

**W**hen the diagnosis is cancer, a recommendation to Oncology Associates is the first important step to help, says Dr. Stephen J. Lemon. The Omaha oncology practice's oncologists and staff were trained at the finest medical institutions in the country, he adds. "We offer the newest technology and medical treatments in oncology and hematology with a compassionate, human touch. Each patient is treated with the dignity and respect of a friend or family member."

Because no two cancers are the same, Oncology Associates specializes in personalized cancer care. This includes medical oncology, hematology, genetic risk evaluation, chemotherapy treatment, and diagnostic services. In addition, it offers access to many types of cancer clinical trials.

Dr. Lemon, who received training at the University of Washington and Johns Hopkins University, has three board certifications and over 13 years of experience in medical oncology. A father of two girls, he loves art, music, and bicycling.

Dr. Lemon is passionate about all aspects of cancer care, and he also loves community service, he shares. A longtime resident of Omaha, Dr. Lemon is the director of cancer prevention at Methodist Health Systems. He regularly gives lectures to the physicians there.

Dr. Elisa Tso Bomgaars, originally from China, grew up in the Philippines. At home in the kitchen or on the golf course, she loves reading good books and traveling, she shares. Dr. Bomgaars has a deep compassion for her work. "My greatest satisfaction is helping my patients survive cancer," she says.

Dr. Irina E. Popa came to the United States to live and work in a democratic society, and she appreciates the opportunity to help her patients on a day-to-day basis, she says. She understands the importance of pursuing the latest techniques and treatments in hematology and oncology, she adds.

Jennifer Riddell, APRN, wanted to be a nurse since she was 9 years old. She comments, "It's important to make a difference, and our goal at Oncology Associates is to help you the best we can throughout your treatment."

Shelley Lynne Reichmuth, PA-C, says she brings the same "zest" to her work that she invests in her life with her husband and two children on the family's farm. "I believe it is important to care for patients in the way I would like to be cared for," she shares.

Alecia Raymer, PA-C, had a physician assistant provide her care as a child. Her greatest satisfaction is seeing patients get better, she says. Alecia believes that, "There's nothing better than having a patient come to you with a problem and knowing you can fix it."

Tina Harrison is the head nurse and a three-year breast cancer survivor. "During my treatment, I had my IV treatment running as I called patients. I could offer patients a unique understanding about their cancer battle."

These doctors and nurses and other staff members are committed to a philosophy that puts the utmost importance on individualized care, Dr. Lemon says. They are dedicated to providing the highest-quality care for patients throughout Omaha and Nebraska, he adds.

Dr. Lemon notes "the importance of treating the patient rather than the disease. When a person receives a diagnosis of cancer, who they are and how they will cope become important factors

in finding cures for them. We believe that to beat cancer, we must treat more than the disease itself. We must treat the whole person. We respond to all aspects of our patients' lives because cancer impacts all aspects of their lives."

On Oncology Associates' website ([www.oacancer.com](http://www.oacancer.com)) are many testimonials about the compassionate care that patients have received there. Dr. Lemon says that they feel the videos on the website provide great support for their patients and have proven to be very helpful. Among the touching videos is that of Pam and Steve Phipps. Married for over 27 years, they started dating when they were 15 years old. They now have three children.

Years after suffering a head injury in an automobile accident, Steve was diagnosed with brain cancer. Because the cancer could not be surgically removed, he went through a year of targeted chemotherapy treatment.

Almost a year later, Pam, who was in the best shape of her life thanks to "lots of salads" and a full exercise regimen, she says, had a routine mammogram. It required a biopsy. The biopsy revealed that she had breast cancer. Steve found her cancer more emotionally challenging than his own. Both Steve and Pam turned over their concerns to their children.

"Having two parents dealing with cancer was very difficult for our kids," Steve says. "We believed in the truth. We'd tell them, 'Here's what is happening. Here is what's going on. Dad is doing this medicine. Mom is doing this. Dad is going to be tired. Mom is going to be tired.' We've told them everything and what to expect," adds Steve.

"Just like anything in life, this is what it is. This is how we're going to deal with it. This is how we're going to get through it," Pam says. "It might change our life a little bit right now, but we're going to get through it. And we're going to get through it as a family and not let it interrupt our lives as much as we can."

The Phipps' strength and positive attitudes are strong evidence of the personalized care that Oncology Associates offers to help patients deal with cancer, Dr. Lemon says.

The standard treatments of radiation, chemotherapy, and surgery are only the beginning of Oncology Associates' approach. Dr. Lemon emphasizes the importance of knowing the latest research, especially regarding new ways to treat the spectrum of diseases that are labeled as cancer.

"There are now smart medicines that have better efficacy and fewer side effects," he goes on to say. "These medicines can be tailored to individual patients' needs."

One such treatment, Kadcyly, was recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Kadcyly, previously known as T-DMI, helps women who have stage three or stage four breast cancer that has spread to other areas of their bodies, Dr. Lemon explains. These tumors are resistant to previous treatments. Traditional chemotherapy often affects both the tumor and normal cells. Kadcyly delivers medication to the tumor directly, without affecting healthy cells. Dr. Lemon says that they have created a new video about Kadcyly, which is available on the website.

Oncology Associates provides world-class cancer care to patients throughout Nebraska, with clinics in Blair, Holdrege, and Norfolk, Dr. Lemon states. There are two Omaha facilities. One is at 8303 Dodge, 402-354-5860; and the other is at 515 N. 162nd Avenue, Ste. 303, 402-354-0970. Oncology Associates is also on Facebook. **WE**

## ONCOLOGY ASSOCIATES

### Personalized Patient Care

By Jackie Byers



Dr. Stephen J. Lemon