

Brain and Spine Tumor News

Making Cancer History®

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
~~Cancer~~ Center

Our mission is to provide support and education to patients, families, caregivers and friends of individuals with brain or spine tumors.

EVENTS

**Head for the Cure Houston
5K Run/Walk**

September 13, 2014
8:00 a.m.

Pearland Town Center

11200 Broadway St.
Pearland, TX 77584
www.headforthecure.org

Packet Pickup - Luke's Locker

1953 W Gray St.
Houston, TX 77019
Friday, September 12
10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Spine Tumor Support Group Meetings:

**First Wednesday Every
Other Month**

5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Spine Tumor Support Group
Place of Wellness
Mays Clinic ACB
Room 2.1041

Future Meetings:

October 1, 2014
December 3, 2014
February 4, 2015



August 2014

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Dave's Courageous Fight

By Lindi Senez

A journey that began in 2006 with double vision, led my husband, David Senez, on an adventure that took his entire support team to MD Anderson in the summer of 2007. It was then that he went to meet the well-known Brain Tumor Specialist, Dr. Dimetri, but graciously ended up in the remarkable hands of Dr. Prabhu and his team, of whom became family over our eight year journey.

I, Lindi Senez, am the wife of David Senez, Jr., better known as Dave, and I would like to tell you a little about my husband's incredible fight he endured with a rare brain tumor. Dave, along with the support of his entire medical team at MD Anderson, battled a rare brain tumor for eight years, known as hemangiopericytoma, of which is only found in 20% of brain tumors.

Although he underwent surgery and radiation in 2007, the tumor came back in 2010. To the astonishment of his care team at MD Anderson (and after undergoing Gamma Knife Radiosurgery in the summer of 2010), we were miraculously blessed to welcome a baby boy, Preston Senez, in the Spring of 2011. Despite a good year of stability, the tumor again came back in 2011. Before his son's first birthday in April of 2011, we traveled back to Houston for David to undergo more radiation and chemotherapy. After making monthly trips to MD Anderson to undergo his second round of clinical trials, that were again unsuccessful, he was given a wonderful opportunity from his neurosurgeon that was with Dave all along.

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Someone, despite all the doctors' best efforts, that never gave up on Dave. Someone who always saw Dave's great nature, even when his body was weak at times. Due to the rare nature of his herangiopericytoma tumor, there is currently no known standard of care. Therefore, with the help of amazing family and friends, we were able to establish a foundation in Dave's name that allowed us to continue his travels to MD Anderson to be in the hands of the best there is. In May 2010, we hosted a 5K race to raise money and bring the community together. Dave, despite having lost his vision, insisted on running every step of the race. His mom and his cousin each held his hands and led him each step. He was the last one to finish, but he refused to give up until he crossed the finish line.

As his wife and a high school science teacher, his will and strength provided me more hope than I ever thought possible; for the unknown to

become closer to a successful treatment plan. Although this was a fight for everyone, we never once lost strength or sight of any hope. I have never known a person to have more love and genuine concern for all mankind, and I hope sharing our story gives you the strength and encouragement to never give up despite all the odds against you. Old records are established, so new ones can be made. We were able to make new records with my husband's courageous fight for eight years, thanks to an amazing surgeon like Dr. Prabhu and his team, who are willing to take risks that others are too afraid to explore.

Dave lost his battle on June 30, 2014, but with all the bravery and love that he showed each step of the way, to me, in a way, he won.



Joggin for the Noggin 5K founded by the Senez Family



Head for the Cure Houston 5K

This Saturday, September 13, 2014 will kick-off the 2nd Annual Head for the Cure Houston 5K at Pearland Town Center, 11200 Broadway St., Pearland, TX 77584.

****[Online Registration](#)** closes at 5 p.m. on September 10th. If you are looking for a team, you are welcome to join Team MD Anderson. When you go to register, you can search for our team on the right hand side of the screen. If you miss the online registration deadline, you can register the day of the event or at packet pick-up on September 12th at Luke's Locker, 1953 W. Gray St., Houston, TX 77019.

Race Day Schedule:

7:00 a.m. Late Packet Pick Up and Check In

7:45 a.m. Keeping the Faith Awards Ceremony

*8:00 a.m. Head for the Cure 5K - Houston starts
(runners line up in the front; walkers in the back)*

**Kids Fun Run will take place when most of the walkers have finished the race*

**5k Race Awards: Immediately following 5k*

Medals and prizes awarded to the top overall male and female finisher, the top overall Masters (40+) male and female finisher, and to the top three male and female finishers in all age groups.

Donate Now by clicking [here](#)

Donations may also be mailed to:
Head for the Cure Foundation
c/o Molly Walsh
2020 Baltimore Suite 201
Kansas City, MO 64108



Head for the Cure Houston donates a portion of the proceeds from the event directly to MD Anderson Brain and Spine Center, as well as it supports the Brain Tumor Trials Collaborative, of which MD Anderson is a participating institution.



Spine Tumor News Receives Facelift

If you were a previous subscriber of our newsletter, you may have noticed that this edition features a redesign and facelift of the masthead. The Spine Tumor News newsletter has now become the Brain and Spine Tumor News newsletter to encompass the overall mission and goals of the MD Anderson Brain and Spine Center and the Departments of Neurosurgery and Neuro-Oncology. We hope that by combining both brain and spine tumor information that we will be able to keep all of our patients, their caregivers, family and friends, as well as those outside of the MD Anderson family, up-to-date about the Brain and Spine Center, current research, upcoming events and news.

Each newsletter will feature information for brain tumor patients, spine tumor patients, and overall general information and news on the Brain and Spine Center. We hope that everyone will enjoy the new format, and find something informative and interesting to read.

Because of timing, this month's newsletter focuses primarily on brain because of the upcoming Head for the Cure 5K Walk. However, there will be another newsletter coming out shortly that will highlight the 5th Annual Spine Tumor Patient Education Conference for those that are interested in information on spine. Future newsletters will have a more equal distribution of combined information on brain and spine tumors.

If you are interested in submitting a story for Brain and Spine Tumor News, please email Kathryne Pruitt at Brain&SpineTumorNews@mdanderson.org, or call 713-563-8748.

What's Happening?

News from the Brain and Spine Center



Shaan Raza, MD
Joins Neurosurgery Faculty

In July, the Department of Neurosurgery welcomed Dr. Shaan Raza as its newest neurosurgeon in the Skull Base Program. Dr. Raza earned his medical degree from the The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He completed a fellowship in Neuro-Oncology under a NIH T-32 Grant, as well as his residency in neurosurgery at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Raza also completed a fellowship at MD

Anderson Cancer Center under the mentorship of Skull Base Tumor Program Co-Director and neurosurgeon Franco DeMonte, MD. His clinical interests include management of benign and malignant skull base tumors, and open and endoscopic skull base surgery. He is currently published in *Neurosurgery*, *Skull Base* and *World Neurosurgery* publications.

Welcome Dr. Raza!

Sign-up! Receive the electronic version of this newsletter, directly to your e-mail inbox, by signing up online, www.mdanderson.org/spinetumornews. Brain and Spine Tumor News is a quarterly publication.

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