecticides, pesticides and steroids.

To date, the majority of his work has focused on tracing the widely-prescribed broad spectrum antibiotic Norfloxacin in the food chain.

Cris says: "England's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Dame Sally Davies, has described resistance to antibiotics as a catastrophic threat, on a par with terrorism, leading to deaths from routine minor surgery within 20 years.

"Antibiotics resistance is a danger for all consumers and drug residues in foods can cause serious reactions in hypersensitive individuals.

<http://tinyurl.com/p6rjoab>

### Treating advanced solid tumours with vaccines made from patient's own cells

Specialists at the Department of Paediatrics and the Area of Cell Therapy at the University Hospital of Navarra have initiated new treatment with a vaccine made from cells of the patient's own immune system (dendritic cells).

These cell units are prepared in the laboratory in order to "teach" the lymphocytes (cells responsible for the defence of the organism) to combat the tumour cells of advanced solid tumours. Amongst these are recurrent and/or metastatic sarcomas and tumours of the central nervous system (SNC).

The University Hospital of Navarra is the promoting research body and the only centre organising such trials, recently authorised by the Spanish Ministry of Health and the goal of which is to test the safety and efficacy of this treatment. The Carlos III Health Institute is taking part in its financing.

Sarcomas are malignant tumours that arise in bone or the soft tissue of the organism, such as cartilage, fat, muscle or blood vessels, amongst others. Its highest incidence rate is detected during adolescence and young adulthood.

<http://tinyurl.com/q3sdzt5>

### Stark differences in cancer screening between young and old women

While the Department of Health gears up for the next phase of its vaccine campaign to prevent cervical cancer in young girls, older South African women are left with an ineffective screening programme to prevent the killer cancer.

In October grade 4 girls will line up for their second vaccination against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) that will protect them from developing cervical cancer later in life. About 350 000 grade 4 girls nine years and older received the first injection of this two-dose vaccine in March and April this year.

Current statistics show that cervical cancer kills more South African women than any other type of cancer, and one in every 30 women in the country will develop the disease in her lifetime.

But the HPV vaccine campaign will never reach about 21 million South African women who are either too old to receive the vaccine or have already left school. Many of these women will also not be able to access the R1500 vaccine via the private sector, which only recommends the dual-dose vaccine for women 26 years old and younger.

South Africa has been praised for being the first African country to roll out the HPV vaccine without international aid. Although this ambitious undertaking will drastically reduce South Africa's rate of



### Bracelet helps support the Cancer Buddies toll-free line

All cancer patients and their families have free access to free cancer support through Cancer Buddies, a project of PLWC.

Cancer Buddies, who take the hands of the cancer patient, are all trained to take calls and deal with the needs of the patient and their journey. The hope and support offered by this service is incredible and assists the patients to feel more in control of their journey with cancer.

Help us to keep this wonderful lifeline operating!

Visit the website [www.cancerbuddies.org.za](http://www.cancerbuddies.org.za) for further information and to buy bracelets online. The beautiful handmade emblem of the wristband was designed and painted by the famous artist Pierre Volschenk.

## PLAY THE GAME -



Create a magical world, save a race of adorable minions and help scientists analyse real cancer data, all through a puzzle game on your mobile.

In *Reverse The Odds*, you help the Odds – colourful creatures whose world is falling into decline. By completing mini puzzle games and upgrading their land, you can restore the Odds back to their lively selves.

Scientists have huge amounts of data, and it needs to be analysed by human beings – computers aren't good enough at recognising the patterns required. By incorporating data analysis into *Reverse The Odds*, we can get thousands of players to help our scientists

learn more about different cancers including head and neck, lung, and bladder cancer.

The images you're seeing are magnified samples of real tumour tissue donated by former patients. By answering simple questions about this data, you're helping scientists to learn more about cancer, and more effectively prescribe the most appropriate treatment options for future patients.

You're analysing in the same way researchers do, but because there are a lot more of you, they can get through data much more quickly, freeing up more of our researchers valuable time and unveiling clues about cancer sooner.

Citizen science is all about getting as many people involved as possible, so don't worry if you're not always 100% sure about what cells you can see. Sometimes even researchers disagree! That's why they have back up mechanisms in place. Lots of other people will see the same pictures as you, and checks are in place to spot wayward analysis.

The information is completely anonymous and will never include any personal details. If you wish, you can switch off the analytics software on the Options screen.

Download the free app from iTunes, Google Play or from Amazon.com.

cervical cancer in the future, tens of thousands of women will still die from the disease before the effects of the vaccine start to show.

The Department of Health is supposedly relooking its cervical cancer prevention policy, but their focus is currently on the roll out of the vaccine for girls.

<http://tinyurl.com/n9n324q>

## Cancer-detecting yogurt could replace colonoscopies

A spoonful of yogurt could soon offer a cheap and simple way to screen for colorectal cancer.

Sangeeta Bhatia, a professor at MIT, is working to replace costly and uncomfortable colonoscopies and MRIs with a helping of yogurt followed by a urine test—a cheap method that could improve the early diagnosis of colorectal cancer.

Bhatia is developing synthetic molecules that can be introduced into the body via yogurt, and will interact with cancer in a way that produces telltale biomarkers. These molecules can then be detected easily when passed in urine.

The first iteration of the technique involved the use of lab instruments to analyse urine and find the telltale markers. Now Bhatia has developed a paper-based urine test—like the one you'd use for pregnancy. So far this test has been demonstrated in mice for colorectal cancer and liver fibrosis.

The nanoparticle work, described in a paper earlier this year, requires an injection. In new, as-yet-unpublished work, Bhatia is developing a way to deliver the nanoparticles by modifying a type of bacteria found in yogurt. The bacteria produces the nanoparticle biomarkers by interacting with a tumour. Because the test requires no specialised equipment, it will be particularly helpful in poor countries, she says, where few people are currently screened for common cancers. But it might also replace or augment colonoscopies.

If detected early, 90 percent of people with colorectal cancer survive for at least five years. But only 40 percent of people are diagnosed early, partly because so few people get screened, according to the American Cancer Society.

<http://www.technologyreview.com/news/531241/cancer-detecting-yogurt-could-replace-colonosopies/>

## Drug gives big survival boost against type of advanced breast cancer

Adding the drug Perjeta to a standard medication, Herceptin, may give women with a form of advanced breast cancer a significant boost in survival, a new study finds.

The finding is limited to patients with tumours called HER2-positive that have spread (metastasised). And experts say that this type of treatment-linked boost in survival - an average of nearly 16 extra months of life - is very rare in cancer research.

Dr. Stephanie Bernik, chief of surgical oncology at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, described the new findings as "extremely exciting."

"Great strides have been made in treating breast cancer, and it is particularly encouraging that we now have additional treatment to offer patients with HER2-positive metastatic disease that extends survival," she said.

"Treatment regimens continue to become more tailored to a patient's individual cancer, lessening unwanted side effects from drugs that may not be beneficial, and focusing on treatments that have been shown to improve outcomes for a specific tumour," added Bernik, who was not involved with the study.

"Adding Perjeta to treatment with Herceptin and chemotherapy resulted in the longest survival observed to date in a clinical study of people with HER2-positive metastatic breast cancer," study lead author Dr. Sandra Horning, chief medical officer at Genentech, said in

a company news release. She called the survival boost "a magnitude of improvement we rarely see in clinical trials in advanced cancer."

The drug comes with a hefty price tag, though. According to The New York Times, patients in the United States can expect a bill of about \$5,900 for a month's supply of Perjeta. That's in addition to the \$5,300 monthly cost of Herceptin, the newspaper said.

<http://tinyurl.com/pqw4r8w>

## Yoga may help with fatigue-related symptoms in cancer survivors

A common side effect of cancer treatment is fatigue: approximately one-third of cancer patients experience persistent fatigue. According to a new research study funded by the National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) at the US National Institutes of Health (Project Number: U01-AT003682), yoga may help cancer survivors deal with fatigue.

This study compared the effects of two different interventions on cancer-related fatigue in a small number of breast cancer survivors. In this experiment, breast cancer survivors were randomised to receive an Iyengar yoga or health education intervention for 12 weeks. Iyengar yoga is a traditional form of Hatha yoga and uses different poses and breathing techniques for various medical conditions. The health education classes consisted of lectures on topics of interest to breast cancer survivors (such as psychosocial issues in cancer survivorship) and discussions. All study participants completed fatigue-related questionnaires before starting their intervention, immediately after their intervention, and three months following their intervention.

At the start of the study, participants from both groups believed

that their intervention would help improve fatigue symptoms. The participants in the yoga group reported significant decreases in fatigue severity and increases in vigour from the start of the intervention to the three-month follow up compared to participants in the health education group. In addition, the participants who had completed the yoga intervention were significantly more confident in their ability to manage fatigue than were participants in the health education group. Although participants from both groups reported a decline in depressive symptoms during the course of the study, larger reductions were reported by subjects in the yoga group. These findings suggest that a specialised yoga intervention may help improve persistent fatigue symptoms in cancer survivors.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22180393>

## Secure Italian military lab to grow medical marijuana

Italy announced on Thursday it would grow medical marijuana at a secure military lab outside Florence and distribute it through pharmacies to slash costs and make it more easily available to the sick.

The use of medical marijuana or cannabis derivatives to treat patients has been legal in Italy since 2007, but only a few dozen people took it through the national healthcare system in 2013 because of its prohibitive cost.

The military lab produces so-called "orphan" drugs no longer made by large pharmaceutical companies that are needed to treat rare diseases, Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti said after signing an agreement with Health Minister Beatrice Lorenzin.

"The institute already produces some medicines," Pinotti said,

**Guest Speakers:**  
Dr. Moshina Kisten • Dr. Anca Pirjol

**Panel discussion** with Linda Greef  
Founder of People Living with Cancer and Cancerbuddies

**Guest Artist:**  
Sam Landers

**Cost of tickets:**  
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**Life after  
metastatic  
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sumptuous breakfast  
on Saturday  
25 October from  
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explaining the unusual case of tasking the military to grow pot. "And we can guarantee security conditions."

Lorenzin said she wanted to "debunk all the cultural or ideological myths" about using certain drugs in health care.

"We already allow the use of drugs in medical treatment that are opiate or cocaine derivatives, and now we'll use cannabis," she told reporters. "Recreational drug use is harmful. But cannabis can be used to help treat certain pathologies or alleviate pain," she said.

Possessing, selling and growing marijuana are illegal in Italy

[http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/831975?nlid=66124\\_1842&src=wnl\\_edit\\_medp\\_wir&uac=985585G&spon=17](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/831975?nlid=66124_1842&src=wnl_edit_medp_wir&uac=985585G&spon=17)

## Free breast cancer screening at Pretoria Station

Commuters boarding trains and taxis at the Pretoria Station will now have free access to breast cancer screening, thanks to the opening of Hello Clinic at the station.

Officially opened by Social Development Deputy Minister Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu, the clinic will provide the service not only to the commuters but also residents in the vicinity of the station.

The clinic forms part of an initiative between government, Metropolitan Health, PinkDrive, Bidvest and Motion Pathology.

Speaking at the event, the Deputy Minister emphasised that the opening of the clinic is not only about detecting cancer but promoting a healthy lifestyle.

"Social development is the mother, father and heartbeat of the nation. When the mother passes on, it is us that must pick up the pieces. Our role is to strengthen families. We have a responsibility to assist families become strong and healthy so they can assist us in combating poverty," Bogopane-Zulu said.

She added that they want to make use of the PinkDrive truck to conduct cervical cancer and HIV testing as well. The PinkDrive truck will provide free cancer screening and HIV testing.

She said that the department will provide funding to ensure that the clinic has dedicated sign language interpreters to strengthen the work of PinkDrive.

The department will also use the PinkDrive truck to provide dignity packages to girl learners in rural areas.



## Phalula sisters triumph in Joburg SPAR 10km Women's Challenge

The Phalula twins had much to celebrate after the Johannesburg leg of the SPAR Women's 10km Challenge at the Wanderers Club on Sunday.

Lebogang Phalula romped home in first place and her sister, Diana-Lebo, clinched the Grand Prix, after finishing in fifth position - for which she will receive a Nissan Micra.

Lebogang finished the race in 33.34 minutes, seven seconds ahead of Rutendo Nyahora, who was closing in on her in the last kilometre.

"I just hung in there," said Phalula. "I tested positive for drugs in a Challenge race in Pretoria and was banned for six months," she said. "It was hard to come back into running after that, especially as the banned substance was given to me by my coach. Now I'm running clean and I want to prove to everyone that I am not a drug cheat. I am so happy to be running well again."

Third home was Lesotho runner Mamorallo Tjoka, in 34.43 minutes.

Diana-Lebo won the Cape Town and Port Elizabeth races in record time, but was then hampered by a hamstring injury. She said she was thrilled to have won the Grand Prix.

Nearly 13 000 runners took part in the 10km Challenge and the 5km Fun Run, with proceeds from the race going to breast cancer support group Reach for Recovery. They received a cheque for R 50 000.



Lebogang Phalula celebrates her win as she crosses the finish line first at the SPAR Women's Challenge race in Johannesburg on 12 October.

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