



# Oncology Updates

for the Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center



## Clinic News

### Why Mercaptopurine (6MP) is so important

Mercaptopurine (6MP) is a chemotherapy drug taken by mouth that is essential for treating many types of leukemia by destroying cancer cells as they try to grow. If your child is on this medication, you may have been taught to give it with certain foods and at specific times. But recent research shows that it **does not matter** if the medicine is taken with or without any type of food or drink – even dairy products. In addition, it shows that it **does not matter** what time of day it is taken, but it is best to take it at the same time every day.

Recent studies also show that 33 percent of relapses (when the leukemia returns) were directly related to patients not taking their 6MP as ordered. With the new knowledge above, it should be easier to take this medicine – and we know that taking it as prescribed works! If you have any questions about this medicine and how to give it to your child, please talk to your doctor or nurse.

## Support

### Parents and Caregivers Support Group

Tuesday, July 24, Noon – 1:30 p.m.

CHKD, 8th floor HemOnc conference room

Join other parents and caregivers of children with cancer for a support lunch. Call Rebecca Ruck at (757) 668-9617 or Kelly Trejo at (757) 668-7931 to attend.

**Save This Date**

# SURVIVOR DAY

Moving Toward the Future

**When: Sunday, September 16, 2018**

**1 – 4 p.m.**

**Where: Bayville Farms Park, Virginia Beach**



It's time to mark your calendars for a special event. Every year, the CHKD oncology staff organizes an opportunity to gather with our oncology families at an outside venue and recognize their tremendous journeys with cancer. Our Survivor Day event, planned by nurses, social workers, child life specialists, education consultants, and others is free and open to the whole family. We hope to see you there!

\*Formal invitations for Survivor Day will be mailed to your home soon.

## Education Corner

### Summer Water Safety

During the hot summer months, kids love to be in the pool or on the beach. Wherever they choose to swim, use these general water safety rules to keep children safe:

- Never leave your child unsupervised near or in the water.
- Do not rely only on life jackets, water wings, or swimming lessons to protect your child.
- Learn CPR, along with infant and child first aid, in case of emergencies.
- Do not allow children to dive into water that is less than 9 feet deep.



### To protect children going through chemotherapy, you need to take these special steps:

If your child has an external line (CVL, PICC, or Midline), they can still participate in water activities, but make sure the line or dressing does not go under the water. Use a product like AquaGuard®, or wrap the site with kitchen plastic wrap, to protect the line. But keep in mind: These products are only a barrier and will not always prevent your child's line or dressing from becoming wet or dirty. If the dressing does get wet, it's important to change it right away. Protection of your child's line and dressing is critical!