



# Cancer Matters

C A N C E R   C A R E   A N D   R E S E A R C H

ISSUE NO. 4  
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## WHAT'S INSIDE:

- The “SunWise Guys” making sunshine safer
- Advances in cancer research
- Real people making a real difference
- Great events in your neighbourhood



**BC Cancer Agency**  
CARE & RESEARCH



**BC Cancer Foundation**  
Supporting research & care at BC Cancer Agency

# Bringing a ray of hope to skin cancer prevention



To many people, summer in the Okanagan Valley means one thing: basking in the sunshine. Whether it's on the beach, at the golf course, or in a vineyard, both locals and visitors hit the hot spots to soak up the rays.

But for Elizabeth and Stuart Waddell, summer time brings a great opportunity to put the spotlight on cancer prevention. Aimed at reducing preventable cancers through education about skin protection and nutrition, the Waddell Project is named for its main sponsors.

Elizabeth feels strongly that prevention and education is key to reducing cancer, and she and Stuart decided to help raise awareness in their own

community. With the area's wonderful weather luring people into the outdoors, skin cancer is a major concern.

"We need to educate people about the risks of skin cancer, and through the BC Cancer Agency, we're able to help our community reduce their risk," explains Elizabeth. "We worked closely with the BC Cancer Foundation to find a way to contribute to cancer research."

The link between exposure to the sun's harmful rays and the incidence of skin cancer is well known. Despite this, skin cancer rates are increasing faster than all other cancers. Since 1940, the incidence of melanoma has risen 1000 percent, despite the availability of preventive agents such as sunscreens.

One of the focuses of the Waddell project is the "SunWise Guys," (cover photo) a program aimed at children, parents, and caregivers. In 2001, this program reached 13,000 children, and is anticipated to reach 15,000 children in 2002.

The Waddell project is operated by the BC Cancer Agency's Centre for the Southern Interior, by regional coordinator Dr. Lynne Baillie.

"The SunWise Guys program is a perfect example of the prevention work that communities can do when supported by the Foundation," says Lynne. "Considering that this year alone, there will be about 600 new cases of skin cancer diagnosed in B.C., and 115 deaths, the greater the effect on people about their sunsafe practices, the better."

One of the keys to cancer prevention is understanding how and why cancer occurs. A recent BC Cancer Agency study shows how the use of sunscreen for children helps prevent skin cancer later in life.

BCCA researchers, with help from the Vancouver School Board, recruited 458 grades one and four elementary school children for this study. At the end of three years, information on the 309 children who completed the study was analyzed.

The first group's parents received a supply of SPF 30 broad-spectrum sunscreen with instructions to apply it on their child if they were going to be in the sun for 30 or more minutes. Parents followed this routine and recorded detailed information on sun exposure and sunscreen use over three summers, and during any family Christmas or spring break vacations that took place in sun destinations.

The second group was given no sunscreen. The goal was to determine the number of new sun-induced spots acquired during the three years between the first and second groups. Children whose parents received high-quality information and the broad-spectrum, high-SPF sunscreen developed fewer moles than the other children.

Richard Gallagher, leader of Cancer Control Research at the BC Cancer Agency, and the study's principal investigator, says there was virtually no difference between the amount of sun each group was exposed to or the kind of clothing the kids wore. "This is a true prevention study," Richard says. "Parents need to know that if they intervene early they can probably significantly reduce their child's risk of skin cancer in the future."

**Stuart and Elizabeth Waddell make cancer prevention a priority – personally, and through supporting the BC Cancer Foundation.**



# Making strides in cancer research

## Gastric cancer research offers hope to families

A family who lost generation after generation to a hereditary stomach cancer now has an excellent chance of beating the odds. The Benn sisters of Victoria – whose mother, grandmother, great aunt, great grandfather, and own sister all died of gastric cancer – can now look into the future thanks to research led by Dr. David Huntsman at the BC Cancer Agency.

Dr. Huntsman's research team discovered a gene that allows family members with a history of the disease to determine whether or not they are at risk. If the test proves positive for the mutation, they still face a difficult option – having radical surgery to remove the stomach, and thus avoid developing cancer.

It was a decision that Natasha Benn decided to make, while coping with the death of her identical twin Nicola from the disease at age 24. When she and sister Jennifer, who also had the gene, had their removed stomachs examined, they proved to have cancers that hadn't appeared in endoscopic screening and biopsies.

For sister Tia, the testing proved she didn't have the genetic mutation, and spared her the awful choice of surgery for survival.



Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Province

**The Benn sisters and their family can look forward to a more certain future, thanks to the discovery of a gene – and a test to determine it – that predisposes their family members to gastric cancer.**

With this test now available to other families predisposed to gastric cancer, this research has helped family members who may carry the gene to make life-saving decisions, or be spared the difficult choice to have radical surgery.

*In March, 2002, Dr. Huntsman, a genetic pathologist, received the prestigious 2002 Castleman Award for the most significant research in human pathology published in English for the past year.*



## Possible lung cancer prevention agent for smokers

A compound originally used to treat dry mouth may be an effective agent in preventing lung cancer in former and current smokers, announced BC Cancer Agency researcher Dr. Stephen Lam in April 2002 at the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) annual meeting.

"When people give up smoking later in life, the risk of lung cancer does not go away," explained Dr. Lam, principal researcher, and head of the Lung Tumour Group at the BC Cancer Agency. "That's why 50 percent of lung cancer patients are former smokers. In people who still smoke, even with the best smoking cessation program, over 70 percent need to try quitting more than once before they succeed. Both of these factors are why we are looking for a lung cancer chemopreventive agent."

Preclinical studies suggest that anethole dithiolethine (ADT) might effectively halt or slow the development of lung cancer. Dr. Lam and his colleagues have conducted a phase II clinical trial to determine the effect of ADT in smokers with bronchial dysplasia, which has a high risk for progression to invasive cancer.

In the six-month study, 101 volunteers – both current and former smokers with bronchial dysplasia – received either ADT or a placebo three times daily. When all lesions in the study were analyzed, researchers found that the progression rate in the placebo group was 54 percent, compared to 32 percent in the ADT group. This clinical trial was part of the BC Cancer Agency Lung Health Study, a program measuring early detection methods for lung and bronchial cancer in high-risk individuals.

## From bench to bedside

### BC Cancer Agency researchers contribute to breakthrough in gene therapy

Two BC Cancer Agency scientists are members of an international science team whose breakthrough gene therapy project is likely to have applications for future cancer treatment.

The project, aimed at correcting sickle cell disease in mice, may not only suggest future therapies for sickle cell disease in humans, it may also provide a basis for delivering therapeutic genes to human cells for more effective cancer treatments.

"While this is a big breakthrough for a disease that is not cancer, it fits in very well with the

Agency's commitment to develop gene-targeted strategies for cancer control," explains Dr. Connie Eaves, deputy director with the Terry Fox Laboratory at the Agency.

The therapy counteracts the faulty gene that causes red blood cells to deform, or "sickle," by using a viral delivery system to transfer an anti-sickling variant of the gene to bone marrow stem cells. After these corrected stem cells are transplanted back into the host, the anti-sickling gene becomes active when the stem cells mature into red blood cells.

Treating sickle cell disease is considered the "Mount Everest" of challenges among gene therapy researchers. The gene "replacement parts" needed are relatively large on a genetic scale, which makes it difficult to transport the genetic material into the genome of blood stem cells.

### New screening technology helps women world-wide

A new technology developed by the BC Cancer Agency that could introduce one-step testing and treatment for cervical cancer is now the subject of a clinical trial in Vancouver. BCCA, in partnership with MD Anderson and the University of Texas, has received a \$10.3 million grant from the National Institutes of Health for the study.

Over the next three years, 400 women in B.C. will be asked to participate in a trial testing this new, less invasive, and more accurate screening procedure. This study uses an "optical wand," a thin probe that shines light onto the cervix, and measures the amount of light that comes back. This returning light can be analyzed by a computer to identify cancerous or pre-cancerous abnormalities in the cervix.

"With this technology, you will be able to directly test the cervix, and if you get a positive reading, you can – in the majority of cases – provide treatment then and there," explains Dr. Lou Benedet, BCCA oncologist and researcher.

Currently, the accepted screening for cervical cancer is the "Pap" test, where cells are taken from the surface of the cervix, and sent to a cytologist who looks for abnormalities. Patients must then wait for the results of the test, have a follow-up test if necessary – and possibly a biopsy – then wait again for results and treatment.

"The delay in waiting for test results can cause a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty," says Dr. Calum MacAulay, head of Cancer Imaging at the BCCA and a study researcher. "For women in North America, reducing this wait time is one of the key benefits."

Cervical cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death for women world-wide. Early detection and treatment can make a dramatic difference in survival rates. While survival rates for women in the developed world are excellent, approximately 190,000 women in developing nations die from the disease every year. Of all the cervical cancers world-wide, 80 percent occur in developing countries.

As a leader in the field of cervical screening – BCCA was one of the first organizations in the world to develop a comprehensive program through a central lab – the Agency is hoping that its new technology will help reduce the mortality rates from cervical cancer around the world.

BC Cancer Agency staff at work on new cervical screening technology.



Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Sun/Wend Perrin

## \$95 million research centre breaks new ground

Under clear blue skies on May 14, 2002, a seven-year dream became a reality. Hundreds of patients, staff and donors gathered on the building site at the corner of West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Heather Street in Vancouver to celebrate the launch of construction of the new BC Cancer Research Centre.

Dr. Victor Ling, vice-president of research for the BC Cancer Agency, first began dreaming about a new facility to replace the current research centre located in a converted bakery, nearly a decade ago. "Wow," he said, surveying the jubilant crowd enjoying the music of Dal Richards and his orchestra. "This is so exciting. We have waited seven years for this. Thank you so much to all the donors and government partners who have made it possible."

The BC Cancer Foundation raised the funds over five years from individuals, corporations, foundations and government partners, through the Millennium Campaign, the most ambitious health care capital campaign in British Columbia.

Allan Rock, Minister of Industry Canada; Sindi Hawkins, Minister of Health Planning, B.C.; Dr. Ling; Iain MacKay, Chair of the BC Cancer Foundation, along with cancer survivor Bernadette Tyson, spoke at the ceremony, which marked the completion of the Millennium campaign.

The federal government contributed \$27.8 million through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation to the project, with the B.C. government matching this amount through the Knowledge Development Fund.

"This new building will be one of the largest cancer research centres in Canada," said Dr. Simon Sutcliffe, executive director, BC Cancer Agency. "It will allow the BC Cancer Agency to attract and retain the best scientists from around the world, so we can continue to conduct leading-edge research that will impact on people with cancer provincially, nationally and internationally."

**Dr. Simon Sutcliffe addresses the crowd at the construction launch of the BC Cancer Research Centre.**

**Cutting the cake to celebrate the launch are: cancer survivor Bernadette Tyson, Dr. Victor Ling, Iain MacKay, Ministers Allan Rock, and Sindi Hawkins.**

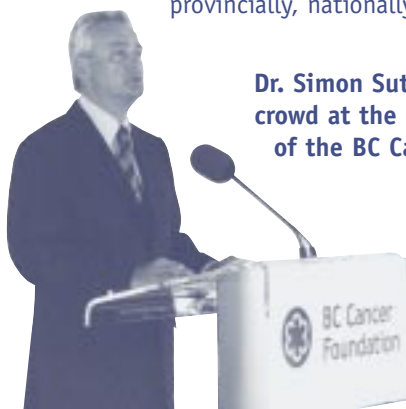


Mary McNeil and Minister David Anderson take a tour of the Genome Sciences Centre with its director, Dr. Marco Marra. (photo by Sarah Robertson)

## Federal government honours Dr. Michael Smith with \$10 million contribution to BC Cancer Foundation

The Genome Sequence Centre (GSC) has been renamed Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre, thanks to the federal government's contribution of \$10 million to the BC Cancer Foundation in recognition of the late Dr. Smith's seminal work in genome research.

"This is one of Canada's true success stories," said BC Cancer Foundation CEO, Mary McNeil at the GSC in December 2001, where Minister David Anderson announced the news. "On October 4, 2001, an incredible Canadian passed away. He left a legacy larger than life. Today Canada is recognizing the late Dr. Michael Smith and helping the BC Cancer Agency continue his legacy."



# Real people making a real difference

## Join the monthly giving program and become a Partner in Care

The BC Cancer Foundation has launched a convenient way to donate money through the monthly giving program – Partners in Care. You specify a certain amount each month, making it easier to contribute a larger amount over time. For example, a donation of \$50 a month adds up to \$600 per year, and at the end of the year we send you a tax receipt for your total donation. For many people this is an affordable way to contribute. You provide a void cheque or your credit card number, authorizing the Foundation to debit the amount you specify each month. You can sign-up over the phone or on-line. You can cancel your monthly withdrawal any time.

For information call: (604) 877-6040 or toll-free (888) 906-CURE (2873), or donate on-line at [www.bccancerfoundation.com](http://www.bccancerfoundation.com)



## Dust off your running shoes for Women's 8k Sept 8

The French Dressing Women's 8k run/walk is Sunday, September 8, 8:30 a.m. at Nat Bailey Stadium in Vancouver. Proceeds benefit the BC Cancer Foundation to support breast cancer research at the BC Cancer Agency. Collect pledges and qualify for great prizes. Team entries welcome!

For info: (604) 736-6107, or [www.effectiveevents.com](http://www.effectiveevents.com)



## Trade your old junker in for cash to support cancer research

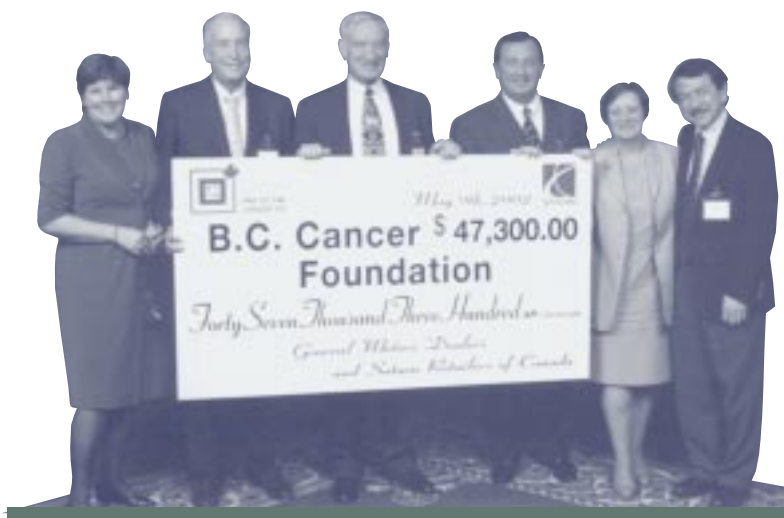
At no cost to you, A-part Auto Wrecking, through its Charity Car Program, will recycle your unwanted vehicle and donate the net proceeds to the BC Cancer Foundation. Towing is free.

Contact (604) 327-0121 or [www.charitycar-program.com](http://www.charitycar-program.com)

## General Motors raises \$47,300 in honour of former president

As a tribute to Maureen Kempston Darkes, former president and general manager of General Motors Canada, and co-chair of the

BC Cancer Foundation Millennium Campaign, GM dealers and Saturn retailers across Canada donated \$47,300 to the Foundation at a farewell dinner in her honour. Departing her Canadian post, Kempston Darkes is now GM Group vice-president as well as president, Latin America, Africa and Mid-east operations. Kempston Darkes was asked to select a charity and the BC Cancer Foundation was one of two she chose. Dr. Victor Ling, vice-president research, BC Cancer Agency, and Mary McNeil, CEO, BC Cancer Foundation, attended the dinner in Toronto where they were presented with the cheque.



Mary McNeil; Don Wheaton, South Park Pontiac Buick Cadillac GMC Edmonton; Joe Mitchell, Carter Pontiac Buick Burnaby; Moray Keith, Dueck Chevrolet Oldsmobile Cadillac Vancouver; Maureen Kempston Darkes; and Dr. Victor Ling.

## Coast to Coast ride for Cancer

On June 1, a determined young man from Vancouver began a solo trek across Canada on bike, with the goal of raising \$100,000 for cancer research at the BC Cancer Agency.

Shannon Walsh's desire to brave the open road from Vancouver to his birthplace of Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, is spurred on by the bravery shown by his family and friends during their battles with cancer. He feels that by exercising his love of biking, he may protect his own and other people's lives from a future threat of cancer.

"Cancer research was my first and only choice of charity," explains Shannon. "I've seen so many successful, energetic and outgoing people die from this disease. I realize down the road, this type of research could make a difference in my life." Shannon is a young, athletic man who has taken proactive measures to reduce his chances of one day having cancer. By undertaking this journey across Canada, he hopes to spur on others to lead a healthy, active lifestyle.

"I'd like to motivate others to take a step back from their busy lives and look at what they can do for themselves, and for others," Shannon says.

**Shannon rides in memory of those friends and family he has lost to cancer, and in honour of those who are fighting the disease right now.**

Each day of the trip, Shannon hopes to cover at least 100 km. He's doing the trip without a support crew, by hauling a bike trailer with camping equipment and supplies, with only his surroundings for company and entertainment.

"I've never embarked on a challenge like this before, and I know it will be an enormous one, both mentally and physically," Shannon says. "But this will be a wonderful adventure, a great way to see the country, and do something for a great cause."

Contributions to Shannon's "Coast to Coast Ride for Cancer" can be made online at [www.bccancerfoundation.com](http://www.bccancerfoundation.com)



**Shannon is riding from sea to shining sea, starting at English Bay in Vancouver, and ending at St. John's, Newfoundland.**

## Where there's a will, there's a way

Would you like to make a gift that will help cancer research and compassionate care at the BC Cancer Agency, but don't feel that you can afford the gift at this time?

Did you know that you can make a gift in your will to support the work of the BC Cancer Agency, and also realize significant tax savings for your estate?

Anyone can make a gift through their will. You don't need to forfeit money that you may need during your lifetime, and you can change your will at any time.

Rosey Brenan included a gift to the BC Cancer Foundation in her will, after participating in BC Cancer Agency clinical trials for a new drug that saved her life.

"I don't have a lot of ready cash but I wanted to

make sure that I supported the cancer research that gave me my life back," says Rosey. "It was so easy. I just called the BC Cancer Foundation and they gave me the sentence to use in my will. Making a gift to the BC Cancer Foundation in my will made me feel really good, because the Foundation funded the research for the new drug that saved my life."

For further information on how you can make a gift to the BC Cancer Foundation in your will or other giving opportunities, please contact: Isabela Zabava, Manager, Planned Giving, BC Cancer Foundation, (604) 877-6157, toll-free: (888) 906-8073, fax: (604) 877-6161, email: [izabava@bccancer.bc.ca](mailto:izabava@bccancer.bc.ca)



**Isabela Zabava with Rosey Brenan.**

## Vancouver Island to house world class tumour tissue repository

**T**he benefits for cancer patients will be enormous," said Dr. Brian Weinerman, vice-president, BC Cancer Agency's Vancouver Island Centre. "We will be able to look at an individual's family history, genetics, and their type of tumour, and customize a treatment for the best possible outcome."

Dr. Weinerman was speaking to a crowd of reporters in Victoria about the new Tumour Tissue Repository (TTR) – a one of a kind resource that will impact cancer research and improve treatments for



patients around the world. This new TTR, as it is called, will be located in the new research floor at the BC Cancer Agency's Vancouver Island Centre. The research floor was made possible through the BC Cancer Foundation's *Daring to Believe Campaign*, which raised \$6.5 million.

"This is the first tumour tissue repository of its kind in Canada and will radically impact the way cancer research is conducted, here in B.C. and throughout Canada and the world," said Dr. Victor Ling, vice-president research, BC Cancer Agency.

Allan Rock, Minister of Industry Canada, and Stephen Owen, Secretary of State, and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, announced the funding news for the TTR, while touring the Victoria site in February 2002.

Funding includes \$1.8 million from Western Economic Diversification Canada and \$1.6 million from Genyous Life Sciences Ltd, in addition to the support provided by the *Daring to Believe Campaign*.

**Dr. Victor Ling, Minister Allan Rock and Stephen Owen tour the site of the new tumour tissue repository to be located at the research facility in the Agency's Vancouver Island treatment centre.**

## Top Canadian artists to play benefit concert

**F**ive of Canada's leading music artists – Bryan Adams, Jann Arden, Barenaked Ladies, Chantal Kreviazuk and Sarah McLachlan – will perform in a landmark concert this fall presented by the BC Cancer Foundation in support of the new BC Cancer Research Centre.

For event organizer Shane Bourbonnais, vice-president of Clear Channel Entertainment, Canada, the purpose for the concert is personal. He spearheaded this event in honour of his late wife Michele and her fight against cancer. Michele passed away October 10, 2001.

"During Michele's battle, I came in contact with so many brave people who were suffering from this disease. When you see what these people are going through, it really puts life into perspective. My hope is that the BC Cancer Foundation Presents benefit concert will help the many people in need, both in our community and throughout Canada."

The concert will take place at General Motors Place on October 10, 2002. All of the artists involved have been directly affected by cancer and are passionate about their involvement in the concert. The proceeds will go to the BC Cancer Foundation's new research facility slated to open in 2004.

"Cancer affects all of us so deeply, so personally," said Sarah McLachlan. "No one has been untouched by this horrible disease. It cuts through gender and age, striking us wherever we live. I hope the community will support us in making the dream of building a leading-edge cancer research facility in Vancouver a reality. By supporting cancer research, we can come one step closer to stopping this devastating disease."

**Sarah McLachlan, at a media conference on August 8, explains her reasons for supporting cancer research.**



# Donor establishes clinical trials unit in Fraser Valley

Thanks to a generous donation of \$250,000 from Surrey Resident Ed Miller, a clinical trials unit has been established in the Fraser Valley. Mr. Miller participated in a clinical trial at the BC Cancer Agency's Fraser Valley Centre during his treatment for prostate cancer. He wanted to expand the capacity for further trials at the centre. Working through the BC Cancer Foundation's Fraser Valley office, he was able to designate his gift to his particular area of interest.

At a ribbon cutting ceremony in April, Karim Karmali, Regional Operations Care Leader for the BC Cancer Agency's Fraser Valley Centre said, "We greatly appreciate the commitment and generosity of Mr. Miller in supporting research in the Fraser Valley. Because of his vision, we will be able to provide many more patients access to new and potentially more effective treatments."

**The BC Cancer Foundation's CEO Mary McNeil, presents Surrey resident Ed Miller with a framed print to commemorate his donation of \$250,000 to establish a clinical trials unit in the Fraser Valley.**



## What's coming up!

### Events to benefit BC Cancer Foundation

#### Country Meadows Senior Men's Golf Tournament

Friday, September 6, 2002  
Country Meadows Golf Course, \$90  
In support of prostate cancer research  
Call: Chuck Dunn, (604) 275-3379, cdunn@telus.net

#### Howie Blessin Memorial Golf Tournament

Friday, September 13, 2002  
Surrey Golf & Country Club  
In memory of Howie Blessin  
Celebrating five years, this tourney's format is Texas Scramble  
Call: Jim Blessin, (604) 580-1477, jim\_blessin@cabp.com

#### Drive for the Cure Golf Tournament

Thursday, September 19, 2002  
Redwoods Golf Course, Langley  
Call: Kirk Fisher (604) 308-6560

#### Celebration of Life

Saturday, October 5, 2002  
A Black and White Mask Dinner and Dance organized by Rennie Yue and friends.  
Call: Rennie Yue (250) 291-1178

#### A Gala. Unplugged

Wednesday, October 9, 2002  
Fairmont Vancouver Hotel, \$300 and up  
Intimate dinner with Bryan Adams, Jann Arden, Chantal Kreviazuk, Barenaked Ladies and Sarah McLachlan, performing unplugged.  
Call: Diane O'Connor, (604) 877-6228, doconnor@bccancer.bc.ca

#### BC Cancer Foundation Presents Benefit Concert starring Bryan Adams, Jann Arden, Chantal Kreviazuk, Barenaked Ladies and Sarah McLachlan

Thursday, October 10, 2002, 8 p.m.  
GM Place, Vancouver, \$79 and up  
Call: Ticketmaster (604) 280-4444

#### Dressing It Up For Cancer

Tuesday, October 22, 2002  
An exclusive fashion show and silent auction organized by the Victoria Chapters of the Order of the Eastern Star at the Fairmont Empress.  
Call: Mickey DeBruin (250) 656-3719

#### Inspiration 2002 – Fashion Show

Wednesday, October 23, 2002, 6 p.m.  
Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, \$150  
In support of breast cancer research.  
Call: Diane O'Connor, (604) 877-6228, doconnor@bccancer.bc.ca or Jonie Zimmerman, Ashia Mode (604) 736-9611

## Making headlines...

As a world leader in cancer care and control, the BC Cancer Agency's accomplishments often make headlines. Here is a sample of some of our work that's making an impact:



### U.S. sponsors Vancouver cancer study: Army gives \$1 million for study of new drug for prostate cancer

*Vancouver Sun, Feb. 12, 2002*

Concerned about the high number of military veterans diagnosed annually with prostate cancer, the United States Army has given a \$1 million clinical trial grant to a pair of Vancouver research scientists.

The U.S. department of defense is sponsoring the study by Vancouver General Hospital urologist Dr. Martin Gleave, and oncologist Dr. Kim Chi of the BC Cancer Agency. They will explore the effectiveness of a new drug, called OGX-011.

### Stem cell source gives leukemia victims hope

*Vancouver Province, April 3, 2002*

"It's very exciting, wow," said Vancouver's Lisa Lockerby yesterday, as the BC Cancer Agency lead investigator Dr. Keith Humphries unveiled the world's first large-scale, long-lived production of vital blood-producing stem cells outside of the body.

These primal cells eventually give birth to all the different types of blood cells. Scientists believe they

will have a much better chance of fighting certain blood cancers like leukemia by injecting patients with these stem cells.

**Lisa Lockerby, right, is delighted by the stem cell advances of Dr. Keith Humphries work.**



Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Province/Jon Murray

## New radiation machine works with precision on brain tumours: Agency acquired device thanks in part to local firm's donation

*Vancouver Sun, Feb. 5, 2002*

A 19-year-old Nanaimo man with a tumour in his brain is one of the first patients in B.C. to benefit from a radiation machine recently acquired by the BC Cancer Agency, that can precisely zero in on the abnormality without damaging nearby nerves and tissue within his skull.

The BC Cancer Agency is just the second medical centre in Canada to get the \$400,000 piece of high-tech equipment, called the M3 micro-multileaf collimator, and its accompanying software. It is intended for people with benign and malignant head tumours, and children whose tumours are so tiny that conventional radiation machines are absolute overkill.

**Staff at the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver use a new piece of radiation therapy equipment to help patients.**



Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Sun/Stuart Davis

## Agency, VGH team in breast cancer study

*Times Colonist (Victoria), Mar. 6, 2002*

Specialists from the BC Cancer Agency and Victoria General Hospital have teamed up on a clinical trial aimed at developing improved, less-invasive treatment for breast cancer.

The trial, a first for Canada, will see the research team work with a treatment technique known as "radio frequency ablation" or RFA, which employs a small ultrasound probe that is inserted into the breast.

When the probe reaches a tumour, it releases a number of sharp tines that deliver radiofrequency waves in an effort to kill the growth.

"We have found that the patients already involved in the study easily tolerate the effects of the therapy, and that it does seem to kill the cancer cells with great precision," said Dr. Ivo Olivotto, a radiation oncologist at the Vancouver Island Centre and a member of the research team.

## B.C. study shows new cancer risk to women

*The Vancouver Province, Jan. 6, 2002*

Researchers have found a dramatic increase in vulvar cancer in young women and they say there's a clear link to cigarette smoking.

"It's a disease that's increasing and associated with a viral infection – human papilloma virus – and with cigarette smoking," said Dr. Blake Gilks of the BC Cancer Agency.

"If there was a decrease in smoking, and we could develop a vaccine, we could eliminate this cancer."

The cancer agency study, published on Friday in *Gynecologic Oncology Magazine*, looked at women aged 17 to 39.

It found that the percentage of tumours in young women increased from one per cent in 1975-1980 to almost eight per cent in 1993-1998. The cancer is more typically seen in women in their 60s and 70s.

**Article excerpts reprinted courtesy of:  
Pacific Press, Victoria Times-Colonist**



We have recently changed our electronic records system. If your name/address is not correct, please contact the BC Cancer Foundation office at your local cancer centre. Phone numbers below.

## Be safe under the sun this summer

**As you head outdoor this summer, remember to stay protected from the sun's harmful rays. UVB rays cause sunburn, skin cancer, sagging and wrinkling.**

### Sun Protection Guidelines:

- Reduce exposure to the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Cover your arms and legs/trunk with clothing
- Put on a wide brimmed hat (brim of hat should be 3.0 inches or 7.5 cm)
- Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher - and remember, sunscreens are not intended to increase your exposure time, but to increase your protection during unavoidable sun exposure
- Keep babies under one year out of the sun
- Beware of cloudy days since the ultraviolet light that causes burns can penetrate light cloud cover, fog and haze. The amount of visible light is not a good guide to the amount of ultraviolet light
- Wear protective clothing if you do not wish to use a sunscreen on the body and arms (i.e., long sleeves). Wide-brimmed hats provide some protection but a sunscreen should be used as well

## Who we are...



### The BC Cancer Agency:

Our mission is to reduce the number of people getting cancer, to reduce the number of people dying of cancer, and to improve the quality of life of those living with cancer. The BCCA provides cancer care and control for everyone in the province of British Columbia. BC Cancer Agency scientists and clinicians are world leaders in cancer research, bringing groundbreaking results quickly from the researcher's bench to the patient's bedside. The Agency is a member organization of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

### Contact us:

Vancouver Centre: (604) 877-6000;  
toll-free (800) 663-3333  
Fraser Valley: (604) 930-2098  
Southern Interior: (250) 712-3900  
Vancouver Island: (250) 519-5500



### The BC Cancer Foundation:

We are an independent charitable organization that raises and stewards funds to support cancer research and care at the BC Cancer Agency. The Foundation maintains offices at each of the BC Cancer Agency's four centres.

### Contact us:

BC Cancer Foundation Provincial office:  
1 888-906-CURE

Fraser Valley: (604) 930-4084  
Southern Interior: (250) 712-3921  
Vancouver Island: (250) 519-5552  
Vancouver: (604) 877-6160

**Our Web sites: [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca) and  
[www.bccancerfoundation.com](http://www.bccancerfoundation.com)**