

Cancer Prevention

T.A.L.K.
Teach, Advocate, Listen & Know

FEBRUARY 2025

A Level Playing Field Can Lead to Cancer Prevention

February marks the first anniversary of our Cancer T.A.L.K newsletter. Thank you for being a part of the Cancer T.A.L.K community over the last year. If you would like to continue to receive this monthly newsletter (at no cost to you), please sign up by scanning the QR code below or emailing us at HCC-COE@upmc.edu.

We hope you can use the information in our newsletters to learn about ways to reduce cancer risk. This month, we celebrate awareness for National Cancer Prevention and Black History Month.

Our focus is on steps that are important to reduce your risk for cancer and help prevent it. Some cancers can be prevented and detected early through health screenings. Getting the age-appropriate cancer screenings that you qualify for is important.

We know that cancer impacts many people but not equally. This is true especially in Black communities that face barriers to cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and survival. These barriers are referred to as social determinants of health and are nonmedical factors that affect the health and well-being of individuals. These factors include: an individual's financial security, access to quality education and health care, workplace, living environment, age, and place of birth.



When there is health equity, everyone has a fair opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To help, we recently launched our Community Health Worker program to connect community members who are facing barriers to access what they need. I look forward to introducing our new Community Health Workers in the next issue of Cancer T.A.L.K.

Susan Radio

PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Susan Radio

Subscribe to this newsletter, connect with us for an upcoming event, or learn more about cancer research, screenings, and our other services:

PHONE: 412-647-1809

EMAIL: HCC-COE@upmc.edu

WEBSITE: hillmanresearch.upmc.edu/outreach/



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UPMC Hillman Cancer Center to Honor Excellence in Pursuit of Health Care Equity

John Moon will join the students of the graduate oncology program and the program in microbiology and immunology in celebration of Black History Month on February 11, 2025.

Moon is a former Freedom House emergency medical technician and retired assistant chief of Pittsburgh Emergency Medical Service.

Moon was raised in Pittsburgh's Hill District and joined Freedom House, America's first emergency medical service, in 1972. He continued to work in emergency medicine for more than five decades and now works to preserve the Freedom House legacy and mentor the next generation of emergency and community responders in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



John Moon

Research Spotlight

Natacha De Genna, PhD, is the assistant director for our Office of Community Outreach and Engagement. She has been studying tobacco use for two decades and was recently selected by the Society of Research in Nicotine and Tobacco for its 2025 Class of Fellows. Her research focuses on younger pregnant people. This research has helped people to better understand what is related to tobacco use before, during, and after pregnancy. De Genna states that "pregnancy is an important opportunity to quit smoking but even though most people want to quit, they may not be getting enough or the right kind of help to quit."

As we celebrate National Cancer Prevention and Black History events this month, De Genna wants people to know that research has shown that people in the Black community have higher death rates from tobacco-related disease including cancer. The tobacco industry has targeted Black communities with more advertising in Black neighborhoods and magazines like Ebony and Jet. In addition, Black children and adults are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke. Although more Black people attempt to quit

smoking compared to White people, they face many barriers, such as not being offered clinical advice and medication to help them quit.

De Genna is currently partnering with Black people who smoked tobacco and marijuana during pregnancy to develop a new intervention to help pregnant people quit smoking based on their experiences and expertise. If you would like more information, please email youngmoms@pitt.edu. What scientists have developed on their own so far just isn't working. The rates of smoking during pregnancy have not declined among Black people in the past 10 years.

"It's time to work together now to reduce tobacco use so that we can do a better job preventing cancer," says De Genna.

For more information, call the PA Free Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).



Dr. Natacha De Genna

No Menthol Sunday



On May 18, 2025, we will highlight the harmful impact tobacco has on Black communities known as NO MENTHOL SUNDAY. This third Sunday of May marks the 11th year that faith leaders across the United States gather to educate congregants (churchgoers) about smoking, vaping, and the role of menthol and other flavors initiating tobacco addiction. There is no safe form of tobacco. Staying tobacco free is the best way to protect your health. Tobacco hurts and kills people. In fact, smoking causes about one out of every five deaths in the United States.

Quitting tobacco is a process. Whether you are thinking about quitting to save money, get healthy, or protect your children/grandchildren, taking the first step can be hard. For more information about smoking in the Black community, call the PA Free Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669). Quitline coaches are there to help you quit smoking today. It's free, convenient, safe and secure.

Save the Date!

2025

Mark your calendar for upcoming events that the office of COE will be hosting or participating in:

MARCH 15

Bridge Ministry 4th Annual Prayer Breakfast 10 a.m. at Clark Memorial Baptist Church, 1301 Glenn St., Homestead, PA 15120. We welcome cancer patients, caregivers and survivors. For more information and to RSVP by March 9, please contact evangelist Laurice Carr at 716-444-635.

MAY 18

Learn more and contact us HCC-COE@upmc.edu for your congregation to participate in **No Menthol Sunday!**

African American Self-Help Support Group meets on the third Friday of each month from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Cooper Conference Center at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center (5115 Centre Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232). Parking is validated. Call 412-647-1809 to register and/or with any questions.

WORD SEARCH

National Cancer Prevention Month

Survival	House Intervention
Treatment	Quitting
Detection	Tobacco
Vegetables	Menthol
Fruits	Food Insecurity
Exercise	Barriers
Social Determinants	Screenings
Freedom	Prevention

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Office of Community Outreach and Engagement

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center
5150 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Recipe of the month

Creamy Mac and Cheese with Broccoli

Recipe courtesy of: American Cancer Society

**Nutritional Information**

Serving size: 6

Each serving provides:

Calories: 530
Fat: 29 g
Saturated Fat: 17 g
Cholesterol: 85 mg
Sodium: 600 mg
Carbohydrate: 41 g
Dietary Fiber: 3 g
Sugars: 6 g
Protein: 28 g
Calcium: 650 mg
Potassium: 360 mg

Ingredients

- 8 ounces shaped pasta, such as elbows, small shells, or mini penne
- 3 cups chopped broccoli
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 3 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided use
- 1 tablespoon breadcrumbs

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Cook the pasta about 4 minutes. Add the broccoli and cook for 1 minute. Drain, rinse with cold water, drain again, and set aside.
3. In a saucepan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes. Add the flour and mustard and whisk for 1 minute. Gradually add the milk and bring to a boil, whisking constantly. Reduce the heat and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes or until thickened and smooth, whisking frequently. Add the cheddar and stir to combine. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the Parmesan and add the rest to the sauce. Stir until combined.
4. Combine broccoli and pasta, transfer to the baking pan, and top with breadcrumbs and Parmesan.
5. Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake for 5 minutes.