There are dozens of subtypes of leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma. But these cancers all have something in common: they flow through the bloodstream and lymph system.

Grouped under the heading “blood cancers,” these fluid tumors generally can’t be removed surgically, as might be the case with a solid mass. However, treatments are available and medical advances are leading to promising new therapies that may help current and future patients.

“Blood cancers are diseases that begin either in the body’s bone marrow or blood-producing systems, or in the lymph nodes,” says Radhakrishnan Ramchandren, M.D., assistant professor in the Department of Oncology and member of the Malignant Hematology Oncology Multidisciplinary Team at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Center. “Blood circulates in all of our organs and lymph nodes. This allows these ‘liquid’ tumors to flow and migrate through the body.”

Cancerous blood cells may interrupt normal blood cell development, which can prevent the body from performing functions like fighting off infections or preventing serious bleeding.

“Some blood cancers are not as easy as others to detect at an early stage and not all blood cancers require treatment immediately after diagnosis,” Dr. Ramchandren says. “Some blood cancers grow slowly, others grow quickly.”

Since blood cancers like solid cancers develop at the cellular level, doctors typically use chemotherapy, sometimes in combination with radiation therapy, to treat the disease. In certain instances a stem cell or “bone marrow” transplant may be necessary. Fortunately for patients, Karmanos’ bone marrow transplant program is one of the largest and most active transplant centers in the United States. The Karmanos bone marrow transplant team also reports some of the best survival outcomes for related and unrelated stem cell transplantation, according to Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Registry data.

Cure rates for blood cancers vary. Some diseases, like Hodgkin’s lymphoma, have about an 80 percent cure rate, while others cannot be cured at all but can be managed for many years, Dr. Ramchandren says.

“Many patients are also living longer with blood cancers,” he says. “We have a much better understanding of cancer biology than we did even 10 years ago. That knowledge is helping to improve the blood cancer survival rate.”

The Clinical Trials Program at Karmanos is conducting many studies that may lead to treatment breakthroughs for blood cancers. Patients who opt for a clinical trial receive newly developed cancer-fighting drugs that aren’t available commercially or in most community hospitals.

“We have many clinical trials evaluating new treatments for a large variety of blood cancer subtypes,” Dr. Ramchandren says. “Some of these drugs have been very effective and have already received FDA approvals. We’re continually developing new treatments, which are promising for patients who are diagnosed with these diseases.”
Dear Readers,

Welcome to the July edition of Hope magazine. As we roll out this latest publication, Karmanos and McLaren Health Care continue their clinical integration process to create the largest cancer research and provider network in Michigan. As someone who has recently joined Karmanos as the hospital’s president, I can attest to the fact that there are many exciting activities going on right now.

As evidence of that, patients who come to Karmanos, as well as those from around the country and the world, will soon have access to proton therapy. It is a more precise form of radiation that spares healthy tissue and organs from unnecessary radiation exposure. We are one of the very few centers in the country to offer proton therapy. You can read about this new technology in this edition.

This magazine also features stories about how our doctors treat the various subtypes of blood cancer, how to take care of yourself once you finish with your cancer treatments, why it’s important to have emotional support when you’re diagnosed with cancer, and a very inspiring story about one young woman’s journey through brain cancer treatments.

We hope that you enjoy Hope magazine. As always, drop us a line to let us know what you think and the stories you’d like to read.

Margaret Dimond, Ph.D.
President, Karmanos Cancer Hospital

Karmanos a winner with women

The Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Center recently received a Women’s Choice Award as one of America’s Best Hospitals for Cancer Care by WomenCertified Inc. Below is a discussion about the award.

What is the Women’s Choice Award?
The Women’s Choice Award is based on a cancer hospital’s oncology services and patient recommendations. Judges also looked at Karmanos’ 2013 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Clinical and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) data, as well as its high American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer standing.

What is WomenCertified Inc.?
WomenCertified Inc. is a consumer advocacy group for women and has the goal of simplifying a woman’s healthcare choices. The group sets higher patient standards and expectations by identifying those hospitals that are focused on delivering a great patient experience.

What does the award mean for Karmanos?
Karmanos is extraordinarily pleased to receive this award because it reaffirms our mission to be among the top cancer centers in the country. It is gratifying that an organization that empowers women considers us to be among the best centers in America for cancer care.
In December 2010, Arianne Baker woke one morning with a splitting headache. She took a sick day off work and went to lie down. She slept for a total of 19 hours.

“I was going through a lot of stress at the time,” says Baker, a 29-year-old preschool teacher from Marshall, Mich. “My doctor diagnosed it as depression. But after another month of headaches, disorientation and sleepiness, I knew something wasn’t right.”

A subsequent MRI showed Baker had a tumor in both the left and right frontal lobes of her brain. She visited the Karmanos Cancer Center in January 2011 and met with neurosurgeon Sandeep Mittal, M.D., co-leader of the Neuro-Oncology Multidisciplinary Team.

Because brain cancer can be difficult to detect at an early stage, it’s not unusual for patients like Baker to receive an incorrect initial diagnosis, Dr. Mittal says.

“With any brain lesion, the symptoms depend on the location of the mass,” he says. “If the tumor is at the area of the brain that controls speech, a person can have difficulty with language function. A tumor near the motor or sensory cortex can cause weakness, numbness or tingling. A person may have difficulty walking or may have balance problems. A tumor can also cause pressure in the brain, leading to significant headaches, nausea, vomiting and double vision. Sometimes patients with lesions have no neurological symptoms until the tumor becomes very large.”

Depending on the tumor’s location, size and growth rate, treatment typically involves surgery followed by radiation and chemotherapy.

“Better outcomes relate to the extent that the tumor can be removed,” he says. “For patients with malignant brain tumors, we now frequently see them doing well two or three years after surgery. Despite their aggressiveness, brain cancer is survivable. Arianne Baker is proof of that.”

At Karmanos, Dr. Mittal and his colleagues utilize advanced MRI techniques using a high-resolution 3T scanner as well as specialized surgical equipment and techniques (such as Brainlab neuronavigation and brain mapping while the patient is awake), which help surgeons perform more accurate surgery to reduce side effects.

Dr. Mittal performed two surgeries in February 2011 to remove Baker’s brain tumors. During her second surgery, which included removing the tumor involving the speech and motor parts of the brain, she experienced slower motor functioning and difficulty speaking for 17 days. But, as expected, after extensive physical rehabilitation and speech therapy, she regained her speech and strength, returned to work, and is living normally. Best of all – she’s cancer-free.

“I feel great and am more active than ever,” Baker says. “I was very determined to make a full recovery. I’m so glad I was persistent with getting the right diagnosis. As a patient, I knew myself best and it was that persistence that made the difference. My family, my faith and the care I received at Karmanos helped me overcome cancer.”
Cancer patients across Michigan, including those at Karmanos, and around the globe can soon take advantage of a new weapon to fight cancer – proton therapy – a more precise form of radiation therapy that is highly effective, causes less damage to healthy tissue, and has fewer side effects.

Proton therapy will be available next year at McLaren Health Care’s Proton Therapy Center in Flint. The Karmanos Cancer Institute and McLaren Health Care recently joined forces to create the largest cancer research and provider network in Michigan. Patients across Michigan and around the world will have access to cutting-edge cancer treatments, like proton therapy, as a result of this alliance.

“Proton therapy delivers most of its energy to the desired tumor site, completely stopping once the desired target is reached,” says Hesham Gayar, M.D., chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology at McLaren Health Care-Flint and medical director of the McLaren Proton Therapy Center. “Conversely, standard radiation therapy delivers radiation along a path through the body to the site of the tumor. Since proton therapy is more precise, we can spare surrounding healthy tissue and organs from unnecessary radiation exposure. That means fewer side effects and better outcomes for patients.”

Proton therapy is ideal for tumors at or near radiation sensitive organs. It can be used for brain, neck, lung, prostate and spine cancers. Pediatric patients also benefit from less radiation exposure to their developing bodies. Proton therapy will give Karmanos physicians the opportunity to evaluate when it is most effective in improving patient outcomes and quality of life. “We will be participating in multiple clinical trials to define the best treatment model to use,” Dr. Gayar adds.

“About 15 years ago, only two centers in the country offered proton therapy, and it was usually reserved for extremely difficult cases,” Dr. Gayar says. “Now, the technology is becoming more widely available. Today, there are only 14 proton therapy centers in the country, with none in Michigan, Ohio or Canada. Our center will fill a big need when it opens.”

Sung Park, Ph.D., chief physicist at the McLaren Proton Therapy Center, noted that the proton therapy machine at McLaren will be one of the most advanced devices available in any clinical setting.

“This allows us to deliver proton beams deeper within the body and with more accuracy,” said Dr. Park. “We also have pencil-beam scanning, which allows us to deliver modulated individual proton beams at varied intensity. Combining these technologies in one center will help maximize patient outcomes. Our center will truly offer the next generation in proton therapy treatments.”

To learn more about the Proton Therapy Center at McLaren, call 1-855-MY PROTON (1-855-697-7686) or visit mclaren.org/ProtonTherapy.
It looks like a prop from a Star Trek movie, but Google Glass is hardly the stuff of science fiction. This “wearable technology” device is helping to enhance patient care and communication between medical residents and supervising physicians at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Center.

Google Glass (google.com/glass) is a hands-free, head-mounted device that acts like a smartphone. You can take pictures, send a text message, surf the Web and perform a host of other functions by voice command, head tilt or touch. The Google-made glasses don’t have lenses (although prescription-glass lenses are in the works). Instead, the battery-powered headset projects images onto the user’s retina. To see what’s on the display, the user simply glances upward.

To explore Google Glass’ medical applications, Karmanos and the Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSU SOM) recently purchased two units. In May, the Karmanos Head and Neck Oncology Multidisciplinary Team began using the device in a pilot project involving microvascular tissue transplants. Many of these surgeries involve reconstructing a patient’s tongue, jaw, cheek, and sometimes their entire face.

“These long and extensive procedures require stitching together arteries and veins,” says Sagar Patel, M.D., a resident physician with the Head and Neck Oncology Multidisciplinary Team at Karmanos and WSU SOM Department of Otolaryngology, head and neck surgery. “Because the blood supply between these tissues is very tenuous during the immediate post-operative period, the tissue can die if not monitored closely. Nurses must check the tissue every hour and physicians must check it every four hours.”

During the immediate post-operative period, a resident physician uses Google Glass to record the status of a transplant and transmit patient information to the supervising physician.

“Instead of describing the tissue status verbally over the phone, I can use Google Glass to send a real-time, high-definition image or video to the supervising physician,” Dr. Patel says. “If there’s a problem, the physician can communicate with me directly. Using Google Glass in this way will enhance communication between medical staff and lead to greater surgical success.”

Karmanos is among the first medical centers in the world to use Google Glass to transmit patient information among medical staff.

“Google Glass is a very exciting technological development,” Dr. Patel says. “It could become a very valuable tool, not just for communication, but also for physician education. For example, a resident could see a surgery directly from the surgeon’s point of view instead of peering over his shoulder.

“Karmanos is always seeking new and innovative ways of defeating cancer. We’re pioneers in using this technology and look forward to using it in a variety of potential applications.”

For more information about a cancer diagnosis or treatment, call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.
Cancer treatments are over and you can’t wait to get back into the swing of things. Sometimes, though, side effects can linger or occur after chemotherapy or radiation therapy is through. If you’re experiencing this, help is available, says Kathleen Hardy, oncology social worker and counselor at Karmanos Cancer Center.

“Some long-term or delayed side effects are pain, fatigue, neuropathy (a tingling sensation in the hands or feet), hormonal, weight or cognitive changes, or fear of cancer recurrence,” Hardy says. “They can diminish or remain indefinitely. The side effects for every cancer, treatment and individual are different.”

Although doctors can’t always predict the potential long-term side effects for every patient, it’s important to stay in touch with your health care provider if side effects remain or new ones develop, Hardy says.

“Keep your follow-up appointments and tell your physician about any ongoing or new side effects,” she says. “Through our counseling program, patients can learn how to live with uncertainty about possible cancer recurrence without feeling anxious. We also offer stress-reducing activities like art therapy, massage and meditation through our Healing Arts Program. No matter what a patient is experiencing, we’re ready to help.”

Deb Olszewski, Supportive Care Services nurse practitioner at the Karmanos Cancer Center, also offers tips on what to do before resuming regular activities:

**Talk to Your Doctor or their NP or PA**
Ask your physician for a copy of your treatment summary in case you need treatment for a subsequent illness. Also, ask if there are any treatment-specific concerns to watch out for in the future.

**Make a Wise Nutrition Plan**
Some patients may have lost weight and need to regain it, while others may tend to gain too much. Karmanos dieticians can offer nutritional guidance during and after treatment and can set you on a plan to incorporate healthy choices into your meal time routine. Concentrating on fruits, veggies, whole grains and lean protein is good for every one!

**Focus on your Feelings**
It is natural to be concerned about a recurrence of cancer, but dwelling on fear is not healthy for body or spirit. If you find you cannot get past worry or have other problems adapting to life after cancer, Karmanos can help provide counseling, support groups and referrals to community resources.

**See a Physical Therapist**
If you feel tired, weak or lethargic after treatment, Kyle Dorcey, DPT, clinical physical therapist specialist at the Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan, has advice on how to regain strength and stamina:

It is recommended that you start on an exercise program. If you want information on how to start an exercise program, please see a physical therapist or have your physician refer you to a physical therapist.

**CONTACT US**
For more information about a cancer diagnosis or treatment, call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.
Dealing with Distress

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IS PART OF CANCER TREATMENT

After a cancer diagnosis, many patients focus solely on the physical side of the disease. But it’s also important to address emotional needs during treatment.

“Dealing with patients’ psychological issues can help them experience better quality of life and have better cancer outcomes,” says Larmender Davis, director of Social Work and Support Services at the Karmanos Cancer Center. “That’s why it’s important for family and friends to provide emotional support and help relieve stress. Simple things like driving the patient to their appointments, helping with dinner, or picking the kids up from school can really help.”

To supplement a patient’s support system, Karmanos offers oncology social workers, a counselor, spiritual counseling and various therapeutic activities.

“Our social workers help patients deal with a new diagnosis and regain a sense of control,” she says. “Our counselors help patients and families manage distress. If needed, we can refer them to outside resources. We also have volunteers who offer activities like yoga, music therapy and pet therapy.

“Cancer patients should never have to go through their journey alone. Karmanos is ready to help them meet their emotional needs.”

For more supportive resources and information, please contact 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.

EMPOWERING EXPERIENCE

Support groups help patients and families thrive

In many cases, cancer patients receive lots of love and support from family and friends. Yet, talking with others who’ve shared a similar cancer journey can yield additional benefits.

Karmanos Cancer Center support groups help patients and their families manage the challenges associated with a cancer diagnosis, says Kathleen Hardy, Karmanos oncology social worker and counselor.

“A support group can make a huge difference in your life,” she says. “They can help reduce tension and fatigue, lower risk of depression and promote healing. Patients might learn they can still pursue their passions, even with chronic disease. Or a family member might gain a wealth of information about a particular cancer from people who’ve already been through the experience. Most people who participate in a support group feel they’ve gained camaraderie, empowerment and better coping skills.”

Karmanos support groups are free and available to everyone. For a complete list of current groups, visit karmanos.org/support-groups. To learn if a support group is right for you, contact Kathleen Hardy at 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or e-mail her at hardyk@karmanos.org.

Music Magic

NEW THERAPY PROGRAM COMFORTS CANCER PATIENTS

Music isn’t just a fun way to express yourself. It’s also an effective tool to help cancer patients reduce pain and fight fatigue.

Starting this summer, the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Center will offer the Jeffrey Frank Wacks Music Therapy Program to patients in its bone marrow treatment unit during what is typically a two-week hospital stay. Karmanos is one of 13 organizations nationally to receive the LIVESTRONG® Community Impact Project award to implement the music therapy program.

It will also be open to chemotherapy patients at Karmanos’ Weisberg Cancer Treatment Center in Farmington Hills.

Patients do not need prior musical training or experience to participate. A trained music therapist will lead individual sessions with patients, says Kathleen Hardy, Karmanos oncology social worker and counselor.

“Research shows musical activities can help patients manage the physical and emotional side effects of cancer,” she says. “Music can be peaceful and relaxing or it can help energize a patient who feels fatigued.”

The music therapy program is named in honor of the late Jeffrey Frank Wacks, a gifted artist who turned to music and his guitar to find comfort during his treatment for non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. He lost his battle at the age of 27.

To learn more about these free music therapy sessions and how to participate, contact Kathleen Hardy at 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or send an e-mail to hardyk@karmanos.org.
Better treatments. Better outcomes.

KARMANOS PRIMARY TREATMENT LOCATIONS

**DETROIT**

**Karmanos Cancer Center**
4100 John R
Detroit, MI 48201

**FARMINGTON HILLS**

**Lawrence and Idell Weisberg Cancer Treatment Center**
31995 Northwestern Highway
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

**MONROE – RADIATION ONCOLOGY**

**Monroe Cancer Center**
800 Stewart Road
Monroe, MI 48162

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**Karmanos Partners Events**

**21st Annual Partners Events**

*honoring Mary Kay and Keith Crain*

**PARTNERS REACHING FOR A CURE**

The Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute’s Partners Committee is presenting the 21st Annual Partners Events to raise critical funds for cancer research programs at the Institute. The Partners Events offer guests a unique, high-end experience. This two-part fundraiser consists of The Classic, held in late summer, and The Night, held in the fall.

**PARTNERS GOLF CLASSIC**

**Date:** Monday, August 25, 2014
**Tee Times:** 8 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
**Location:** Franklin Hills Country Club

**PARTNERS NIGHT**

**Date:** Saturday, September 20, 2014
**Time:** 7 p.m.
**Location:** Detroit Public Library

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional information about the event, visit www.karmanos.org/partners For sponsorship opportunities, contact 313-576-8111, benderm@karmanos.org

For general event inquiries and information on individual ticket sales, contact 313.576.8106 or laurinl@karmanos.org

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**Better treatments. Better outcomes.**

1-800-KARMANOS

**FOR QUESTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION,**

you may call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You may also reach us by emailing: info@karmanos.org