



Sarcoma Cancer
Foundation of Canada

SCFC Spring Update

A Message From Our Chair

Dear Friends,

Typically in our Spring newsletter I would start by wishing you all a Happy Spring but given the challenges being faced as a result of COVID-19 and the tragedies that recently occurred in Nova Scotia, it seems a more sombre season is upon us this year. I find amidst the chaos and uncertainty that our sarcoma community continues to give me hope. Hope that we will get through this together, inspired by the strength and grace we see every day in your individual fights against sarcoma. Whether a patient yourself, a caregiver, friend or someone keeping the memory of a loved one alive, your stories inspire us to keep going. Our community is resilient and creative and we continue to be touched by your stories and your determination.

Thank you to those of you who have reached out to us recently. Our office continues to be open to accept mail and process donations, though our team is working remotely to respect best practices during COVID-19. We are still available by phone or email and look forward to continuing to provide support to those of you across the country who need information, resources or just a friendly ear. I encourage you to also connect online with other community members through our social media channels. Even before this time of isolation, a sarcoma diagnosis could feel very lonely and SCFC was founded to remind you all that you are not alone. We'd love to hear your stories of how you're meeting the new challenges posed by COVID-19. If you don't have access to social media accounts, please call or email us your story and we'll share it for you.

We are thrilled this year to be celebrating our 10th year as an organization - an anniversary that would not be possible without the support we have received from patients and families, partners and physicians across the country over the past decade. We came together originally to provide support, raise awareness and work together to raise funds for critical sarcoma research and there has never been more need than there is today for all three. I am proud of the work that our team has accomplished in 10 years but there is still a long way to go. I look forward to continuing to work alongside all of you as we battle this disease together.

Take care of yourselves and each other,

Diana Arajs
Founder & Chair
SCFC

We're Turning 10!

This year we are celebrating a major milestone. Check out our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to catch the latest announcements and follow along as we celebrate and gear up for Sarcoma Awareness week in June.



How is COVID-19 Impacting You?

We'd love to hear from you - share your story through our social media platforms or by emailing us at info@sarcomacancer.ca

Patient Profile: Andy Bertrand

In 2019, my sarcoma returned so I am currently undergoing chemotherapy treatments every two weeks at Mount Sinai hospital in Toronto. My tumour is deemed inoperable and the bottom line is that if it does not shrink, my time is limited.



Though this sounds scary, I believe I will win out in the end. My tumour has been slow growing but I am unable to work, though this round of treatment (gemcitabine) is not nearly as potent as last year's doxorubicin treatment.

I have been busy writing a book about cancer survivors. The tentative title is: From Illness to Fulfillness: A Transformational Guide for Cancer Survivors Seeking New Meaning in Their Lives. It is about the similarities we go through in surviving the cancer process and wanting to establish some changes in our lives after defeating the disease. Survivors often want to attack new challenges but some do not know where or how to initiate those changes. My book explains the steps required to move ahead. I am aiming for a finished product by the end of May, so stay tuned!

Eventually, I would like to speak to audiences regarding this topic. I do not know how long a future I possess, so I am making sure this dream comes true. The book is my inspiration toward encouraging other survivors to fulfill their dreams also.

Personally, I don't find I am approaching things differently as someone with cancer living through COVID-19 than I would under normal circumstances. As long as we follow the guidelines suggested, we will be fine. We won our bouts with cancer, so we cannot fear COVID-19.

SCFC Board Member and Sarcoma Survivor Mark Stewart Shares His Experiences During COVID-19

SCFC: Mark, can you tell us how you stay connected and support the cancer community while in quarantine?



During the current COVID-19 crisis I have reconnected with people through phone calls and on social media. So far, that has been the silver-lining of this whole ordeal for me - having time to reach out and connect.

SCFC: Do you have any sources of inspiration that keep you positive during this time?

Since my diagnosis with osteosarcoma in 1995, I've had an understanding of the important role doctors and nurses have in our lives. I experienced their kindness and amazing abilities firsthand then, and still do during my annual check-up visit to the hospital. So I certainly look to them for inspiration. I also really appreciate the hard work done by our first responders and frontline workers. I make sure to say "thank you" every time I do my groceries!

On a more personal level, my brother is a railroader based in Calgary, Alberta. In his job, he drives massive trains through the mountains every day, helping get goods from the West Coast to us in Ontario and vice versa. I draw a lot of inspiration from him and others like him at this time too.

SCFC: So many Canadians are concerned about contracting the virus and what this could mean for them and their families - as a cancer survivor, are you at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 and if so, what are you doing to protect yourself?

I'm not sure if I'm at a greater risk of contracting the coronavirus but I act as though I am. Having gone through chemotherapy, I understand what it is like to be immunocompromised and the severe damage a wayward germ can do. Indeed, after my treatments, I was always quarantined from my family for three or four days upon coming home from the hospital, just to let my body further recover. I've also wondered if my titanium prosthetic (itself the result of the osteosarcoma originating in my left leg) increases my chances of getting COVID-19. I don't think so, but I'm not willing to take that chance.

Because of this, I wash my hands often and have been good at not touching my face. And when I can, I stay at home. I also go shopping for groceries at off peak hours when I know it will be easier to socially distance.

SCFC: The past six weeks have been a source of anxiety and stress for so many - what are you doing to maintain your wellness both physically and mentally?

I try to go for walks and have some free weights for exercise at home. I also have started having online meet-ups with friends and family. My fiancé and I also look after vulnerable or front-line healthcare-working family members by doing their groceries or running little errands for them. Keeping busy this way has also been valuable. We have also decided to try to read without any television at least two nights a week. We have the time, so can't we finally read those novels that have been on our shelves for far too long?!

SCFC: Do you have any words of wisdom for someone who might be newly diagnosed with cancer during the pandemic?

I don't think I have any different advice than I would normally give: try to stay positive. Also, reach out to family and friends to see how they are doing. But above all: wash your hands!



A huge thank you to those who have supported and continue to support the AnnFrances Tropea fund, including TACC Construction and all of Annie's family and friends who have worked tirelessly to raise over \$30,000 in the last year, through 2 major events and other initiatives.

The AnnFrances Tropea fund was created in loving memory of AnnFrances Tropea, who lost her battle with sarcoma, and which raises money for osteosarcoma cancer research. As the anniversary of her death approaches we remember what a spirited, joyful, and loving young lady AnnFrances was and are honored to be able to help keep her memory alive.

Generous Donation Makes Critical Research Possible

Epithelioid hemangioendothelioma, or EHE, is a rare sarcoma cancer that grows from the cells that make up a person's blood vessels. This cancer can occur anywhere in the body with the most common sites being the liver, lungs, and within bones. It usually presents in people between 30 and 50 years of age but can also occur in young children and older people.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of a private donor, your donations towards a groundbreaking study in EHE research will be matched throughout 2020 to a total of \$50,000.00. This gives us the potential to raise \$100,000.00 for EHE research in 2020! Though we realize that many are going through especially challenging times right now, please do all you can to support this great initiative and help us raise \$100,000.00 for this critical research.

Please mark your donation as 'EHE Campaign'.

[Donate Today](#)

Approval of New NTREK Fusion Cancer Treatment

Hoffmann-La Roche Limited (Roche Canada) has recently announced the Health Canada approval of Rozlytrek® (entrectinib) for adult patients with unresectable locally advanced or metastatic



extracranial solid tumours, including brain metastases, that have a neurotrophic tyrosine receptor kinase (NTRK) gene fusion without a known acquired resistance mutation, and with no satisfactory treatment options.

Rozlytrek is Roche's first tumour-agnostic treatment which works by targeting the underlying gene mutation (NTRK) which is responsible for driving oncogenesis or the growth of cancer cells in tumours.

This treatment has been approved for use in a number of tumour types, including sarcoma cancer.

[Read the Full Press Release Here](#)

Using Virtual Fundraising to Replace Your Cancelled Event

COVID-19 is taking so much from us, but it is also giving us the opportunity to come together, work together, learn together and grow together. This crisis serves to illustrate the deep and interwoven connection between all human life.



This connection is something we at SCFC are honored to experience and witness continuously. This is no more obvious than through fundraisers. Although we aren't currently able to gather in person for events, we encourage you to leverage this opportunity to connect with your community virtually, in new and novel ways.

If you were already planning a fundraiser or event, consider converting it to a virtual fundraiser through a platform like Facebook Live rather than cancelling. Were you planning a gala? Virtual dinner parties are a great and fun alternative, and you can even include silent auctions and prize raffles. Get creative with online contests, giveaways, and incentive items that can be run completely in a virtual environment or delivered via mail delivery. If you want to get a little more physical, create a virtual run/walk where participants collect pledges and complete a physical challenge from home.

We encourage everyone to stay home, stay safe, but stay connected during this time. We believe that with your help we can lessen the impact of COVID 19 on our mission to support sarcoma patients and their families.

SCFC'S First Virtual Fundraiser!



PRESENTS

Virtual
TRIVIA NIGHT

*Put on your thinking cap and get comfy
at home.*

Registration details coming soon!

**MAY 21, 2020 | 8:30 PM EST
COST | \$15 PER HOUSEHOLD**

Proceeds from this event will go directly to patient support
programs and critical research initiatives

Cooking During COVID-19

Nutrition is an important part of life, cancer treatment, recovery, and prevention. Food is one of the few things you can be in control of during COVID-19. The below recipes are simple, delicious, have easy-to-find ingredients and are packed with nutrients to keep you and your family healthy.



**Chicken Soup with
Rice and Broccoli**



**One Pan Mexican
Quinoa**

Ingredients

- 4 cups fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups broccoli florets
- 2 small ribs organic celery, diced
- 2 small carrots, sliced
- 1/2 cup short grain brown rice, washed
- 2 cups cooked, skinless chicken, diced

Soak rice in cold water from 15 minutes to one hour. This will reduce cooking time.

Bring broth to a boil in a large saucepan. Add presoaked rice and vegetables. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until rice is tender. Add cooked chicken and simmer for 3-4 minutes.

Did you know?

While both broccoli stem and florets are edible, the broccoli florets are generally thought to be healthier as they provide more vitamins and cancer-fighting substances than the stem.

Source: <https://www.healwithfood.org/recipes/chickensoup-rice-broccoli.php#ixzz6LUzO2MM2>

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 avocado, halved, seeded, peeled and diced

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add garlic and and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 1 minute.

Stir in quinoa, vegetable broth, beans, tomatoes, corn, chili powder and cumin; season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat and simmer until quinoa is cooked through, about 20 minutes. Stir in avocado and lime juice .

Serve immediately.

Source:
<https://damndelicious.net/2014/04/09/one-pan-mexican-quinoa/>

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