

Cancer Creating Balance and Courage for One of the W's Own

On any given day, members of the W campus can see Dr. Agnes Carino walking around campus with a pep in her step. Her infectious smile portrays a kind and friendly spirit that draws her colleagues and students to her; however, it also hides a fact that is not easily read on her face: she is living with stage 4 cancer.

The mother to three daughters is originally from the Philippines and has been a professor of mathematics at the W for five years. Dr. Carino has lived through many big events in her life that have led her here to Mississippi; however, the biggest and most life-changing event occurred in 2012 when she was first diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer.

Upon Dr. Carino's first diagnosis, her doctor recommended that a lumpectomy be performed. After lumpectomy surgery and several weeks of radiation, she and her doctors hoped the cancer was gone. Unfortunately, three years later the cancer reappeared in the same place. By 2016, her cancer had metastasized to stage 4—meaning the cancer had spread to other parts of her body. After speaking to her doctor about her options, she thought to herself “If I don't do chemotherapy, basically I will die.” Looking back, she says she would have never done the chemotherapy and treatments her doctors recommended knowing what she knows now.

After reading the testament of a woman who had stage 4 breast cancer and was cancer-free a year later, Dr. Carino decided to follow her example and take the same unconventional route of treatment called high dose vitamin C therapy instead of enduring chemotherapy a second time. Though she was initially discouraged by her doctor's hesitation about Riordan Clinic, the forefront of high dose vitamin C therapy, she booked an appointment and was reassured that it was the right decision when her friend covered her hotel costs. She was surprised by the clinic's bright colors and optimistic doctors, and felt empowered when her doctor told her “You have a fighting chance! I think we can do this.” Dr. Carino described the clinic as a paradigm shift because there it was so hopeful. “That was such a big ingredient in getting better,” she says. After only staying at the clinic for three days, she had already started to feel better—physically and mentally. She had started her infusions that were custom-made for her based on her body's deficiencies, and she revamped her entire lifestyle to strengthen her body so she could

fight her cancer herself. By June of 2016, all of her tumors had disappeared but one. This past August, her cancer score had dropped from 268 to 51, the normal range being 0-32. She says, “I knew there would be improvement, but I never thought it would be that drastic.” Her improvement was so amazing that her previously skeptical doctor told her “Keep doing whatever you're doing.”

As of today, Dr. Carino is not yet cancer free, and she is on a daily regimen that helps her body function optimally

so she can fight her own cancer. She jumps on the trampoline for 15 minutes a day to stimulate her lymphatic system. She can be seen sprinting up and down the stairs in Parkinson Hall to get in some exercise. She drinks a homemade organic bone broth, takes supplements custom-made for her body's deficiencies, and sometimes she mixes up a collagen powder drink. She follows a diet plan given to her by her doctor that eliminates foods that she is sensitive or allergic to. She remembers the late night processed foods, coffee, and sweets that she consumed during college and graduate school and believes that these were contributors to her sickness. Now, she eats strictly whole foods and a 90% vegetarian diet. She says “I will never go back to my previous lifestyle.”

If anything can be learned from Dr. Carino's health journey it is that a holistic approach to wellness is the key to good health. She

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doesn't just eat healthily and exercise daily, she makes conscious efforts to ease her mind and spirit. She attends counseling to help with stress management, and she exercises gratefulness and forgiveness. She emphasizes that relationships matter, and having a community like she has found at the W and in her church has been one of the most helpful parts throughout her journey. Instead of just treating the cancer, she treats her mind, soul, and body all together. She reveals, “It's an amazing story. I'd never want cancer, and I'd never wish that for anybody, but I have thanked God for cancer because I've learned so much, and I have influenced other people to be healthy.”



Introducing one of our newest Rec Fitness Classes:

Pulse Pointe Barre

PPB is a challenging and creative barre experience that weaves together traditional muscle-sculpting barre choreography with exhilarating cardio segments to define and challenge the body in a whole new way.

Classes are Wednesdays at 7:00 AM and Mondays at 5:15 PM



With elbows bent at 90 degrees, arms rotate out to the sides and slightly in front of the body.



Begin with heels together and toes apart in relevé. Legs in 2nd position plié.



Sweet Potato Bean Dip

1 c. cooked sweet potato (1 medium sweet potato)
1 (15 oz) can Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
1T tomato puree ¼ c. diced red bell pepper
1 lime, juiced
1 tsp. chopped garlic
1T red wine vinegar
1T olive oil
½ tsp. onion powder
1 tsp. chili powder
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper (if desired, for added heat)
½ tsp. cumin, ½ tsp. salt

Combine all ingredients in food processor or high powered blender until well combined. Add water to reach desired consistency. This dip is great served with raw vegetables (cucumbers, carrots, celery, etc) or whole wheat pita chips. Can even use as a spread for sandwiches.

Yield: 2 cups

Nutrition Info (per 2T serving): 39 calories, 6g carbohydrates, 1g fat, 2g protein

Living W Well
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