

In Balance

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center
Making Cancer History®

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The Center for Energy Balance in Cancer Prevention and Survivorship, of the Duncan Family Institute, facilitates and conducts state-of-the-science research to understand the relationship between activity, nutrition, obesity and cancer, and uses this knowledge to optimize interventions to decrease cancer risk and improve cancer outcomes. The Center sponsors collaborative research, transdisciplinary educational opportunities and seminars to create, produce and disseminate innovative and practice-changing research results.

Center for Energy Balance in Cancer Prevention & Survivorship Energy Balance Special Seminar:



Date: Thursday, January 17, 2019

Title: Sleep Quality and its Association with Fatigue, Symptom Burden, and Mood in Patients with Advanced Cancer in a Clinic for Early-Phase Oncology Clinical Trials

Location: CPB8, Room 5

Time: Noon – 1:00 PM

Presenter: Goldy C. George, PhD – Instructor, Department of Symptom Research, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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Research Spotlight: Getting to Know Goldy George, Ph.D.

Born in Calcutta, India, Dr. Goldy George enjoys seeing things from different angles, be it a global, educational and/or research perspective. “That said, I have always been fascinated with cells and science, and how nutrition can affect physiology and molecular entities,” she proclaims. She studied nutrition in India, where she earned her BSc in Nutrition and Dietetics and MSc in Foods and Nutrition from the University of Madras. She completed a Graduate Fellowship in Molecular and Cell Biology at the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center, and earned her Ph.D. in Nutritional Sciences at The University of Texas at Austin. She then completed an NCI R25-Funded Postdoctoral Fellowship in Cancer Prevention and Control, Epidemiology and Public Health, at The University of Texas School of Public Health at Houston.

When she joined M.D. Anderson in 2011, she served as a Clinical Research Scientist and Senior Research Scientist in the Department of Investigational Cancer Therapeutics. She also began a study examining the relationship between diet and clinical outcomes in patients with advanced cancer on early-phase clinical trials. She conducted cognitive testing with patients in early phase 1 clinical trials, and examined the different symptoms and toxicities patients experience from cancer treatment.

Since 2016, she has served as an Instructor, Department of Symptom Research, Division of Internal Medicine, and facilitates an interdepartmental collaboration between the Departments of Symptom Research and Investigational Cancer Therapeutics. Recently, she has focused on sleep quality and its association with fatigue, symptom burden and mood in patients with advanced cancer in a clinic for early-phase oncology clinical trials.

“256 patients from the phase 1 clinic completed a well-validated sleep questionnaire, called the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index, and over 60% of patients had poor sleep quality, that was associated with greater fatigue, higher symptom burden and greater mood disturbances. Nearly one-third of these patients took sleep meds three or more times a week. This study was among the first to examine poor sleep quality among patients with advanced cancer in an early-phase clinical trials clinic,” she adds. Also, recent guidelines from the National Comprehensive Cancer Network state that good sleep hygiene, physical activity, diet control and cognitive behavioral therapy may be very helpful to improve sleep patterns for cancer patients and survivors.”

Dr. George is becoming an expert investigator in certain issues facing patients with advanced cancer. “I am very interested in examining relationships between nutrition and dietary behavior, sleep quality and clinical outcomes in cancer patients and survivors, and I am grateful to be able to play a role in research that would benefit patients.” With her many talents, knowledge and skills, there is no doubt, she will make a difference.