

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR GI HEALTH

Our mission is to provide comprehensive care for patients with both early and advanced stages of gastrointestinal cancers, including esophageal, stomach, pancreatic, biliary tree/liver, colon, and rectal. In addition to offering the traditional diagnosis and staging for GI cancer patients, we take special care in customizing treatment plans that help ensure the best possible outcomes based on individual needs.

Services include:

- Organized clinical care programs
- Endoscopic, non-surgical alternatives to traditional surgical therapy
- Nutritional support
- Research programs and access to emerging technologies in cancer care

We also offer programs for risk reduction in chronic conditions that increase the likelihood of cancers such as Barrett's esophagus, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and chronic liver disease.

## CANCER STAGING

Determining the most effective treatment plan for patients with GI cancers begins with a thorough assessment by our medical team. A wide range of factors are considered during the staging phase: the specific type of tumor, unique mutations identified within the tumor, microscopic changes seen within cancer cells, and finally, findings on other imaging tests such as endoscopic ultrasounds (EUS), CT scans and PET scans.

A comprehensive pre-treatment screening program gives physicians a much better understanding of individual patient factors and provides the basis for determining the appropriate therapy. The staging evaluation determines whether the patient undergoes surgical vs. non-surgical therapy, chemo-radiation, or new technologies such as the cyberknife.

## PHYSICIAN REFERRALS

Once an appropriate evaluation has been performed, our staff will coordinate any necessary referrals to other GI cancer experts including surgeons, oncologists and interventional radiologists. As patients undergo cancer therapy, we work in tandem with your treatment team to ensure that visits are being coordinated and therapy is being conducted as planned. We also act as a resource should side effects occur.

## NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT

Our nutrition team relies upon close interaction between our physicians, sub-specialists and registered dietitians to provide an integrated approach to nutritional support. Since gastrointestinal cancers can be discovered at any stage, some patients may already be experiencing weight loss and malnutrition, while others have no noticeable problems. Providing GI cancer patients with early nutritional interventions can help prevent malnutrition and weight loss and improve compliance with their prescribed treatments.

Support is also available when patients experience common cancer therapy side effects such as nausea, diarrhea, constipation and lack of appetite or when they require feeding tubes or IV nutrition to maintain health during cancer therapy.

## RESEARCH

Learning from each patient's experience is vital to finding a cure for gastrointestinal cancers and is an important part of our mission. By tracking the clinical course of each patient, we can determine which treatments resulted in improved response and quality of life.

As part of our research, all patients are asked to consent to having their pertinent information stored in our database, as well as permission to study all samples, blood specimens and biopsies collected as part of their care. Patient privacy is protected and no personal identifiers are used in the database records. Information in this database will be shared with other researchers and will significantly add to our understanding of treating GI cancers.

## THE ATLANTA BARRETT'S REGISTRY

Principle Investigator, Dr. William D. Lyday II

The Atlanta Barrett's Registry is an IRB approved program offering both medical and therapeutic options to manage Barrett's esophagus and lower cancer incidence. Patients undergo careful assessment to determine their risk of esophageal cancer and have the option to undergo either an intensive medical program focusing on diet, lifestyle and control of GERD or a more proactive approach using endoscopic therapy to remove Barrett's tissue. Both strategies aim to lower cancer risk and are determined based on patient preference and individual factors. Patients are followed in a database to track their results and have regular follow ups with the medical staff to monitor progress. The Atlanta Barrett's Registry is part of a larger network involving universities and other participating centers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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