



The latest treatments, close to home

If you or someone you know is interested in finding out more about clinical trials at the St. Vincent Center for Cancer Care, call **(317) 338-CARE (2273)** or visit **cancer.stvincent.org**.

Paving the way in cancer care

St. Vincent offers leading-edge treatment through clinical trials

As home to one of the region's busiest cancer centers, St. Vincent Indianapolis Hospital offers patients the most advanced treatments available. It stays at the top of its class by participating in more than 40 clinical trials or research studies that test the effectiveness of new drugs, devices or treatment strategies. The hospital's clinical involvement gives patients the opportunity to benefit from the latest innova-

tions in cancer care.

Now, as a partner in a new, three-year pilot program by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), St. Vincent is making it easier for patients in the Indianapolis area to enroll in clinical studies and receive state-of-the-art care. Last year, the hospital was chosen as a pilot site for a National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP) sponsored by the NCI. As a result, St. Vincent is not only helping to

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define top-notch care but also bringing that care directly to people who need it the most.

“This is an important step because it’s bringing new treatment options directly to the community,” explains Karen Hieston, research study coordinator at the St. Vincent Center for Cancer Care. “Instead of having to travel long distances to a large academic medical center, where many of the larger clinical trials take place, patients can now receive the same care closer to home. It’s easier for them to get in and out and easier for them to see their physician.”

Louisa Hayenga, director of Cancer Specialty Services in the St. Vincent Center for Cancer Care,

agrees. “Nearly 80 percent of care is provided to patients through a community hospital. It’s appropriate for clinical trials to be available here. This program allows us to reach not only the local community but also elderly, rural, inner-city and low-income patients who are typically underserved.” At the same time, it ensures that high-risk patients in certain ethnic and racial groups receive the patient education and treatment they need.

Treatment network expands

The goal of the NCI program is to discover more about the nature of cancer and explore the development of more effective approaches to cancer prevention, diagnosis and

therapy. It aims to encourage collaboration among area medical, surgical and radiation oncologists and provide close links to NCI-funded research and to the other centers in the program, many of them based at large research universities.

St. Vincent was chosen as a pilot site for the NCCCP because of the staff’s ability to conduct cancer research and deliver medical advances in a top-notch patient care setting. One of the most important characteristics of the centers chosen for the NCI program is having strong organizational capabilities. Being part of the program means St. Vincent is able to provide the infrastructure needed by physicians and other health care professionals in the community to manage and track the large amounts of information required to maintain records and determine appropriate solutions.

“Private practice physicians who use our facilities can be assured of proper data management and appropriate screening, care and follow-up with their patients,” Hayenga explained. “We have the ability to assist them in enrolling patients in these important trials, which are designed to identify the type of cancer you have, test new drugs and offer new treatment options.” ■

Enrollment is under way

Right now, as part of the NCI-funded program, the Center for Cancer Care is starting to screen and enroll patients for three studies investigating the prevention and treatment of breast cancer, lung cancer and colon cancer.

To be eligible for the trials, patients must meet certain inclusion and exclusion criteria, explains Hieston. In the breast cancer study, for example, patients must be breast cancer survivors who are now cancer-free for five or more years or who are at high risk for breast cancer. The object is to determine whether tamoxifen can help prevent future recurrence.

The lung cancer study will be enrolling patients with small cell lung cancer who are interested in participating in a study of new treatments. Similarly, patients with documented colon cancer may want to find out more about the study that hopes to identify new treatment options.

For more information, call TK.