

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Kinder, Gentler Chemotherapy

EVANSTON, IL - With the advent of technology brought to the U.S. from France, having to postpone, even stop, regular life activities to go to a chemo ward to receive chemotherapy treatments, may be a thing of the past. Utilizing a portable, computerized pump that can fit in a fanny pack, patients receive their chemotherapy at a time when it will be most effective and least toxic.

"Using a portable, computerized pump to deliver chemotherapy allows patients to participate in normal daily activities such as walking, jogging, yoga, and even sleeping while they are receiving their treatments," states cancer specialist Keith Block, MD, who brought this technology to the U.S, and is a member of the National Cancer Institute's PDQ Cancer CAM Editorial Board. "This unique pump allows for a more specialized method of chemotherapy administration than just modifying the timing of the drug alone. This revolutionary delivery system has demonstrated in large randomized trials its potential to improve survival."

One patient, LisaAnn McConnell, used to go in-line skating along Lake Michigan wearing that special fanny pack. Little did anyone know that the fanny pack she wore was administering chemotherapy for her colon cancer.

"It allows for larger doses to be delivered more frequently, with higher efficacy and lower toxicity," said pioneering chronobiologist Dr. William Hrushesky, a senior clinical investigator at the Dorn VA Medical Center in South Carolina, one of just a handful of U.S. locations that offers chronotherapy. "It's kinder, gentler and at the same time, more aggressive and effective."

"Every drug has an optimal time when it is least toxic and most effective," says Dr. Block. "For cancer treatment, this is determined by several factors, including the biological uniqueness of the particular drug being given, the time when the specific type of cancer cells divide the most, when the normal healthy cells of the patient generally divide the least, the patient's circadian clock and individual rest-activity cycles, and even the time zone the person resides in."

"We have found that often patients receiving their chemotherapy this way reduce what would have been recurring side effects of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and fatigue," explained Dr. Block cofounder and Medical/Scientific Director of the Block Center for Integrative Cancer Treatment, and Director of Integrative Medical Education at the University of Illinois College of Medicine. This is important because the debilitation caused by chemo can cause patients to reduce or even stop treatments that could otherwise help them win their battle with cancer." In fact, current research shows that up to 1/3 of chemotherapy patients abandon treatments prematurely due to the side effects.

According to Dr. Block, "Even after prior treatments have failed patients, using our specialized pumps to administer chronomodulated chemotherapy, we have been able to re-challenge these same patients with the identical drug regimen and this time around gotten successful results."

McConnell, who was diagnosed with colon cancer at age 46, is the third generation in her family to have been diagnosed with this form of cancer, and until now there have been no survivors. “I’m happy to say that my doctors now think that my cancer is 100% gone,” says McConnell, now 47.

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The Block Center for Integrative Cancer Treatment, located in Evanston, Illinois, was founded in 1980 by Penny and Keith Block, MD. The Center's research-based treatment integrates an innovative approach to the best of conventional medicine with scientifically sound complementary therapies – therapeutic nutrition, botanical and phytonutrient supplementation, prescriptive exercise, and systematic mind-body strategies – to enhance the recovery process.

Dr. Block is Director of Integrative Medical Education at the College of Medicine at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and a member of the National Cancer Institute’s PDQ Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) Editorial Board in Bethesda, MD,. The Block Center regularly participates in industry-sponsored clinical trials of new drugs, large-scale drug monitoring studies, and research on medical communication and patient perception. The Center’s research staff has participated in laboratory and clinical research projects with investigators from a number of universities and clinical centers, including the University of Illinois at Chicago, Bar-Ilan University in Israel, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, and the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. The Block Center is currently the only private North American medical center using chronomodulated chemotherapy.