



IN EVERY ISSUE

# Letters from Our Readers

## The Necessity of Palliative Care

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Reading "[The New Specialty in Cancer Care](#)" in the Spring issue, I was awestruck that this wasn't already considered a major part of cancer care. My mother, diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer in 2000, was given many options but no hope for cure. I was her primary caregiver. My emphasis was seeing that every day was as good as possible. This is quality of life, and I am so thankful for your article. Life is so precious that cancer shouldn't stop its pleasures no matter how small they may be on any given day. From hospice to other health care providers, our main goal was to see that she got exactly what she wanted. Mom would tell you palliative care was the best part of her final months.

Carole A. Bretscher  
Bellbrook, Ohio

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I e-mailed my deceased wife's oncologist to tell him of the wonderful article on palliative care in your magazine. About a year ago he finally convinced his local hospital executives to initiate a palliative care function. To reward him, they made him director of the operation. I wanted him to see your fine article and also spread the news about CURE as a wonderful resource that not many know about yet.

James Bogar  
Camdenton, Missouri

## Talking to Kids about Cancer

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I wanted to comment on the "[Message from the Publisher](#)" in the Spring 2008 issue. I too believe your son's day care should have picked up on what he was really saying and not just the words he was using. It is amazing what kids can pick up from the adults around them. When I was diagnosed with breast cancer last October, I made sure to tell my 3-year-old son's preschool teachers about the diagnosis. I wanted to make sure I didn't get any phone calls similar to the one you received. I also let them know that, as a nurse, I would be honest with my son about what was happening. He never mentioned anything in school, but he always

had questions for me. My favorite was when I sneezed several times in a row, and he wanted to know if my hair fell out because I sneezed too much! Thank you for such a great magazine.

Klara Hartfiel  
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin

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Thank you for your enlightened "[Straight Talk](#)" article. I work at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and have a program called KNIT (Kids Need Information, Too) that specifically addresses the needs of parents who are diagnosed with cancer. My son was 4 when I was diagnosed, and the reality that I might not live to help him grow up weighed heavily. Thankfully my hospital supported my interest in this special patient population and my program is now four years old. The fears, the fierce instinct to protect their children, the intense sadness—all of these feelings conspire to encourage adults to keep honest information from their children. We, unfortunately, cannot protect them from the pain and sadness when a parent dies. We can, however, let them have a companion in the grief journey, but only if we are honest with them. Thank you for this most important article and for giving this underserved population a voice.

Martha Aschenbrenner  
Houston, Texas

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We love to hear what you think about the stories in *CURE*. Address comments to [editor@curetoday.com](mailto:editor@curetoday.com). Letters may be edited for length and grammar. If you prefer your letter not be published, please indicate.

And don't forget we are always looking for good writing from our readers. Send your stories about cancer and its impact on your life to [editor@curetoday.com](mailto:editor@curetoday.com). Keep it to 1,000 words please.