

# Healthy Lifestyles

Five-star health and wellness news from LeConte Medical Center | 865.453.9355 | www.lecontemedicalcenter.org

## Prostate Cancer Patient Finds Excellent Care, Close to Home

Jimmie Dodd's patience can be measured in numbers: three biological children, seven adopted children, 114 foster children. So when his annual prostate examination just before his 66th birthday came back with higher-than-expected PSA (prostate specific antigen) numbers, he did what one might expect him to do – he waited to see if the results would change at his next exam.

But six months later, when his PSA had climbed from 6.1 to 14.4 (more than three times the 4.0 that is generally considered "normal") and biopsies revealed he had an intermediate-risk prostate cancer, the normally patient Dodd was ready to act.

"The doctor told me, 'It's not a life-threatening cancer, but it will get uncomfortable after a while,'" said Dodd. "He gave me three things I could do: watch it, have it removed or take radiation. Well, we had already watched it and I didn't like the outcome of that."

After investigating options of surgery and proton therapy, Dodd decided on radiation therapy. He would need 40 treatments, five days a week for eight weeks. While convenience was an important consideration when he chose Thompson Cancer Survival Center – Sevier, the center also offered advanced treatment options, skilled physicians and a qualified staff that he found reassuring from day one.

On May 21, he met with board-certified radiation oncologist Natasha Townsend, MD, at TCSC-Sevier, for a new patient consultation. After a thorough discussion of his treatment options, Dodd was ready to begin treatment. His planning CT (CT simulation) was done the following day. Radiation treatment planning always

takes several days to ensure optimal dose to the prostate and lowest possible dose to nearby normal tissues and organs. His first treatment was delivered June 3.

"I went in and talked with her and was impressed," Dodd said of Dr. Townsend. "She's very good - very well-mannered and polite; very personable. And she's concerned. She sits down

"Toward the end, I started getting a little tired but I still went to work. When I came home I just went to bed earlier than normal. But as far as being worn out, I did what everybody would let me do. My friends, my wife, they were concerned about me going to work, and I said, 'Hey, I want to go to work. What am I going to do? Sit around the house

of my way to work. It was like making a two-block turn on my way to work, getting it done, and then back on the road. It really wasn't out of my way at all."

By comparison, Dodd said, going to Knoxville five days a week for treatment would have meant lost hours from work.

"I probably would have lost anywhere from two to



**While convenience was an important consideration when Jimmie Dodd chose Thompson Cancer Survival Center – Sevier, the center also offered advanced treatment options, skilled physicians and a qualified staff that he found reassuring from day one.**

with you, she talks with you, and she takes her job very seriously. I felt very comfortable there. That meant a lot. I felt relaxed. There was nothing to worry about. Everything was just perfect."

Dodd's treatments began at 10:50 a.m. each day. "It takes longer to get prepared for it than to get the treatments," he said. "You lay down on this table, and the machine [called a linear accelerator] rotates around you and makes several stops as it shoots radiation into you. It's almost like taking a five-minute nap before I go to work."

The radiation treatments, he said, were painless with little to no side effects. "I couldn't tell I was having any treatments," he said.

and mope? I don't do that." TCSC-Sevier's proximity to Dodd's home and work allowed him to maintain his schedule. "I didn't feel like driving to Knoxville every day," said Dodd who lives in Kodak near Douglas Lake and works as a customer service representative at Workshop Tools in Pigeon Forge. "Plus, Thompson was highly recommended by my doctor in Knoxville and some others."

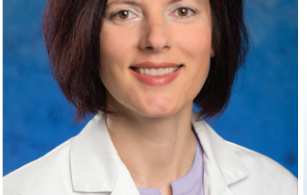
"Because Thompson was right here locally, I could still work and do my treatments and go straight back to work," he added. "It was just very convenient. Time-wise, it would take me 10 to 15 minutes; mileage, maybe eight or nine miles. It's not that far away and it's not out

three hours by the time I took a half hour to 45 minutes to drive over there," he said. "I don't know how long their procedure would have taken, and then I would have to drive back. So I would say at least two-and-a-half hours a day, and depending on their schedule, it might've taken even longer."

For Dodd, who has now finished his treatments and is awaiting his first follow-up PSA in November, Thompson – Sevier was "perfect."

"The doctor was fantastic, the staff was fantastic, they were polite and there were no complications," he said. "They were very professional. They treat you with respect - very kind, very helpful."

**"I went in and talked with her and was impressed ... she takes her job very seriously," Jimmie Dodd says of board-certified radiation oncologist Natasha Townsend, MD.**



## TCSC Sevier: More Than a Matter of Convenience

**Center Offers Advanced Treatments, Expert Physicians and Supportive Care**

Jimmie Dodd's decision to choose radiation therapy closer to home wasn't just a matter of convenience – it was also a wise health decision.

While Dodd was given three options (watchful waiting, surgery or radiation), radiation therapy is often considered the first treatment for cancer still confined to the prostate gland. In fact, the cure rates for men with low-grade cancers are about the same as those for men choosing radical prostatectomy.

Radiation, which uses high-energy X-rays or particles to kill cancer cells, is a therapy of precision. It requires in-depth treatment planning for optimal dose to the prostate with minimal harm to nearby organs and tissue.

What's more, the treatments require regular Monday-through-Friday, preferably uninterrupted, visits to the oncologist. "Radiation treatments are daily treatments, and it is important to choose a facility most convenient to the patients' daily obligations and schedule," said Natasha Townsend, MD, a board-certified radiation oncologist with extensive experience in prostate cancer treatment, along with several published peer reviewed articles on the topic. She is a full-time radiation oncologist at Thompson Cancer Survival Center – Sevier, which is located on the campus of LeConte Medical Center.

"It is ideal that a patient not miss any scheduled treatment. However, prostate cancer does not grow very quickly, and as such, there would not be an adverse effect on the outcome if a patient had to miss one or two treatments. The patient would still receive the prescribed number of treatments. For other cancers, however, it could be significantly detrimental to miss radiation treatments."

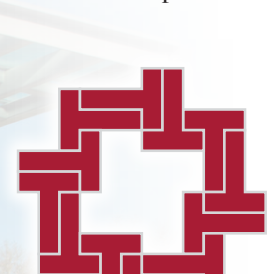
It is because of the need for frequency that Dr. Townsend recommends patients choose a quality facility that is most convenient for them. "A lot of cancer patients are not medically sick and are able to work and lead

an active lifestyle," said Dr. Townsend. "In particular, prostate cancer patients are usually medically healthy. It is important to choose a convenient treatment location so a patient can continue to work and perform usual activities of daily living, as there are no restrictions with any activities while on treatment for prostate cancer. It is also important to be in close proximity to family members or other support members involved in patient's care. It is unnecessary to drive long distances back and forth for daily treatments, as the latest technology and highest level of care are available close to home."

While lying on the linear accelerator, Dodd received a sophisticated form of treatment delivery known as "intensity modulated radiation therapy" (IMRT) with image-guided radiation therapy (IGRT). The most common radiation method for prostate cancer, IMRT shapes the beams and aims them at the prostate from several angles, adjusting the intensity of the beams to increase the dose to the cancer and to limit the dose to nearby tissues.

TCSC-Sevier also offers other services such as stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) in which the image-guided high-dose radiation beams are delivered over the course of a few days rather than weeks. Other external or internal modalities available now or coming soon include high-dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy for appropriate patients and tumor sites for breast, prostate or gynecological cancers. Licensing also is now in process for volumetric modulated arc therapy (VMAT therapy), which significantly speeds up the usual IMRT treatment delivery from the average of 20-25 minutes to just 2-4 minutes per treatment.

"TCSC-Sevier has the exact same linear accelerator technology used in Knoxville, and at the nation's leading cancer centers such as MD Anderson," said Dr. Townsend. "In addition, we have highly trained staff whose skills allow us to use the equipment to its greatest potential."



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# Great American Smokeout

★★★★★ is Nov. 19 ★★★★★

## What is **Your Plan** to Quit Smoking?

The American Cancer Society marks the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November each year by encouraging smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day. By quitting — even for one day — smokers will be taking an important step toward a healthier life — one that can lead to reducing cancer risk.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, yet about 42 million Americans still smoke cigarettes — a bit under one in every five adults. As of 2012, there were also 13.4 million cigar smokers in the US, and 2.3 million who smoke tobacco in pipes — both are also dangerous and addictive forms of tobacco.

The US Surgeon General has said, “Smoking cessation (stopping smoking) represents the most important step that smokers can take to enhance the length and quality of their lives.”

### Why is it so hard to quit smoking?

Mark Twain said, “Quitting smoking is easy. I’ve done it a thousand times.” Have you tried to quit before? Why is quitting and “staying quit” so difficult for many people? The answer: nicotine. Nicotine is a

drug found naturally in tobacco, which is as addictive as heroin or cocaine.

Over time, a person becomes physically dependent on and emotionally addicted to nicotine. This physical dependence causes unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when you try to quit. The emotional and mental dependence (addiction) make it hard to stay away from nicotine after you quit. Studies have shown that to quit and stay quit, smokers must deal with both the physical and mental dependence.

It’s hard to quit smoking, but you can do it. To have the best chance of quitting and staying a non-smoker, you need to know what you’re up against, what your options are, and formulate a strong quit plan.

### Make Your Plan

- One of the rewards for quitting smoking is better self-esteem.
- Talk with your doctor about smoking cessation aids that are available to you.
- Keep a daily journal to learn what triggers your craving to smoke, and how much you’re smoking a day.
- Tell close friends and family that you are going to stop smoking.
- Pick a quit date. The Great American Smoke-

out is Nov. 19 — that’s a great place to start!

- Develop a plan for success!

### Plan for Success

Have alternatives when the craving strikes, such as:

- Healthy, low-calorie snacks (e.g., fruits, carrots, small piece of dark chocolate).
- Sugar-free gum, hard candy, lollipops.
- Breathing relaxation techniques.
- Drinking water.
- Calling or texting a friend or relative.
- Going for a walk!

You may need to re-learn some of your favorite habits or activities, such as your morning coffee. If you always have a cigarette with your morning coffee, con-

sider changing your routine, and enjoy your coffee during a morning walk. Or switch to hot tea, and buy yourself a new mug. It’s important to relearn your routine, without cigarettes.

### Rewards for Success

- Spend money saved on something special, such as whitening your teeth, starting a new hobby, vacations, dinner and a movie, or a gym membership (You should talk with your doctor before starting any exercise routine.)
- Enjoy new self-esteem of being a non-smoker!
- Thrive with better health!



## When Smokers Quit

*What are the health benefits over time?*

### Timeline of health benefits after having your last cigarette:

- **20 minutes after quitting:** Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- **12 hours after quitting:** The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal and your energy level increases.
- **24-48 hours:** Blood flow to your heart increases, and taste and smell improve.
- **2 weeks to 3 months after quitting:** Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- **1 to 9 months after quitting:** Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) start to regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection. Lung and throat cancer risks are half that of a pack-a-day smoker.
- **1 year after quitting:** The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker’s.
- **5 years after quitting:** Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2-5 years.
- **10 years after quitting:** The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.
- **15 years after quitting:** The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker’s.

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting smoking for good. Quitting smoking lowers the risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps the heart and lungs. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

### Dealing with Slip-ups

Not everyone can quit successfully on their first try. That doesn’t mean you won’t ever be successful!

- Acknowledge the slip-up.
- Think about what triggered you to smoke.
- Go back to your “Plan for Success.”
- Throw away your cigarettes.
- Stay away from people or places that led to the slip up.
- Don’t give up, start over!

Join the volunteers at  
LeConte Medical Center  
for their

# ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR AND BAKE SALE!

Monday, Nov. 23  
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The sale will feature homemade baked goods and holiday crafts, as well as gift shop clearance merchandise. Park in Lot A, and come in main entrance to medical center. Sale will be located in the classrooms.

## An “App” today keeps the cigarettes away.

Download the Covenant Health Stop Smoking App and reap the rewards of a smoke-free life at [www.covenanthealth.com/stopsmoking](http://www.covenanthealth.com/stopsmoking)

The Stop Smoking Mobile App lets you create a profile to identify the number of cigarettes you smoke on a daily basis and price per pack, as well as the “triggers” that keep your need for cigarettes active. Based on a short questionnaire, the App will then generate a realistic “quit date” for you and will help you track how many cigarettes you smoke that day, as well as record those factors that keep you smoking and make it difficult to stop. Daily monitoring and gradual reduction of the number of cigarettes you smoke, based on eliminating the triggers, should help reduce your reliance on smoking to get through the day. As an added bonus, the App will show you how much money you’ve saved!







Connie Wyant (left) and Mickey Babb are both shining examples of how bariatric surgery can transform your life! Wyant has lost 150 lbs. and Babb 60.

## Transformations on Display!

October 8, 2015, was an evening of celebration for the Fort Sanders Center for Bariatric Surgery – a fashion show that gave current and former patients the opportunity to strut their stuff on the catwalk in front of an enthusiastic audience of hundreds of supporters!

This year's theme was "Transforming to a Healthier You!" and was designed to not only focus on the physical changes, but also the emotional and spiritual strength that often develops following bariatric surgery. Mark Colquitt,

MD, bariatric surgeon, was on hand to receive thanks for the changes he and his partner, Jonathan Ray, MD, have helped make in the lives of the models and participants alike.

Inspiring journeys and emotions were on display for those whose lives have truly been changed. Their overall advice? Don't wait! If you are thinking about bariatric surgery, what do you have to lose?

Models were able to select outfits from TJ Maxx that fit their lifestyles and body

types. Then, stylists from Tennessee School of Beauty assisted in makeup and hair. "Everyone felt so pampered," said bariatric program coordinator Dana Bradley. "It was great to see their self-confidence grow with every step down the runway. The audience encouragement went a long way!"

Following the fashion show, the models' names were placed in a hat for a gift card from TJ Maxx. The winner was Robin Ayala who has lost 279 pounds!

LEFT TO RIGHT: Tracie Kitts, patient advocate; Dana Bradley, FSR bariatrics program coordinator; and Tiffany Kernell, patient advocate, celebrate in style at the "Transforming to a Healthier You!" fashion show.



## TIPS FOR HOLIDAY EATING SUCCESS!

It's November and that means that the dreaded "holiday season" will soon be upon us. You know, the parties where everyone's "favorite" desserts, snacks and adult-type beverages are featured. There are several simple steps to keep your weight in check during the holiday season:

- **Never arrive hungry.** Eat every three to four hours, and always have a healthy snack with you such as a protein bar or raw almonds so you don't feel famished.
- **Eat the turkey or ham first.** Protein helps with metabolism, keeps you fuller longer and, hopefully, will help you cut down on those carbs that are so tempting.
- **Drink water or other non-caloric beverages.** Coffee and tea, which are very low in calories are staples at many holiday parties, and often come in festive flavors. Avoid the sugary drinks.

- **Chew gum.** Chewing sugar-free gum can satisfy your oral fixation and curb your appetite at a party.
- **Chew Slowly.** Eating a meal quickly inhibits the release of hormones in the stomach that induce feelings of being full, resulting in overeating.
- **Tweak your favorite holiday recipes.** You can enjoy some of your favorites without sacrificing your waistline.
- **Bring a vegetable or fruit tray.** Bring something that you can eat in unlimited amounts so you won't go hungry or binge on the wrong foods.
- **Avoid the egg nog.** High-calorie beverages like egg nog won't fill you up, so they are not a good choice. Alcohol can also lower your inhibitions, making the buffet table hard to resist. These are all empty calories.
- **Socialize.** Make your

- holiday about family and friends instead of eating. The focus should be family, not food.
- **Sit far away from the buffet or kitchen.** Sit where the food can't be seen. This will help with the temptation of going back for more, which can lead to extra calories.
- **Give it away.** Don't keep leftovers lying around. Donate the excess to a local homeless shelter or pack up doggie bags for family members and friends. Remember, though, the holidays are also about forgiveness. If you end up over-indulging, give yourself a break. Get right back on track the next meal - not the next week - by recommitting to healthy eating and regular exercise. Don't beat yourself up, but redirect your thinking by saying, "this is in the past, it's done" and move on. Do better when it's time for the next snack or meal.

# Year-End Bariatric Seminars

Still want to attend an informational bariatric seminar before 2015 comes to an end? There are a couple of dates and times available (listed below). Need another option? Try our online seminar available through the Foothills Mobile App. You can complete the seminar at a time that will work with your schedule.

**Thursday, Nov. 19 | 7 p.m**

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center

**Thursday, Dec. 10 | 6 p.m.**

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center

**Thursday, Dec. 17 | 7 p.m.**

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center

For more information or to register for a seminar, call **(865) 541-BAR1 (2271)**.



## PATIENT SPOTLIGHT:

### Robin Ayala



When Robin Ayala's primary care physician told her she wouldn't be around for her kids if she didn't do something about her weight, she took action. "I was 477 pounds and almost immobile," Ayala says. "I had diabetes, high blood pressure and sleep apnea. I could hardly walk and I wasn't getting any smaller."

Attending a seminar about bariatric surgery helped her understand the multi-step process. She began by losing 77 pounds pre-surgery, then opted for the Roux-en Y procedure, which bypasses a large part of the stomach and small intestines to limit the amount of food eaten and absorbed by the body.

Over the next 14 months, Ayala lost an astounding 220 pounds. She can get around much better and is trading in her love of food for a love of yard sales and shopping with friends. Her weight loss has also been accompanied by some good gains: more energy, better sleep, fewer body aches, "great" blood pressure and best of all, a new life.

Now down a total of 279 pounds – "and not done yet" – Robin looks back on her decision to undergo bariatric surgery. "It's not an easy way out, but for some of us, it's the only way out."





# We Built LeConte

**Together, our community and Covenant Health built LeConte Medical Center,** a magnificent, \$120 million state-of-the-art hospital with medical services and advanced technology rarely seen in cities our size.

And many of you personally contributed to build our hospital and its services that allow us to receive medical care right here at home in our community, including:

- **Thompson Cancer Survival Center-Sevier:** Since 2010 we have treated nearly 4,000 of our family and friends at our community's only full service cancer center.
- **Dolly Parton Birthing Unit:** We delivered 1,078 babies last year, welcoming eight out of ten of Sevier County's newest residents.
- **Emergency Services:** Last year we treated over 51,000 emergencies, caring for local residents and visitors from across the country and around the world.

**We've built an outstanding hospital in our community, and we're still growing.**

**We Built LeConte.**



*Count on LeConte*

[www.lecontemedicalcenter.com](http://www.lecontemedicalcenter.com)

For a referral to a LeConte Medical Center physician:  
[lecontemedicalcenter.com/physicians](http://lecontemedicalcenter.com/physicians)

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