When Tom Kalas of Rochester Hills learned he had Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML), he didn’t seek treatment at the community hospital where was diagnosed. Instead, he sought another expert opinion.

“I wanted to consult leukemia cancer experts in order to get the best treatment and care possible,” says Kalas, 49. “I chose a renowned out-of-state cancer hospital. After conducting a bone marrow biopsy, the doctors said my condition was rapidly deteriorating. They didn’t want to take any chances, so they admitted me immediately the next morning.”

Kalas began chemotherapy, but soon faced life-threatening complications. While hospitalized for six weeks, he lost 50 pounds, suffered from 105-degree daily fevers, and had numerous other side effects. Dozens of tests and scans offered no solution. With little hope for survival, Kalas made a life-saving decision and decided to seek additional treatment at Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Center.

“I found that the best treatment center for my illness was close to home,” Kalas says. “Karmanos physicians quickly resolved my fevers—something the other hospital couldn’t do for four and a half weeks. I had a bone marrow transplant in January 2008 and have been in remission ever since. Karmanos saved my life.”

Karmanos is one of just 41 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the country. Karmanos also offers better survival rates than other metro Detroit hospitals for leukemia, breast, colon, lung, prostate, pancreas and Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma patients. And, as Kalas will attest, Karmanos provides excellent patient treatment and better outcomes.

“The doctors, nurses and staff at Karmanos are amazing and truly practicing for the right reasons—not just a paycheck,” Kalas says. “When people tell me they have been diagnosed with cancer or ask me about getting a second opinion, I advise them to make an appointment at Karmanos. It’s a tremendous resource right in our own backyard.”
Dear Friends,

The words “thank you” don’t begin to express my gratitude to Karmanos Cancer Center.

In the summer of 2004, I was diagnosed with stage 4 uterine cancer. A tumor had destroyed my uterus and ovaries, 90 percent of my left pelvic bone and 60 percent of the right. My case was so frightening and confusing that I asked my husband, Burton, to take over. His thorough due diligence convinced us that Karmanos was as capable as any place, anywhere to treat me.

An extraordinary team helped me beat what, for a while, I considered a death sentence. The late Dr. John Malone was my gynecologist and surgeon. Many doctors, technicians, nurses and staff also number among my heroes. They include Matt in interventional radiology and Denise, a radiology tech at Karmanos’ Weisberg Cancer Treatment Center. Though many of the players in my case have moved on, other capable and devoted people have replaced them.

I can’t describe how grateful I was for the chance to receive world class medical treatment close to home — to be just a hug away from the support of family and friends.

I share my story in “GODSIGNS: Health, Hope and Miracles; My Journey to Recovery.” My recently launched memoir describes the medical process I endured. Please see page 7 to read about my upcoming book signing May 21 at Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills. “GODSIGNS” also reveals the spiritual side of my journey. Many remarkable coincidences occurred in the process. They brought me hope and guidance. They kept me going.

Thank you, Karmanos, and thank you to all who support this vital institution.

Suzy Farbman, Cancer Survivor

I’ve been diagnosed with cancer. Can I get a cancer expert’s opinion?

Yes. Our team of experts at Karmanos recommends individual patient treatment plans daily at our facilities in midtown Detroit and Farmington Hills. We are committed to offering more treatments with better outcomes. We know that our medical teams are most effective when brought in before any treatment begins.

Where can I go for screening and diagnostic tests, as well as receive a specialist’s opinion on breast, prostate and other types of cancer?

Karmanos offers many diagnostic tests at its primary locations in Detroit and Farmington Hills. Each team of experts focuses on a specific form of cancer, whether that’s breast, prostate, skin, colon and many other types of cancer. In fact, our doctors treat the more than 200 known types of cancer. At Karmanos, patients receive the latest tests and diagnostic procedures from leading experts in the disease.

Do I need a physician referral?

Anyone with a diagnosis of cancer can make an appointment themselves at the Karmanos Cancer Institute. You do not need to be referred by a physician unless required by your insurance company. Please call 1-800–KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266). However, it is important to keep your physicians aware of your care. You will be asked to bring information on prior treatments and test results to help our doctors and health care teams plan the best course of therapy. We can help you collect all the necessary information when you call.
Folate:
A POWERFUL FORCE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

Karmanos Cancer Institute scientists, working with the international research community, are on the verge of exciting breakthroughs in the diagnosis and treatment of some deadly forms of cancer. Recent discoveries about folate receptors may result in a range of new drugs and treatments that are more effective and have fewer side effects for patients with ovarian, triple-negative breast and non-small cell lung cancers.

“Our bodies need the vitamin folic acid,” says Manohar Ratnam, Ph.D., professor of Oncology at Karmanos and Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSU SOM). “Folate receptors on the surface of certain types of cells bind and internalize the vitamin. Most normal adult tissues don’t make folate receptors. Certain cancerous masses may be detected by looking for folate receptors in the tissues or in the bloodstream.”

By administering safe agents like prednisone, doctors can increase the production of folate receptors in the tumors and monitor their presence in the patient’s bloodstream. A folate receptor spike (or over-expression) means cancer is present. If detected at an early stage, more treatment options are available.

“We can also administer folic acid attached to an imaging agent that can be easily seen on a body scan,” Dr. Ratnam says. “Because the folic acid targets the over-expressed folate receptors, we can obtain real-time scans that show us the exact location and size of the tumor. No invasive tissue biopsies are needed.”

Clinical trials, including a recently completed trial at Karmanos, have shown that EC145, a drug that targets overexpressed folate receptors, can effectively kill ovarian and lung cancer cells without harming normal cells. Patient side effects were minimal.

“These findings will help us make significant progress against a number of aggressive, late-stage cancers,” says Larry Matherly, Ph.D., leader of the Molecular Therapeutics Program and director of the Cancer Biology Graduate Program at Karmanos and WSU SOM. “Because Karmanos is a research institution as well as a cancer center, we can apply these laboratory discoveries directly to patient care. That’s part of what makes us uniquely qualified to make progress in the fight against cancer.”

For more information about a cancer diagnosis and treatment, please call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.
This year, more than 228,000 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed and more than 159,000 people will die from the disease, according to the American Cancer Society. Lung cancer is the No. 1 cancer killer, accounting for about 27 percent of all cancer-related deaths -- more than colon, breast and prostate cancers combined.

It takes comprehensive health care to battle this deadly disease. At the Karmanos Cancer Center, lung cancer patients aren't seen by cancer generalists. Instead, a team of oncologists who specialize in lung cancer treatments reviews every patient's case. And that translates into better patient outcomes.

Most lung cancer patients are evaluated by physicians from different disciplines that are focused on lung cancer during the same visit. This not only allows patients to get opinions from all the doctors in one visit, but also promotes a more effective team approach to manage this challenging cancer.

Each week, medical, surgical and radiation oncologists, pathologists, pulmonologists, and radiologists within the Thoracic Oncology Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meet to review individual patient cases related to cancers of the chest, including lung cancer. Team members discuss potential treatment options in great detail, after thoroughly reviewing all the available medical information on the patient.

Many patients have the option of participating in a clinical trial—exclusive, cutting-edge treatments involving new medications. Since the entire team only focuses on chest cancers in general and lung cancer in particular, they engage in novel clinical trials that are not available anywhere else in Michigan.

“Because we only focus on cancers of the chest, we offer patients a level of expertise other area hospitals can’t match,” says Shirish Gadgeel, M.D., leader of the Thoracic Oncology MDT and associate professor of Oncology at Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSU SOM). “Patients receive an opinion developed by an entire team, which is crucial. Because lung cancer treatments are a process, it’s very important to involve multiple physicians who work toward the same goal. Should any issues arise during treatment, we can easily modify the treatment plan with all the physicians on the same page.”

Karmanos also offers the latest surgical advances to lung cancer patients, including people in their 70s and older who may not have been surgical candidates several years ago.

“We’re performing minimally-invasive procedures on about 98 percent of patients who require surgery,” says Miguel Alvelo-Rivera, M.D., medical director of the Surgical Oncology Unit at Karmanos and associate professor of Surgical Oncology at WSU SOM. “We can perform many procedures through incisions about the size of a fingertip. Patients experience less pain and blood loss and recover more quickly compared to open surgery. That preserves patient quality of life.” Recent advances in radiation oncology are also helping some lung cancer patients live longer with the disease.

“More treatment options have emerged recently, including stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT),” says Andre Konski, M.D., MBA, MA, F.A.C.R., chief of Radiation Oncology at Karmanos and professor and chair of Radiation Oncology at WSU SOM. “SBRT delivers a targeted radiation dose directly to a lung tumor while preserving healthy tissue. We’re also working closely with medical oncologists on a new clinical trial involving medication that protects normal tissue but enhances the effects of chemotherapy. This trial is unique to Karmanos and underscores our ability to offer patients better treatments derived from a group of true lung cancer experts.”

In addition to providing care for lung cancer patients at Karmanos, each physician within the Thoracic Oncology MDT is a clinical scientist dedicated to lung cancer research. Lung cancer research conducted here is not only focused on developing novel treatments but also on better understanding the molecular processes that drive cancer. This engagement in research by each member allows doctors to provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date care.

“The understanding and management of lung cancer has changed radically in the past five years, so the need for multidisciplinary care by a group of physicians that are focused on this specific cancer is greater than ever,” Dr. Gadgeel says. “The Thoracic Oncology team at Karmanos provides care in the context of those medical advances — and that gives our patients a huge advantage.”
Regular breast self-exams and mammogram screenings are the best ways for women to remain vigilant for breast cancer. But for many of them, breast density can stand in the way of tumor detection.

“High breast density means there is a greater amount of breast and connective tissue compared to fat,” says Sharon Helmer, M.D., clinical service chief of the Imaging Department and medical director of Breast Imaging at the Karmanos Cancer Center. “Breast density can limit visibility of a non-calcified tumor on mammographic imaging.”

For women with dense breasts who need additional imaging services, Karmanos offers the latest molecular breast imaging (MBI) device: the GE Healthcare Discovery NM750b. MBI works by replicating views obtained by mammography, but without X-ray radiation. Instead, the patient receives a small injection of a radioactive tracer that locates active tumors. MBI safely captures clear, precise images—even for women with dense breast tissue. It’s also an option for women who cannot have a magnetic resonance imaging scan due to pacemakers or other metal implants, claustrophobia, weight limitations and other factors.

Karmanos also has developed another breast imaging device called SoftVue. The device immerses a woman’s breasts in warm water, collecting information via ultrasound to be translated into a three-dimensional image without using radiation. Both MBI and SoftVue obtain high-resolution images quickly and comfortably.

Dr. Helmer says it’s important for women over age 40 to get regular mammogram screenings. Breast density is classified into four patterns based on the mammographic appearance and ranges from completely fatty to completely dense. The need for supplemental studies such as ultrasound, MRI or MBI is often based on that determination.

“Breast self-examination and clinical examination do not always reflect the density findings on mammography,” she says. “Only a mammogram can define breast density. Also, MBI and SoftVue do not replace mammography. They’re complementary tools we can use for additional diagnostic information. They improve our ability to accomplish our goal of early detection.”

For more information about a mammogram and imaging services at Karmanos or to schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.

**Contact Us**

**Managing Your Breast Health**

Karmanos offers the following guidelines for breast screenings:

- Women 40 and older should consider yearly mammograms. Talk with your health care professional about what is right for you.

- Women at higher-than-average risk should seek expert medical advice on whether they should begin screening at age 40 and the frequency of screening.
Children with Down syndrome face plenty of challenges. Fighting cancer shouldn’t be one of them.

That’s the belief Jeffrey Taub, M.D., takes toward his work. Dr. Taub is professor in the Division of Pediatric Hematology Oncology at Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSU SOM) and at Children’s Hospital of Michigan. As a member of the Developmental Therapeutics Department at Karmanos, he and his colleagues are researching the biology of acute myeloid leukemia (AML) in children with Down syndrome. These children have a 20-fold greater risk of developing leukemia compared to children without Down syndrome.

“One of the interesting things about children with Down syndrome and AML is they respond very well to chemotherapy,” Dr. Taub says. “They have the highest cure rate (80 to 100 percent) of any subgroup of AML patients. We want to learn what it is about their genetic makeup that makes them more responsive to chemotherapy. Our findings will help us develop new leukemia therapies for children without Down syndrome.”

Dr. Taub is conducting a clinical trial within the Children’s Oncology Group, which links doctors and researchers from more than 200 centers in developing the most effective therapies for childhood cancer. The study is focusing on gene chromosome 21, which is specific to children with Down syndrome and AML. Hospitals across the nation are sending leukemia cells from these patients to Children’s Hospital of Michigan for the study. Karmanos is the coordinating reference laboratory for the study.

“Karmanos has a great environment for conducting this type of research,” says Dr. Taub, who is working closely with Yubin Ge, Ph.D., assistant professor of Oncology at Karmanos and Wayne State University School of Medicine; and Larry Matherly, Ph.D., leader of the Molecular Therapeutics Program and director of the Cancer Biology Graduate Program at Karmanos and WSU SOM. “We’re geographically linked in midtown Detroit and have the proximity for face-to-face conversations. The more doctors and scientists work together, the more patients will ultimately benefit.

“Children with Down syndrome are very vulnerable, and also very sweet. We want to make a difference in their lives, and the lives of all children with cancer.”

For more information about a cancer diagnosis and treatment, please call 1-800-KARMANOS (1-800-527-6266) or visit karmanos.org.
KARMANOS ANNUAL DINNER
The Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute (KCI) is hosting its 31st Annual Dinner Saturday, April 20 at the General Motors-Hamtramck Assembly Center. Mark Reuss, president of General Motors, North America, and his wife, Kim, are chairs of this major fundraiser. Mark Reuss answers a few questions about why he and Kim, and GM, continue their support for Karmanos’ mission of eradicating cancer once and for all:

Why is it important to General Motors, and to you and Kim, to support Karmanos?
As one of the nation’s best cancer centers, GM and Chevrolet are committed to helping Karmanos maintain its unmatched reputation for excellence. Supporting KCI is critical to keeping it at the forefront of the latest life-saving technologies, state-of-the-art research and the best-possible care. Karmanos also offers its patients treatments and clinical trials that just aren’t available anywhere else, right here in Detroit, home of GM’s world headquarters. And Karmanos offers an unsurpassed level of support to families and loved ones. On a personal note, Kim and I are honored and grateful for the opportunity to help this great organization. It means a lot to us to be able to serve as co-chairs.

Have you and Kim had any personal experience with cancer?
Unfortunately, cancer has affected people close to our hearts, but we certainly aren’t alone. Everyone has been touched by cancer in some way. Cancer doesn’t discriminate; it doesn’t care if you’re young or old, if you’re a good person, a good parent or a good kid. It is relentless, ruthless and brutal. Kim and I really believe the only way to end cancer is for all of us to work together, to do whatever it takes to fund the research to find a cure.

What should guests look forward to with the Annual Dinner in 2013?
We’re very excited about the Annual Dinner. It takes place at GM’s world class Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Center, home of the Chevrolet Volt, the world’s most technologically advanced vehicle, creating a tangible link between the future of automobiles and the technology advances that will be used to win the fight against cancer. And I’m thrilled that Chevrolet will donate the first Corvette Stingray convertible for auction at Barrett-Jackson in April, with all proceeds going directly to KCI. Kim and I look forward to what we hope will be a terrific, record-breaking event for a very worthy cause.

Learn more about Annual Dinner and purchase tickets at: http://www.karmanos.org/annualdinner

Paint the town PINK
Register Now for the Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®
A spring chill still hangs in the air, but it’s not too early to register for one of metro Detroit’s signature inspirational events.

The 22nd annual Susan G. Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®, locally presented by the Karmanos Cancer Institute, takes place Saturday, May 18 at Comerica Park. The Race includes a competitive 5K run, a 5K walk and a one-mile walk. Participating is a wonderful way to remember, honor and celebrate loved ones who have battled breast cancer. You’ll also help support life-saving breast screening, education and treatment programs for those who may not otherwise have access to these services. Since 1992, Detroit’s Race has raised and invested more than $23 million to help fight breast cancer.

Registration is now open for individuals and teams. You can join a team and raise funds to benefit Komen Detroit’s Race even if you will be out of town or choose to sleep in on Race day. You can also participate as an event volunteer.

To learn more about the race and register, visit karmanoscancer.org/KomenDetroit or call 248-304-2080.

Author, cancer survivor signs books about battle with disease, experience at Karmanos.
In the spring of 2005, the late Dr. John Malone of the Karmanos Cancer Center pronounced author and uterine cancer survivor Suzy Farbman, “cured until proven otherwise.” She and her husband, Burton, have served as generous benefactors of Karmanos, as well as honorary chairs of Karmanos’ Annual Dinner in 2005. Among her remarks that night, she said:

“…My family wouldn’t let me give up. My friends wouldn’t let me give up. God wouldn’t let me give up. And Dr. Malone and other doctors said they hoped to cure me. So I had to fight. And over the past 10 months, I kept fighting. I logged through three surgeries. Six courses of chemo. Fifty-six rounds of radiation. And yes, it was rough. But I put on my wig and kept going. And here I am tonight. Still in my wig. And still at the party.”

The above is an excerpt from Suzy’s inspiring memoir, GODSIGNS: Health, Hope and Miracles; My Journey to Recovery. Her tough but hopeful story encourages readers to recognize the Godsigs in their lives. GODSIGNS is available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble or from the bookstore at www.ReadTheSpirit.com.

Suzy will share her story and sign books at 7 p.m., Tuesday, May 21, in the Maas Chapel at Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Hills.
Get answers about prostate cancer from a KARMANOS specialist.

Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers in America, according to the American Cancer Society, and many men have questions about the disease.

Perhaps you’re wondering about symptoms, risk factors and screening methods. Maybe you’d like to learn about new treatment options.

You could search the Web hoping to find a credible resource, or you can send your questions via our online form to Jordan Maier, M.D., medical director of Karmanos’ Weisberg Cancer Treatment Center and a prostate cancer specialist. He will contact you to discuss your concerns.

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