

# Teal Talk



December 2020

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*The end of 2020 is upon us. What a year it has been! We are looking to 2021 with the hope that we will actively continue our mission and we look forward to connecting with you in person.*

*Wishing you and yours a  
Happy Holiday Season!*



# IN THE NEWS

## **New Combination Treatment for Recurrent Ovarian Cancer Shows Positive Outcomes**

---news-medical.net  
November 19, 2020

A team from Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center has detailed striking findings on the effectiveness of a previously untried combination of old and new drugs as treatment for recurrent ovarian cancer.

In a new article in JAMA Oncology, the researchers report that one-quarter of patients who received the combination of pembrolizumab (brand name Keytruda), bevacizumab (brand name Avastin) and a pill form of cyclophosphamide (brand name Cytoxan) experienced long-term disease control along with excellent quality of life -; far outpacing the effectiveness of either existing approved therapies or newer immunotherapies alone.

The idea to combine the two widely used systemic chemotherapy agents with pembrolizumab, an immune checkpoint inhibitor, grew out of the desire to improve immune response while preserving quality of life, notes Emese Zsiros, MD, PhD, FACOG, a staff physician and faculty member with the Department of Gynecologic Oncology and Center for Immunotherapy at Roswell Park.



*"Pembrolizumab works by activating immune cells against cancer, but checkpoint inhibitors haven't worked well in ovarian cancer because the T cells often can't get to the tumor. We combined bevacizumab, to normalize the tumor microenvironment and achieve better penetration of T cells into tumor tissue, and oral cyclophosphamide, which can deplete 'bad' regulatory T cells that actually help cancer cells to avoid immune attack, with checkpoint blockade in order to activate the 'good' killer T cells to fulfill their function."*

---Dr. Emese Zsiros, first author on the new paper

The results of the team's phase 2 clinical study suggest a significant benefit for patients receiving this combination regimen.

Among 40 patients with recurrent or treatment-resistant ovarian, fallopian-tube or peritoneal cancer -; which together represent the most-fatal gynecologic cancers -; 95% experienced clinical benefit from this treatment. Progression-free survival nearly doubled, from an expected survival of 5-6 months to 10 months. And the combination generated durable responses, with 47.5% of patients on the study responding to the treatment and 25% demonstrating long-term disease control.

The team assessed participants' quality of life at several junctures. Patients on the study maintained high and stable functioning throughout the study. Some indicators -; body image and emotional/social functioning actually improved overall over the course of the trial.

"The quality of life of our patients who took part in this clinical trial was excellent," says Dr. Zsiros. "Most of them were able to travel, spend good time with their families and resume their hobbies -; cooking, hiking, things that they were not doing before. And approximately 30 percent of our patients were still living more than a year and a half after going on this combination, which we did not anticipate. These are very striking results."

Approximately 70% of people diagnosed with ovarian cancer will experience a recurrence. Studies have shown that the available "second-line" chemotherapies for those whose cancers return are associated with limited clinical benefit, with overall response rates ranging from 10-25%, and result in significant treatment-related toxicities. And only 8% of patients with recurrent ovarian cancer have been shown to respond to pembrolizumab alone.

"This clinical trial represents a significant conceptual advance in the use of combination therapy to enhance the efficacy of immunotherapy, demonstrating that we can generate long-term disease control in ovarian cancer without compromising quality of life". says the paper's senior author, Kunle Odunsi, MD, PhD, FRCOG, FACOG, who is Deputy Director, the Robert, Anne & Lew Wallace Endowed Chair in Cancer Immunotherapy, Executive Director of the Center for Immunotherapy, and the M. Steven Piver Professor of Gynecologic Oncology at Roswell Park. "The combination assessed in our trial is an option that should be considered for many patients with recurrent ovarian cancer based on its high tolerability and strong signal of efficacy."

# Survivor Spotlight

## *Meet Arnisha Simley-12 year Survivor*

I am 57, born in Columbus, Ohio. I have two grown adult children and seven grandkids I truly adore, they keep me grounded. I have been employed with Nationwide Insurance for 33 Years.

My diagnosis came as a shock in Feb 2008. I was experiencing pain in my stomach with seeing my regular OBGYN. I suffered dizziness, severe cramping, and heavy bleeding, along with a few other symptoms. After several rounds of medication to combat the pain and nothing worked, I was my own advocate. I asked the doctor to take an ultrasound of my stomach. During the procedure it was discovered that the right ovary was quite the problem, enlarged to the size of a grapefruit. The doctor said *'there is the problem and it would need to be removed'*. Laparoscopic surgery was scheduled to remove the one ovary. The doctor said it looked fine, and I thought everything was fine, until the dreaded call, which confirmed the pathology report that the ovary was cancerous. I was then referred to the Zangmeister Center and consulted with Dr. Luis Vaccarello.

On February 28, 2008, the diagnosis was confirmed. Dr. Vaccarello shared with me everything I would be going through, surgery, chemo, etc, and how this would help me live and fight the cancer. I remember being so numb, in total disbelief and my mind immediately pictured people losing hair, being small, looking sick. All I could think about was all the horror stories I've heard about chemo therapy and people dying from cancer. I told him I agreed to the surgery, but that was it. I was refusing to take the chemo therapy sessions. I remember telling him the surgery will get it all. My mom was in the consultation with me assuring the doctor that I would do what was necessary, but I had only agreed to the surgery. I left with that thought only, as the doctor said he couldn't make me take the chemo. It was my choice. Chris Burton, Dr. Vaccarello's nurse, was also there trying to encourage me. She said *'you are so beautiful and I'm sure you will look as beautiful with a new hair style'*.



On March 13, 2008, I had my second complete surgery. Everything went well and it was determined that it was clear cell carcinoma of the ovary, stage 1C, Grade 3.

While home recovering, my grandson, 3 years old at the time, came in with this big flower and said '*This is for you NENE – I love you!*' It was at that very moment, I decided that I wanted to live to see my grandkids, and I would go through the chemotherapy and beat this thing called Cancer. I called to schedule the chemo sessions and asked the doctor how soon after the chemo would I lose my hair, as this was important to me. I didn't want to lose my hair. He said 2 weeks after the first session. Knowing this, I went to my stylist, got out all my fears and tears and had her cut it to a boy cut... very low. I heard this would devastate me to see hair fall out on the pillow.

April 15, 2008 was my first chemo session. I had a total of 6 rounds of Carboplatin and Placitaxel (Taxol). The little hair I did have as a boy cut vanished 2 weeks after the first chemo. I lost hair everywhere. I missed my eyelashes and had wigs made just for me. My last chemo session was July 29, 2008.

I can say that I was fortunate not to experience the horrible side effects that I had heard and envisioned. The only side effect for me was pain in my knees, and I took something for that. Having cancer is so devastating, however life is so precious, so fight it and live life to the fullest making every day count.

My cancer was officially declared in remission after 5 years, and remains there today. I credit my survival to my faith in God, the Zangmeister Center, my family and friends who continue to support me along my survivor journey and my constant involvement with the OCAO organization.



# 2020 Holiday Recipe Swap



Do you have a go-to family recipe that you prepare every holiday season? Maybe something that has been passed down from generation to generation? Perhaps there is a new recipe that looks so good you can't wait to give it a try this year, or one that you created on your own.

Rather than me sharing holiday recipes this month, I thought it would be fun to do an OCAO Survivor recipe swap. Looking for all categories: drinks, appetizers, soup, salad, main dishes and sides. I certainly can't forget desserts: cookies, cakes, pies, candy, and puddings. Oh my!

Please email your recipes to [lmitchell@ocao.org](mailto:lmitchell@ocao.org) **BY DECEMBER 15TH**

I will compile them and email to everyone. I can't wait to see what makes your holiday meals special.



# Christmas Tree Farms



I thought this was worth a repost just in case you need it or didn't see it in our November edition of Teal Talk.

## Mr. Tree Farm

[mrtreefarm.com](http://mrtreefarm.com)

1099 Reynoldsburg New Albany Road, N; Blacklick  
614.577.0081

## Messerall Tree Farm

[messeralltreefarm.com](http://messeralltreefarm.com)

4634 Hardscrabble Road; Alexandria 43001 740.924.8495

## Cackler Family Farms

[cacklerfarms.com](http://cacklerfarms.com)

4971 Cackler Road; Delaware 43015 740.524.5311

## Country Cabin Tree Farm

[countrycabintreefarm.com](http://countrycabintreefarm.com)

3600 Wilson Road; Sunbury 614.832.9345

## Needle Pine Tree Farm

[needle-pine-tree-farm.square.site](http://needle-pine-tree-farm.square.site)

8312 Denune Road; Johnstown 43013 614.632.5303

## Lands Christmas Trees

22796 Ringgold Southern Road; Stoutsville 43154 740.474.5884





# Financial Aid

The Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Ohio is dedicated to supporting women across Ohio who have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer. We announced our Financial Aid Program in April, which added another layer of support to our mission.

This program is specifically aimed at helping women with expenses during and after cancer treatment. Grants may be given to qualified applicants in the form of gift cards for food and/or gasoline. This may be expanded to other forms of payment in the future. There are yearly and lifetime limits on the amount each individual may receive.

To qualify for the grant, you must be a resident of Ohio. You must be diagnosed with ovarian cancer and currently be in chemotherapy or other oncologist-directed treatment for ovarian cancer OR have completed surgery or treatment for ovarian cancer within the last three months.

For more information and an application, please visit our website:  
[www.ocado.org/what-we-do/financial-aid](http://www.ocado.org/what-we-do/financial-aid).





Hand  
Crafted

# No-sew Gnome

## Materials:

Men's crew socks for body      Scissors  
Shaggy fabric fur for beard      Glue gun  
9x12 crafting felt for hat      Utility knife  
3/4 " wood ball for nose      Rubber bands  
Poly-fill stuffing for hat      Rice to fill body

**\*\*\*SEE PATTERNS FOR BEARD,  
MUSTACHE & HAT**



Step 1: Fill the gnome sock body with rice- Put sock in a glass & fold over edge to hold in open. Pour rice in using funnel



Step 2: Rubber band sock & trim



Step 3: Glue body to secure in case the rubber band breaks



Step 4: Slice the beard with utility knife (not scissors, they will cut the *hair*) being careful not to slice through *hair*



Step 5: Glue beard to body



Step 6: Glue nose to beard



Step 7: Cut hat

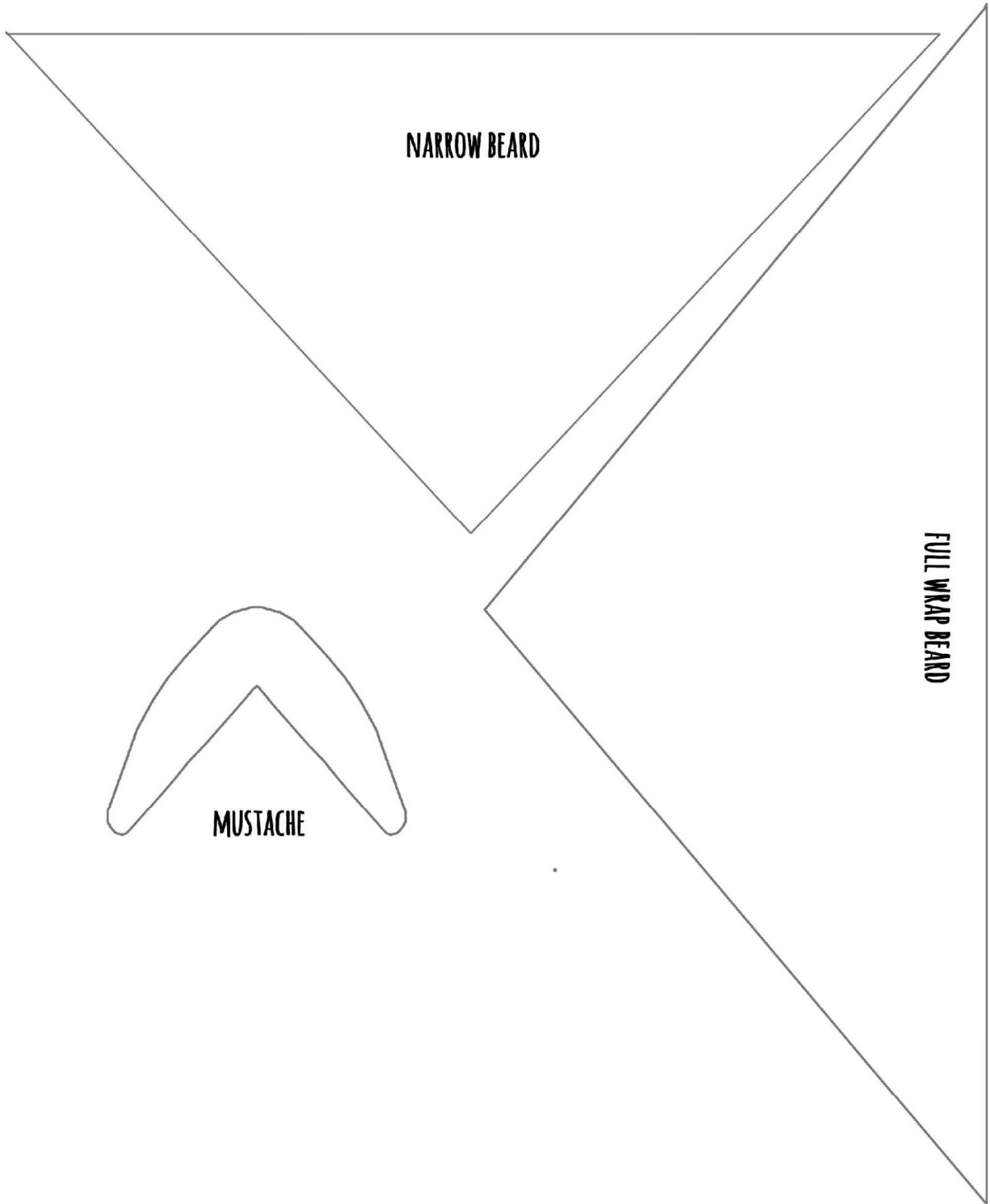


Step 8: Roll hat into cone



Step 9: Stuff hat with polyfill and glue to gnome





**NARROW BEARD**

**FULL WRAP BEARD**



**MUSTACHE**



GNOME HAT

Thank you so much for your amazing support of Teal Talk this year. It has been a labor of love, and I have enjoyed connecting with you in this way. It is my hope that you have found value in the information brought to you each month. I am looking forward to holding monthly Survivor events in 2021, and I have some fun things planned, so stay tuned. Wishing you a very Happy Holiday Season and I can't wait to see you in the New Year. As always, please reach out if there is anything OCAO can do for you.

Warm regards,

Lisa



# *Looking for a few Survivors to end the silence & speak up about ovarian cancer*

OCAO is once again teaming up with Sunny95 radio station to help spread awareness about ovarian cancer. Recordings will take place during the first quarter of 2021. Sessions will last 20 to 30 minutes. You will be given a prompt and your response will be recorded.

To register, or get more information email Kim Britt: [kbritt@ocao.org](mailto:kbritt@ocao.org)

# Ways to Give Back



You shop. **Amazon gives.**

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.



Create a Kroger digital account

Link your card to OCAO

OCAO earns a percentage of your spending AT NO COST TO YOU!

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT*