

Cancer Creates...

STRENGTH • COURAGE • HOPE



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Valley's New Tradition for Celebrating Completion of Chemotherapy



Izabela Gardula, a breast cancer patient, recently started a new tradition at Valley for celebrating the completion of chemotherapy treatments. Immediately after her final treatment, Izabela ceremoniously marked the end of more than a year of chemotherapy by banging a gong three times in front of her friends and some Valley staff members involved in her care.

Izabela was diagnosed with breast cancer in August 2016 at age 33. Her cancer was Stage 2 at the time of diagnosis, but by the time she had a double mastectomy a month later, it had evolved to Stage 3. She had to complete chemotherapy and radiation within 14 months after her surgery.

Izabela used Instagram to see what other chemotherapy patients around the world were doing to commemorate the milestone of completing chemotherapy treatments. She

discovered that many patients completed a ceremony with a bell or a gong at the end of their treatment. Izabela used a gong, which has a stronger and more vibrant tone, to symbolically exclaim the end of all of the physical and emotional hurdles that come with a cancer diagnosis.

Gongs Unlimited donated a gong to Izabela to use for the ceremony, and Izabela then donated it to Valley-Mount Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Care for all chemotherapy patients to use going forward.

At the end of her ceremony, Izabela said, "Thank you to all at Valley for being a part of my journey and helping me get through these past 15 months. I would like to especially thank Chad DeYoung, M.D.; Jordan Farkas, M.D.; Tiresha Wilson, M.D.; Thomas Rakowski, M.D.; Geraldine Redmond, P.A.; Karen Kwilecki, R.N.; Elena Fishman, APN; Brooke Laster, LCSW; my amazing infusion nurse, Lindsay Buldo, R.N.; my wonderful radiation therapists Amber Herrick, Hugo Pereira, Joan Riedy, Laura Nappi and Susan McConnell; and all the amazing people in the Infusion and Radiation departments who helped, guided and supported me. The best decision I ever made was to come to Valley for my treatment."

Valley Health *LifeStyles* Fitness Center Now Open!

Valley Health *LifeStyles*, which opened at Valley's Center for Health and Wellness on February 1, is Valley's new fitness center! The goal of *LifeStyles* is to help you incorporate an appropriate amount of fitness into your lifestyle, as there is growing evidence that physical exercise is essential to preventing and treating diseases, coping with illness and injury, slowing the progression of chronic disease and building strength and endurance.

More than just your average gym, *LifeStyles* is medically supervised and has trained staff to can assist with your physical exercise regimen. Depending on the diagnosis, joining *LifeStyles* may be an excellent option for cancer patients who are looking to better manage their symptoms and to reduce the risk of further illness.

Benefits of Valley Health *LifeStyles*

- A blend of professional fitness and healthcare staff
- A personalized approach to exercise assessment and exercise prescription
- Medical oversight of programming and policies
- Programs and services to meet the needs of an aging population
- Specialized wellness programs that promote a healthy lifestyle
- Improved outcomes for patients with chronic diseases and multiple risk factors

Valley Health *LifeStyles* has something for every age and fitness level. It is located at Valley's Center for

Health and Wellness at **1400 MacArthur Blvd. in Mahwah, NJ**. To learn more about *LifeStyles* membership, please visit ValleyHealthLifeStyles.com or call **201-389-0839**.



COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CARE

Consumer Health Information Ambassador Program

We are here to help you!

Do you have health questions that concern yourself, a family member or friends? Do you want to learn more about a health-related condition? If so, the highly trained staff at The Valley Hospital's Consumer Health Information Ambassador Program is ready to help you find the most reliable and accurate medical information that you're looking for.

If you would like assistance with obtaining health information, you may call the department at **201-446-8285** (fax: **201-447-8602**) or email a request for information to callocc@valleyhealth.com. You may also stop by the Health Information Library Service Desk, located on the second floor of the Luckow Pavilion in the main corridor of the patient resource area. If you plan on visiting in person, please check scheduled availability to coordinate your visit.

Once a request is received and clarified, the library's trained staff will complete a comprehensive literature search and select and photocopy all pertinent materials. A packet of all materials will then be sent to the person who has made the request.

The Consumer Health Information Ambassador Program is available to all members of our community. **Services are both confidential and free of charge.**

We Want to Hear from You!

Have an inspiring story or helpful tip to share? Let us know, and it may appear in our next edition of *Cancer Creates!* Email submissions to jforlen@valleyhealth.com.

GetWellNetwork at Luckow



Valley-Mount Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Care now features GetWellNetwork at the Luckow Pavilion! GetWellNetwork is an interactive menu on our patient TVs that empowers patients and their families to become well-informed

and engaged in their care by giving them more control over their patient experience. This personalized approach provides resources on care-related topics that pertain to their personal health, as well as additional opportunities for patients to ask questions and provide feedback.

When a patient checks in, their GetWellNetwork account can be pulled up at any chairside with a TV in the Ambulatory Infusion Center and the Gamma Knife Center. GetWellNetwork allows patients to:

- Watch videos on topics regarding their health or about Valley
- View information about their medications
- Ask questions about their care
- Provide feedback about services and recognize staff
- Confirm their understanding of health topics or the need for more information
- Watch TV and movies, listen to music, browse the internet or check email during treatment

Nurses can also engage with patients on the portal by selecting video clips related to their care for them to watch. After viewing a video, the patient can click to indicate whether or not they understand or like it. This provides the nurses with valuable feedback to advance the patient's experience, and prompts them to identify and address any concerns or confusion they may have.

Your nurse can answer any questions you may have about GetWellNetwork. If a patient is not feeling up to viewing certain videos or information that is required, they can also view this information from their patient portal at home.

There's More Online

Visit ValleyHealthCancerCenter.com to:

- Learn more about Valley's cancer services
- View upcoming events, classes and support groups
- Find more issues of *Cancer Creates*

