



PATHWAYS

A Study of Breast Cancer Survivorship

A NEWSLETTER FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Spring 2010



From the Principal Investigator's Corner

by Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D.

As I write this, we are approaching the spring equinox. The spring season is upon us, and here in the East Bay, flowering trees are blossoming, a harbinger of the possibility of new beginnings. With the daylight hours stretching into the evening, we can enjoy our surroundings with a greater awareness.

And so it is with the Pathways Study. As you know, we submitted what is known as a competitive renewal application to the National Cancer Institute for continued funding. The great news is that our application received a highly positive review, and we have been assured that funding will continue. With you as our partners, we are embarking on the next five years of the study, the maximum number of years that the NCI will usually support at any one time. This is a time of great opportunity for us as we build upon the strong foundation of the first years of the Pathways Study.

A primary purpose of this new period of funding is to continue to follow you, the women who are participating in the study, as you experience the changes in your lives following a breast cancer diagnosis. Some of you have been in the study for about four years; others are just beginning your journey after your diagnosis. All of you are vitally important partners in the contributing to our knowledge about your experiences, and how they can help inform care of women with cancer.

While we have awaited longer follow-up so that we can better describe the breast cancer experience, we have published a series of papers that describe different aspects of our population. These have been based on the first one thousand or so women who have enrolled in the study, and include descriptions of use of complementary and alternative therapies, quality of life, and the overall diagnostic and population characteristics. We have published information examining tumor characteristics (for example, whether the tumor is hormone-receptor positive), and what breast cancer risk factors may be associated with these characteristics. These papers provide a context for other scientists to understand what our population is like, and what types of analyses we are likely to be able to do.

We believe that the Pathways Study is a unique and important study that will provide some of the best information available about the role of lifestyle factors such as diet and physical activity in breast cancer prognosis. We look forward to continuing this journey with you over the next several years. ☘



Pathways Update – Who Is Participating?

BASELINE INTERVIEW

3,064 completed

6 MONTH FOLLOW-UP

1,822 completed

12 MONTH FOLLOW-UP

2,197 completed

24 MONTH FOLLOW-UP

978 completed

48 MONTH FOLLOW-UP

103 completed

We are grateful for your role in Pathways. All of you add meaning and diversity to our team, and contribute your unique perspective to the information we are gathering. Thank you for participating. 🌸

Staff Follow-Up:

SOCORRO RAMIREZ-CAGLIA

I am now working on the 3rd phase of the Kaiser RRISK study (bladder/pelvic issues), in which I interviewed



participants for the past 10 years. It's a great feeling to have our Kaiser patients so committed to participate in our research studies. In my spare time, I spend time with my grandchildren, and I will be taking my granddaughter to Seaworld and Disneyland this summer.

NANCY WITTELS

I'm currently working on a project in the Kaiser Spine Clinics in Redwood City and San Jose. I'm helping to enroll new participants, and, of course, fill out lots of questionnaires! I'm glad to be helping out on this project, but I still miss my Pathways connections. Away from the clinic, I've been spending my spare time in a kayak.



Pathways Faces:

VERONICA RINCON

I have been a phlebotomist for 22 years. I am bilingual in English and Spanish. I have been with the Division of Research Pathways Study for 2 years. I live in San Jose with my husband and 3 wonderful children. I have been married for 25 years. I love going to the movies and spending time with my husband and children.



CLAUDIA SAMAYOA

I've been with the Pathways Study for 15 months and I'm committed to breast cancer research, since our family was afflicted by this disease. I feel like any support for research is hope. In my spare time I love to make new recipes for my husband and 4 year old daughter while watching some good boxing matches.



Moving Forward: What to Expect as Pathways Continues

by Allegra Timperi

As Pathways enters our next five years of funding we want to emphasize the continuing importance of following-up with each individual participant. While our study will continue to grow in numbers, each woman's unique experiences remain irreplaceable. So that you know what to expect, here is an outline of our current follow-up interviews, as well as the interviews we will add over the next 5 years. Our follow-ups will continue to alternate between mailed packets and short phone interviews; however, once you reach the 24-month interview, each follow-up thereafter will be spaced two years apart:

- 6 months after your baseline interview you will receive a packet in the mail.
- 12 months after baseline we will call you for a 10 minute phone interview.
- 24 months after baseline you will receive another packet.
- 48 months after baseline we will call you for another short phone interview.
- 72 months after baseline we will mail you another packet.
- 96 months after baseline we will conduct another 10 minute phone interview.

Many of you are already familiar with our follow-up interviews. For those of you who are not, the packets contain similar questions to those you were asked at your baseline interview about lifestyle factors such as physical activity, vitamin and



supplement use, and diet. The phone calls ask about your current health status, and give you a chance to update us on any changes since your last interview.

We are very excited about the opportunity to continue following our participants for another 5 years. Studies that follow participants over time are less common than studies that collect information only once. Your continued participation is vital in helping the Pathways study answer questions about the ongoing issues breast cancer survivors face. Gathering information on each woman's unique experience is just as important 10 years after diagnosis as it is immediately following a breast cancer diagnosis. We know that you are busy, and we are very grateful for the time you give to Pathways. Your ongoing commitment will benefit both future breast cancer survivors as well as all women. Again, we thank you for being a part of the Pathways study. ✕

For the most up to date information on the Pathways study, please visit our website at its new address:

<http://www.dor.kaiser.org/studies/pathways> ✕

New Contact Information?

In order to keep in touch with you we must have your latest contact information. Please let us know if your phone number or home address has changed. You can reach us by calling our toll-free number, **1-866-206-2979**. ✕





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