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R **U**
And, your Family



**PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT
City of Onkaparinga Group
South Australia**

**An affiliate Member of the Prostate Cancer
Foundation of Australia,**

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OUR GOLDEN RULE: We do not give medical advice, your GP, your Urologist and Allied Health Professionals are the only people who are legally qualified to give you medical advice.

We do however give you our wholehearted support.

Thank you to Noarlunga Community Hospital for allowing us to use the Boardroom for our meetings. Thanks also to our Sponsors: Southern Primary Health and to all who support us.

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER (No 142)

Your own local Newsletter

Our Editor John Shields accepts responsibility for the content of this newsletter.

DECEMBER 2016 REPORT.

MAX GARDNER AWARD:

On behalf of our Support Group we extend our congratulations to Ian Fisk for receiving this well deserved award, and look forward to being able to do this personally in the near future.

Dr David Elder was our Guest Speaker for the November meeting and once again he brought us up to date with Current treatment options and explained every aspect of Prostate Cancer and he welcomed the interaction with those who were present and responded in a positive manner.

We always look forward to Dr Elder attending our end of the year meeting and appreciate the fact that he is so generous with his time and so open to all of our questions.

The Aussie Inn.

Our get together at the Aussie Inn was a very enjoyable occasion and it was a good opportunity, as always, to put the cares of the day aside and wind up the year in such a relaxed manner.

From a report on The Breast Cancer Site.

TEN THINGS ANYONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED CHEMO BRAIN CAN RELATE TO.

We have all heard of Chemo Brain, it is often referred to a mental cloudiness or fog.

It's a decrease in ones mental sharpness that often coincides with the effects of chemotherapy. Perhaps it could be caused by lack of sleep or low blood counts.

Either way, chemotherapy - related cognitive impairment is not pleasant to experience.

What does Chemo Brain feel like? And how can you ease the symptoms?

SYMPTOMS.

1. Feeling Slow - Many people with Chemo Brain report feeling slow in their thinking and mental processing. This can become awfully frustrating if you need to think on your feet.

Figuring out a problem that has arisen may take much longer than it normally would.

2. Forgetting Things That I Already Know - In elementary school you learnt your basic maths facts; you drilled those into your rote memory. When your daughter asks you to quickly correct her maths page, you become flustered. What was 6x4 again? Or when you have worked in the same cubicle next to your co-worker for the last four years and you simply cannot remember their name, even when it is at the tip of your tongue.

3. Lack Of Concentration - While sitting in a meeting, you notice that you cannot recall the last five minutes. What were we discussing again? You just hope that one of your co-workers can fill in those gaps you missed. Where did your mind go during the meeting?

You can't remember.

4. Losing Your Train Of Thought - You are having a great conversation with your best friend when all of a sudden you forgot what you were talking about. It doesn't happen just once but multiple times-wait, what was I saying again?

5. Forgetting The Simple Things - Those small everyday things can be the hardest to remember at times. You may rush out the door and get to your car before you question yourself, did I lock the front door? You may get all the way to work before you call and question your husband, "Did I turn off the Iron?" You could return home from work to notice that you forgot to turn off the television when you left earlier.

6. Trouble Multi-Tasking - Multi-Tasking is an art form. When you add Chemo Brain into the mix, it becomes more difficult. Trying to do two or three things at once during this time can be challenging. You can cook and talk on the phone at the same time most days, but when you have Chemo Brain, you tend to forget the Spaghetti Sauce simmering on the stove top.

7. Difficulty Learning New Things - Focus and Concentration are qualities that go into learning. Chemo Brain often affects each of those, making learning that new skill even harder to do. Imagine you have been a dancer since high school. Learning your new routines is now taking twice, sometimes three times longer.

8. Forgetting What You Were Going To Do - You stopped cleaning the kitchen in mid clean to grab something in the living room. As soon as you walk in there you ask yourself the four W's, Why did I come in here?, What was I going to do?, Where was I really going?, When did I forget?.

9. Difficulty Speaking - That moment when you can't remember what your favourite box of cereal is called - That box, over there, in that thing. It's red. It's

this tall. It's - - - Can be embarrassing. Often times you know what you are talking about, but you just can't seem to get the right words out.

10. Mental Fatigue - Add this to the lack of focus and the inability to concentrate. Your mind is just tired. Your brain feels overworked early in the afternoon leading to more confusion when your trying to follow a conversation. You could use a mental nap and find zoning out is becoming a frequent habit.

CHEMO BRAIN is a real symptom that comes with taking Chemotherapy. You may find yourself reading this list saying. I've had that, and I've never taken Chemotherapy. "It's true! We have all experienced these. Imagine experiencing it ten times more frequently, or on a daily basis. Chemo Brain takes those cognitive issues we have and intensifies them.

Be patient with a person who is experiencing these symptoms. Often times they become frustrated themselves and would appreciate the support.

TIPS TO HELP.

If you are currently experiencing these Chemo Brain symptoms, there are ways to help get yourself through them. Utilise a Planner or Smart Phone to keep track of your appointments. Keep sticky notes or a whiteboard handy in every room; write down what you need to remember or questions to ask when they occur. Eliminate the multi-tasking by only doing one thing at a time. Repeat aloud (multiple times) what you would like to remember if you do not have any of the above available. Get enough rest and sleep to help alleviate the fatigue. Get moving. Exercise, even a slow walk can help improve your mood and make you feel more alert. Exercise your brain as well by completing brain games like puzzles or crosswords. Eat food, like vegetables and Omega3 rich foods, which help keep our brain power up. Lastly, don't forget to ask for help. There are so many people around you that would like to help; utilise them when you need to.

Rito's:

Support Group members, their family and friends are invited to attend a luncheon, or have a cup of tea or coffee, and a friendly chat, at Rito's Cafe 101 Beach Road Christies Beach, on the second Thursday after each Support Group meeting. This is proving to be a good opportunity to just relax and talk about life in general, and gives real meaning to that word "Support".

Newsletters received with thanks from:

Andrology Australia, Prostate Melbourne, Prostate Heidelberg, Sydney Adventist Hospital PCSG.

We hope that 2017 is "A HAPPY NEW YEAR"

 **OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON WEDNESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2017 AT 6.30PM
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.**