

## September 2024

We hope you enjoy the latest news from Cancer Society Waikato/Bay of Plenty.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know.

If you need support and haven't heard from us in a while - please get in touch.

**Cancer Society**  
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## Angela's story

We all think we're never going to get cancer, until we do.

I was working full-time and nursing my husband who had succumbed to end stage renal failure. Then in October 2021, I went for a bone marrow biopsy. It was a Thursday. On the Saturday I received a call from a haematologist at Waikato Hospital - I had multiple myeloma.

Multiple myeloma is a type of blood cancer - I'd never heard of it before. I was told I would need an MRI then induction chemotherapy followed by a stem cell transplant.

At this stage, the severity of the cancer had not been explored but my haematologist felt that I should let my work know so I could devote all my energy into addressing my diagnosis. My boss was amazing. He supported me in processing my next steps and helped me calm my thoughts.

Those initial days, weeks, and months are a little hazy as I still had so much on my plate.

The MRI showed that the cancer was inside all the bones of my torso but had not spread to my skull yet. That was good news. Nor did I have common bone lesions associated with multiple myeloma. We had found it in time to get on top of it before it could weaken my skeleton.

My husband told his renal nurse, Robyn, who then contacted the Cancer Society and explained the complexity of our situation. A Cancer Society nurse called Andrea rang then arrived very shortly afterwards with information sheets and frozen meals (but most of all with a warm and caring smile) to help us get through the next few days.

I had been put on a 'shopping bag' of medications - ones to take an hour before food, some with food, others to take at night ... I was really struggling to get my head around all the rapid changes in our lives. My brain just couldn't cope. I felt overloaded until Andrea stepped in.

Even though the haematologist had explained the drugs to me, it was such a lot of information to take in on top my diagnosis.

A month later, my husband's condition deteriorated and he was admitted to Waikato Hospital. He had his leg amputated below the knee in November. When he was transferred back to Rotorua, it was necessary to give him some small sense of normality. The psychological strain was enormous as I helped with his dialysis and nursing care, alongside the fabulous staff of Rotorua Hospital.

My induction treatment was taking place in the same hospital so I'd just wander off to see the caring nurses of the cancer ward, then I'd go back to the OPRS ward where my husband was. Then we'd have our afternoon naps, me in the La-Z Boy chair and my husband in the bed.

I went on to have a stem cell harvest at Waikato Hospital in December of that year, then tandem stem cell transplants in February and April of 2022. All though this time, I found myself in the realm of the unknown - what could possibly come next? I had Andrea on speed dial; she was my first and best source of information. I have lost count of the number of times she advised me through the problems I encountered.

In May 2022, my husband had his second lower leg amputation. I had only just arrived home from my second stem cell transplant. I was struggling to support him emotionally and also look after myself.

In October 2022, my husband passed away calmly and quietly in the middle of the night, at home. Finally he was at peace and his suffering was over. We'd been together for 49 years.

The Cancer Society team and the ward nurses were there for me when I needed the most support I have ever needed in my life. I never felt like I shouldn't reach out for help. We are so lucky to have these wonderful, committed professionals and the volunteers who sit in behind them.

My dog, Max, became my best friend. Many Rotorua people will recognise me as the lady with the little dog in my pouch! He became my strength; I couldn't dwell on myself.

I am now in remission and have been weaned off many of the heavy-duty drugs. I still have to take anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and immunotherapy drugs to keep me well for as long as possible.

I now volunteer with the Cancer Society. Being involved has given me a way to focus my intellect and give me purpose moving forward. I can now give support to others embarking on their own journeys. I have survived. I can give others hope.

#### [How to access Cancer Society services](#)

Please phone 0800 226 237 or visit our website to fill in a referral form at [cancer.org.nz](http://cancer.org.nz)

#### [How we can support you](#)

Our free services include transport to treatment, guidance from an experienced nurse, frozen meals, access to counselling, therapeutic massage, and accommodation at the Cancer Society's Lions Lodge.



## Government announces changes to cancer research

The government recently announced their intent to change gene technology regulations for the first time in 30 years. These changes will help advance cancer outcomes and bring us closer in line with the rest of the world.

This will also allow our researchers to push boundaries, research, develop and manufacture innovative therapies here in New Zealand, such as CAR T-Cell therapy that uses a patient's own cells to help fight against cancer.

You can find out more about the research the Cancer Society is currently funding in a series of videos on our Facebook page or on our website: [cancer.org.nz](http://cancer.org.nz)



## Volunteers welcomed back to Waikato Hospital

We have volunteers in oncology rooms throughout our region's hospitals who provide support to both patients and hospital staff. And we now have big news!

"We are delighted to share that we have a fabulous new volunteer team of ten at Waikato Hospital," says Sharon, who leads our volunteers (pictured left).

"Our Oncology Hosts provide comfort during moments that can be particularly difficult. We are pleased to provide this service once more in Hamilton."

Here is some of the new Oncology team, excited to settle into their new roles.

## New diagnosis? Questions you may wish to ask

1. How is the cancer affecting my body?
2. What tests do I need?
3. When will I know the results?
4. What will the results tell us?
5. What is the aim of the treatment?
6. What is the probability of it working?
7. How do you check if a treatment is working?
8. Is there a clinical trial I can join?
9. Will I have to have treatment in hospital?
10. If treatment is not working, what is the plan?
11. Are there any side effects?
12. Should I follow a special diet?
13. Can I work?
14. Will the treatment affect my sex life?
15. Will treatment affect my fertility?
16. Can I exercise?
17. What will happen if my cancer is not controlled?

## Ngā pātai tērā pea ka hiahia tuku koe

1. Pēhea te pānga o te matepukupuku ki taku tinana?
2. He aha ngā whakamātautau me whai au?
3. When will I know the results?
4. He aha ngā kōrero ka puta i te whakamātautau?
5. He aha te whāinga o ngā maimoatanga?
6. Ka mahi pai anō te maimoatanga?
7. Pēhea te mōhio mēnā kei te mahi pai te maimoatanga?
8. Ka taea te hono ki tētahi whakamātautau ā-haumanu?
9. Me haere au ki te hōhipera mō ngā maimoatanga?
10. Ki te kore te maimoatanga e mahi tika whai muri mai i tērā, ka aha?
11. He mate tūpono anō kei te taha o ngā maimoatanga?
12. Me whai rārangi kai motuhake au?
13. Ka pai noa iho au ki te mahi?
14. Ka pā anō he rarararu ki tōku hia ai nā runga i te maimoatanga?
15. Ka taea tonu e au te mahi pēpi?
16. Ka pai noa iho au ki te korikori i taku tinana?
17. Ka aha mēnā kāore e taea te whakahaere i taku matepukupuku?



## 20-year volunteer anniversary for Joan

Twenty years ago, Joan Frost was motivated to start an informal support group for cancer patients in Taupō because her friend, who was on the journey, had no-one to talk to. Today, she leads a team of volunteers who help provide comfort and a listening ear to patients at Taupō Hospital.

We visited Joan this week to celebrate her 20-year anniversary with us, joined by some of the other Taupō oncology volunteers.

Joan, you have given your community an incredible service over the past two decades and are a highly appreciated member of our volunteer team. Thank you so much for all you have done and continue to do.



## Thank you for the goodies!

We are extremely grateful to Anne and Bev of St Lukes Church Rotorua who popped by recently with 75 vintage scarves & earrings, all beautifully packaged and ready to be donated. We are sure these beautiful gifts will make some people very happy!

### **Need support?**

Our supportive care nurses  
are here to help. Contact us  
on 0800 22 77 44

# Daffodil Day - behind the scenes

By the time this goes to print, Daffodil Day 2024 will be completed for another year. Here are some photos from behind the scenes - it took a lot of people a lot of work to make this happen! For more highlights, please see our social media pages!



## Golden milk recipe



Golden milk is a soothing beverage that has been prescribed for centuries in Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine. It also tastes delicious and can be a great drink to relax you before bed.

Golden milk is made with turmeric, which is one of Mother Nature's top healing compounds. Its most active ingredient, curcumin, can help certain autoimmune conditions by regulating inflammatory signals in your body. It is also a powerful antioxidant and can help fight free radicals.

Serves 2. Cooking time: 15 minutes.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups milk (dairy or dairy free)
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- pinch black pepper
- 1 tbsp maple syrup or honey

### Optional:

- 1/2 tsp coconut oil
- additional spices or flavours such as ginger, cardamon or vanilla extract

### Method

1. Add all ingredients to a saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes to let the flavours meld.

Enjoy!

**Tip:** Store leftovers in a sealed jar in the fridge for up to 5 days.

## Fancy some chess?

If you are in the Cambridge area and are interested in developing your chess skills, please come along to a new social chess group formed by one of our clients.

**When:** Every Friday (starting September)  
3.30pm

**Where:** 24 Raleigh Street, Leamington

**Contact:** John, 020 4080 2872



# Support groups

Our groups provide a relaxed space to connect with others and share experiences and knowledge. Support groups are open to people who have had a cancer diagnosis and/or their carers.

## Western Bay of Plenty

### **Katikati prostate cancer support group**

**When:** Meets every second month

**Where:** 181 Park Road  
Katikati

**Contact:** Rod on 027 590 9710 or  
Stuart on 027 774 8933 for details  
about the next meeting.

### **Mt Maunganui Walk for Wellness**

Our weekly walking group is an opportunity to walk, chat and build fitness in a supportive way.

**When:** Every Monday (except public holidays)  
9.30am - 11.15am (approx).  
Optional cafe stop at Coffee Club.

**Where:** Meet at the green restrooms halfway  
down Pilot Bay.

**Contact:** Cath, 021 210 2372

### **Prostate cancer support group**

Hosted by Prostate Cancer Foundation

**When:** First Thursday of every month,  
6pm

**Where:** Club Mount Maunganui, 45 Kawaka St,  
Mount Maunganui

**Contact:** Ian Armstrong, 021 504 093

### **Raft support group**

SEPTEMBER ADDRESS CHANGE

**When:** Third Tuesday of every month,  
10-11.30am

**Where:** Classic Flyers AVGas Cafe, 9 Jean  
Batten Dr, Mt Maunganui

**Contact:** Leona, 021 713 096

### **Oesophageal, throat and stomach support group**

Meets bimonthly on a Friday.

**When:** Friday 25 October  
10.00-11.30am

**Where:** Daffodil Cottage, 21 Twelfth Ave,  
Tauranga

**Contact:** Lyn, 021 804 041

### **Katikati support group**

Gentle tai chi exercise followed by morning tea.

**When:** Every Friday during term time,  
9.30-10.30am

**Where:** The Club (old RSA)  
corner Henry and Main Roads,  
Katikati

**Contact:** Helen, 021 025 68992

## Eastern Bay of Plenty

For more information on support groups  
in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, please contact  
Leona on 021 713 096.

### **Whakatāne Walk & Talk group**

Weekly walking group meeting for a cuppa  
afterwards.

**When:** Every Thursday  
10am

**Where:** Whakatāne Information Centre  
entrance, Quay St, Whakatāne

**Contact:** Kaye, 027 694 7052

### **Kawerau support group**

**When:** Third FRIDAY of the month,  
10am-12noon

**Where:** Ground floor boardroom, KEA Centre,  
60 Onslow St, Kawerau

### **Ōpōtiki support group**

**When:** Second MONDAY of the month,  
10.30am-noon

**Where:** Te Ao Hou Trust,  
38 King Street, Ōpōtiki

### **Whakatāne support group**

**When:** First Tuesday of the month,  
10am-12noon

**Where:** Whakatāne Lyceum Club, 58 Domain  
Road, Whakatāne



# Mā ngā huruhuru ka rere te manu

It is the feathers that  
enable the bird to fly

## Waikato groups

### Hamilton Walk & Talk group

**When:** Every Tuesday, 9.30am  
**Where:** Meet at Hamilton Gardens Cafe entrance. Those not wishing to walk can join the group at the cafe at 10am  
**Contact:** Lynette 021 177 9543 or Jenny 0274 946 808 to confirm dates

### Matamata support group

**When:** First Tuesday of every month, 10-11.30am  
**Where:** Railside by the Green  
41a Hetana St, Matamata

### Morrinsville support group

Facilitated by Cancer Society volunteers.  
**When:** Third Wednesday of every month, 10.15am-12noon  
**Where:** St Joseph's Church, 1 Victoria St, Morrinsville  
**Contact:** Lenie, 021 100 4320

### Paeroa support group

**When:** Second Thursday of every month, 10.30am-12noon  
**Where:** St John's Hall  
31 Belmont Rd, Paeroa

### Te Aroha support group

Facilitated by Cancer Society volunteers.  
**When:** Second Tuesday of every month, 10-11.30am  
**Where:** The RSA  
67 Rewi St, Te Aroha  
**Contact:** Laurel, 027 274 1252

### Te Awamutu support group

**When:** First Wednesday of every month, 10am-12noon  
**Where:** Te Awamutu RSA,  
381 Alexandra St, Te Awamutu

### Te Awamutu carers support group

**When:** Second Wednesday of every month, 1.30-3.30pm  
**Where:** Te Awamutu Baptist Church  
106 Teasdale St, Te Awamutu

### Taumarunui support group

**When:** Fourth Tuesday of every month, 11am-1pm  
**Where:** REAP, 115 Hakiaha Street, Taumarunui  
**Contact:** David, 027 815 4447

### Cambridge Coffee & Chat

**When:** Fourth Tuesday of every month  
10.30-11.30am  
**Where:** Community House, 193 Shakespeare St, Leamington, Cambridge

### Lymphoedema information sessions

**When:** 26 September, 31 October, 28 November, 19 December, 1-2pm  
**Where:** Cancer Society's Lions Lodge, 32 Tainui St, Hamilton

### Tokoroa support group

**When:** Third Tuesday of every month, 10am-12noon  
**Where:** St Marks Presbyterian Church, 83 Bridge St, Tokoroa

### Prostate cancer support group

**When:** First Tuesday of every month, 7-8.30pm  
**Where:** Cancer Society's Lions Lodge, 32 Tainui St, Hamilton  
**Contact:** Kris, 021 032 4481

### Hamilton mutual evening support group

**When:** Second Wednesday of every month  
7-8.30pm  
**Where:** Cancer Society's Lions Lodge, 32 Tainui St, Hamilton

### Hamilton mutual support group

**When:** Second Tuesday of every month  
10-12pm  
**Where:** Cancer Society's Lions Lodge, 32 Tainui St, Hamilton

### Head & Neck support group

**When:** First Thursday of the month, 10am-12noon  
**Where:** Cancer Society's Lions Lodge, 32 Tainui Street, Hamilton

### Cambridge Prostate Cancer support group

An informal forum for men to share their personal experiences of prostate cancer.  
**When:** Contact Ron for more details  
**Where:** ONYX Cafe & Bar, 70 Alpha St, Cambridge  
**Contact:** Ron, 027 276 0336

## Support groups cont.

### Thames men's space

Held in partnership with Thames Cancer Support Group.

**When:** First Thursday of the month, 10-11.30am

**Where:** Thames Community Centre  
609 Mackay St, Thames

**Contact:** Caro, 0274 353 733

### Whitianga Coffee & Chat

In partnership with Mercury Bay Cancer Support.

**When:** First Friday of the month, 10-11.30am

**Where:** St Andrew's Church Hall  
82 Albert St, Whitianga

### Whangamatā support group

**When:** Fourth Monday of every month  
10.30-11.30am

**Where:** Varies (please phone Caro for location)

**Contact:** Caro, 0274 353 733

### Coromandel support group

**When:** Second Tuesday of every month, 10-11.30am.

**Where:** Hato Hone St John's Building,  
285/345 Tiki Road, Coromandel

## Rotorua/Taupō

### Rotorua support group

**When:** First Tuesday of every month, 10.30am-noon

**Where:** Cancer Society's Rotorua office  
1235 Ranolf St, Rotorua

**Contact:** Claire: 021 1630 739

### Weekly Walk & Talk support group

A warm welcome to join us each week to support walking and wellness. All levels catered for.

**When:** Every Thursday, 9.30-11am

**Where:** outside Sequoia Cafe  
Tarawera Rd, Rotorua

**Contact:** Claire: 021 1630 739

### Taupō support group

**Cancelled in September**

**Resumes Thursday 17 October**

### Blood cancer support group

We warmly welcome you to a friendly environment where you are welcome to share your thoughts and experiences while gaining personal and practical support. **RSVPs required.** Please enquire for more information

**Contact:** Sean 027 245 0933 or email  
[seanr@leukaemia.org.nz](mailto:seanr@leukaemia.org.nz)

### Rotorua prostate cancer support group

We warmly welcome you to our newly established support group in Rotorua. The dates, times and venue may change monthly so please contact Daniel or Heinz for more information.

**Contact:** Daniel 027 494 4491 or  
Heinz 027 570 7601  
rotorua@prostate.org.nz

### Rotorua ostomy support group

**When:** Third Wednesday of every month

**For details on time and venue, please contact:**  
Margaret, 07 348 5882 / Mike, 07 349 6609

### Rotorua young person's support group

Run by Aratika Cancer Trust, this new support group connects those navigating cancer while juggling a young family or career.

**When:** 13 August (second Tuesday of every month)  
7pm

**Where:** Cancer Society's Rotorua office, 1235  
Ranolf St, Rotorua

**Contact:** Susie or Shelley 022 429 5063

## Look Good Feel Better

### LGFB online classes, September 2024

Chair Yoga 2/9, 12 - 12.45pm	Hand & Nailcare 3/9, 10.30 - 11.30am	Mindfulness 4/9, 12 - 1pm	Gentle Exercise - Mat Pilates 5/9, 10.30 - 11.30am
Chair Yoga 9/9, 12 - 12.45pm	Managing Hair Loss & Regrowth 10/9, 4 - 5pm	Gentle Exercise - Mat Pilates 12/9, 10.30 - 11.30am	Chair Yoga 16/9, 12 - 12.45pm
Skincare & Makeup 16/9, 5.30 - 6.45pm	Brow Focus 17/9, 12.30 - 1.15pm	Gentle Exercise - Mat Pilates 19/9, 10.30 - 11.30am	Scarf Tying & Headwear 19/9, 4 - 5pm
Skincare & Makeup 21/9, 10 - 11am	Chair Yoga 23/9, 12 - 12.45pm	Gentle Exercise - Mat Pilates 26/9, 10.30 - 11.30am	Skincare & Makeup 28/9, 10.30 - 11.45am
Chair Yoga 30/9, 12 - 12.45pm			



 Cancer Society  
**Daffodil Day**  
Te Rā Daffodil

*Ko au pea te*  
*tahi o te toru*



**Please donate this Daffodil Day.**  
Because the 1 in 3 who'll get cancer  
in their lifetime could be you,  
or someone you love.

**Donate Now**  
[daffodilday.org.nz](https://daffodilday.org.nz)

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