

## Celebrating Life at Annual Cancer Survivors Picnic

Posted by [petehurrey](#) On 05/28/2009

If you or a loved one has survived cancer and you want to join the celebration, St. Mary's Hospital is hosting a National Cancer Survivors Day picnic on June 7 from 1 to 5 p.m.

According to the American Cancer Society's "Cancer Facts and Figures 2009" report, more than 26,000 new cancer cases are estimated in 2009 in Maryland and more than 10,000 people are estimated to die from cancer this year in Maryland.

Although a cancer diagnosis is a scary thought, it is not always a death sentence. In fact, about 65 percent of people nationwide diagnosed with cancer in the United States are expected to live at least five years upon diagnosis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control.

The event on June 7 will be held in the St. Mary's Hospital parking lot in Leonardtown and will feature lunch and speakers, including Dr. Michael Mahaffey, the hospital's Cancer Committee chairman; MaryLou Watson, hospital vice president for nursing; and Joan Popielski, director of the St. Mary's Hospital Cancer Care and Infusion Services. Jennifer Drury, clinical health educator at Health Connections, will provide a lesson on the benefits of exercise during chemotherapy.

"From the beginning of one's diagnosis with cancer, he or she has begun the road to survivorship," said Popielski. "We, as health professionals and other patients undergoing treatment, support those new to the treatment process or undergoing treatment for a recurring cancer. Survivorship includes the patient, family, friends and co-workers. Everyone deals with his or her survivorship differently, but on this special day each year, we enjoy celebrating with those in our community...survivorship takes people beyond their diagnosis and treatment and offers an opportunity to focus on other aspects in their lives."

The National Cancer Survivors Day Foundation defines a "survivor" as anyone living with a history of cancer – from the moment of diagnosis through the remainder of life.

St. Mary's Hospital offers several programs for cancer patients, their family members and friends. The Cancer Support Group is a free group facilitated by employees from the hospital's Cancer Care and Infusion Services and Case Management departments. The class runs June 3 and 17; July 1 and 15; and August 5 and 19 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the hospital's Classroom.

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