



# 2024 AT A GLANCE

*...looking ahead to 2025*

A Progress and Programing Report  
Created December 2024

**Stomach Cancer Awareness Network**  
dba: Hope For Stomach Cancer  
aka: StoCAN / StoCan.org



*hope*



YOUR STOMACH CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY!



## REFLECTING ON 2024 FROM LOSS TO ACTION, FROM STORIES TO HOPE

*Reflecting on 2024, we carry heavy hearts for those we've lost, find renewed energy in our achievements, and hold deep gratitude for the community that has supported us throughout.*

This year reminded us of life's fragility and the immense strength found in unity. Too many lives were cut short by stomach cancer, but their legacies fuel our determination. Together, we turned pain into progress.

One of the highlights of the year was our **3rd Annual 30 Stories in 30 Days** campaign, where we amplified the voices of patients, survivors, and caregivers throughout Stomach Cancer Awareness Month. These stories moved hearts, raised awareness, and reminded us of the incredible power of connection in the fight against this disease. Reaching millions, we demonstrated that sharing our experiences can inspire hope and drive change.

We also celebrated the success of our **2nd Patient Empowerment Summit**, held in a new city, where patients and caregivers came together to share knowledge, find support, and

inspire one another. And for the first time, we hosted **Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day** on Capitol Hill, where your voices played a pivotal role in the introduction of the **Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act**—a legislative milestone toward earlier diagnoses and better outcomes for patients.

This year wasn't without its challenges. Addressing the issues with our Charity Navigator score was a humbling experience, made harder by those who used it as an opportunity to attack our mission. Through transparency and resilience, we corrected course and emerged stronger, reaffirming our commitment to accountability and trust.

Moving into 2025, we are inspired by the strength of your stories, driven by hope for progress, and determined to honor those we've lost by continuing this fight

Thank you for your unwavering support, your courage, and your belief in a world where stomach cancer no longer takes so much from so many. Together, we will keep pushing forward, raising our voices, and uplifting one another in this journey.

With gratitude and hope,  
*Aki Smith*, Founder, Hope for Stomach Cancer



# THE IMPACT OF HOPE IN 2024



*OUR VISION:  
TO BRIDGE THE GAPS BETWEEN RESEARCH AND PATIENT CARE*



 **32** STORIES SHARED IN NOV. 2024, REACHING  
**1,671,732** TOTAL VIEWS  
ACROSS **7** SOCIAL PLATFORMS



 SHARED  
**193**  
HOPE-IN-A-BAG KITS

**24** PRIVATE SUPPORT GROUPS HELD   
**1010** REGISTRATIONS  
**248** REGISTERED QUESTIONS

 **109** IN-PERSON  
2024 HOPE PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT ATTENDEES  
**565** VIRTUAL  
 **50** IN-PERSON ATTENDEES  
**FIRST** ADVOCACY DAY!

**2** NEW MONTHLY GROUPS FROM HEALING WITH HANNAH ADDED IN MAY  
SOUL CARE PARTICIPANTS **88**   
YOGA SESSION VIEWS **9K** 

 **INTRODUCED BILL HR9304:**  
STOMACH CANCER PREVENTION & EARLY DETECTION ACT IN CONGRESS

**3** SPECIALIZED WEBINARS HOSTED

**1,985**  **ACTIVE** FB SUPPORT GROUPS MEMBERS

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS: **64**





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**#INSPIRE**research  
**#ADVOCATE**forresearch  
**#CREATE**research

HOPE HELPS RESEARCH HAPPEN



# WE ARE ON A MISSION TO SPREAD HOPE

## OUR MISSION.

Hope for Stomach Cancer provides resources to patients, caregivers and loved ones. We promote early detection and prevention to the general public and medical communities. 'Hope' creates and facilitates programs which enable all of those who are affected by stomach cancer to take actionable steps to overcome each phase of the disease.

## OUR VISION.

To bridge the gap between Research and Patient Care by:

- 1) **Educating** people about stomach cancer to improve health outcomes and increase their quality of life.
- 2) **Strengthening** the community of patients and their loved ones to alleviate their suffering by providing hope and connection.
- 3) **Empowering** and uniting all for advancing research and care protocols, for increasing enrollment in clinical trials, and patient care access for diverse populations.

## OUR COMMITMENT.

- We connect the stomach cancer community
- We help save lives
- We are constantly working to find a cure
- We are HERE for YOU

## OUR ACTIONS.

**INSPIRE** research.

**ADVOCATE** for research.

**CREATE** research.

## HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER IS SO MUCH MORE THAN A PATIENT ADVOCACY GROUP.

Almost everyone involved in our organization has been personally impacted by this disease.

We are caregivers, survivors, patients and loved ones who come together to interact, support and care for one another.

We interface with leading members of both the medical and the pharmaceutical communities. By understanding the latest technological advancements, we are able to better serve our community.

## HOW HOPE STARTED.

**Aki Smith** founded Hope for Stomach Cancer after helping her father, Shigeo Tsuruoka, battle the disease.

The devastating shock of Shigeo's advanced stage diagnosis came in late 2013 but they refused to give up without a fight. They made a deal – Shigeo would fight the disease and Aki would handle everything else. Aki soon found a severe lack of information, guidance and support. Making the decisions on the right team of doctors to treatment options and insurance issues was overwhelming. Today, Shigeo is in remission. Call it luck, a blessing, something else or ALL of the above.

Aki decided to answer the call and made Stomach Cancer Patient Advocacy her life's work (in addition to being a wife, mother and daughter).

**She created Hope for everyone impacted by stomach cancer.**



# COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

*HOPE WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION IN MANY DYNAMIC CAPACITIES WITH OVER 60 NONPROFITS, HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS, GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, AND COMPANIES.*

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| TARGETCANCER FOUNDATION                         | DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE                     | INTERNATIONAL GASTRIC<br>CANCER CONGRESS         | PROJECT PERIWINKLE   |
| ACADEMY OF NUTRITION<br>AND DIETETICS           | DERRICK KEITH PEARSON<br>FOUNDATION, INC  | IMERMAN ANGELS                                   | RARE CANCER IRA  |
| AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR<br>CANCER RESEARCH     | DISABILITY BENEFITS CENTER                | KOMOTO HEALTH                                    | THE RUESCH CENTER<br>FOR THE CURE OF<br>GASTROINTESTINAL CANCERS |
| AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY                         | DLH FOUNDATION                            | LEAL HEALTH                                      | SARA SCHOTTENSTEIN<br>FOUNDATION                                 |
| AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR<br>CANCER RESEARCH       | ESCAPE TO THRIVE                          | MAN UP 2 CANCER                                  | SAVE OUR STOMACHS  |
| AMERICAN SOCIETY OF<br>CLINICAL ONCOLOGY (ASCO) | ESOPHAGEAL AND STOMACH<br>CANCER PROJECT  | MASSIVE BIO                                      | SAVE RARE TREATMENTS TASK<br>FORCE                               |
| BAG-IT  | ESOPHAGEAL CANCER<br>EDUCATION FOUNDATION | MEDSCAPE   | SMART PATIENTS<br>SUPPORT GROUP                                  |
| BIDEN'S MOONSHOT CABINET                        | THE ESTER CARRIER<br>MEMORIAL FUND        | MY GUT FEELING                                   | STAND UP TO CANCER – SU2C  |
| CANCER CARE                                     | FDA                                       | NANCY'S LIST                                     | STOMACH CANCER SISTERS   |
| CANCER COMMONS                                  | FORCE                                     | NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE                        | STOMACH CANCER TASK<br>FORCE                                     |
| CANCER LEGAL RESOURCE<br>CENTER                 | GASTRIC CANCER MEDICAL<br>COMMUNITY       | NATIONAL COALITION FOR<br>CANCER SURVIVORSHIP    | STUPID CANCER  |
| CANCER SUPPORT<br>COMMUNITY                     | GASTRIC CANCER SUMMIT<br>AT STANFORD      | NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE<br>CANCER NETWORK (NCCN). | STUPID STRONG  |
| CHOLANGIOCARCINOMA<br>FOUNDATION                | GI CANCERS ALLIANCE                       | NATIONAL INSTITUTE<br>OF HEALTH                  | THE SAMFUND  |
| CLOZTALK  | GRYT                                      | NO STOMACH FOR CANCER                            | TEMPUS   |
| CURE  | HAYSTACK PROJECT                          | PATIENT ADVOCATE<br>FOUNDATION                   | TRIAGE CANCER  |
| DEADLIEST CANCERS<br>COALITION                  | HEALING WITH<br>HANNA STINSON             | PREVENT CANCER                                   | TRAVERA  |
| DEGREGORIO FAMILY<br>FOUNDATION                 | HEALTHWELL FOUNDATION                     | ONE VOICE<br>AGAINST CANCER                      | VUMEDI   |
|   |   | PCORI  |  |





# 2024 WEBSITE UPDATE

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

SCAN EACH QR CODE TO SEE EACH OF OUR 2024 NEWSLETTERS



JANUARY 2024



FEBRUARY 2024



MARCH 2024



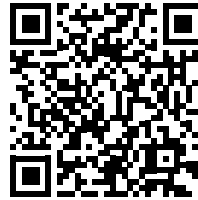
APRIL 2024



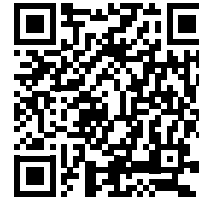
MAY 2024



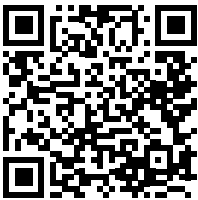
JUNE 2024



JULY 2024



AUGUST 2024



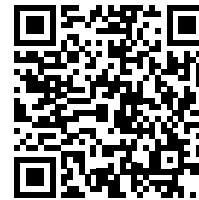
SEPTEMBER 2024



SEPTEMBER 12, 2024



SEPTEMBER 19, 2024



SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE OUR E-NEWSLETTER IN YOUR INBOX AT [STOCAN.ORG](https://www.stocan.org)



# 2024 WEBSITE UPDATE

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

SCAN EACH QR CODE TO SEE EACH OF OUR 2024 NEWSLETTERS



OCTOBER 3, 2024



OCTOBER 10, 2024



OCTOBER 17, 2024



OCTOBER 22, 2024



OCTOBER 31, 2024



NOVEMBER 7, 2024



NOVEMBER 14, 2024



NOVEMBER 21, 2024



NOVEMBER 28, 2024



DECEMBER 3, 2024



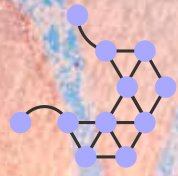
DECEMBER 13, 2024



DECEMBER 19, 2024

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE OUR E-NEWSLETTER IN YOUR INBOX AT [STOCAN.ORG](https://StoCan.org)





**STOMACH  
CANCER**  
BIOMARKERS  
.ORG

## STOMACHCANCERBIOMARKERS.ORG ADVANCING PATIENT EDUCATION

IN 2024, STOMACHCANCERBIOMARKERS.ORG, POWERED BY HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER, CONTINUED ITS MISSION TO BUILD AWARENESS AND EDUCATIONAL CONTENT ON STOMACH CANCER BIOMARKERS. This community-driven initiative, supported by the medical community, and patient advocates remains committed to improving the standard of care for patients and caregivers navigating this disease.

This year marked significant progress in the field of biomarkers:

- On **October 18, 2024** a new biomarker was approved, expanding treatment options for advanced-stage stomach cancer patients and paving the way for further advancements in personalized medicine.
- The **FDA hearing on September 26, 2024** emphasized the critical role biomarkers play in shaping treatment options, clinical trial designs, and future applications for earlier stages of stomach cancer. These discussions highlighted the importance of biomarkers in improving survivability and quality of life.

In 2024, we also received a grant to support a **comprehensive revamp** of **StomachCancerBiomarkers.org**, planned for 2025. This revamp will focus on:

- Expanding resources and updating content to reflect the latest developments in biomarkers and treatment options.
- Addressing the unique challenges of biomarker use, particularly their application in advanced-stage (Stage 4) patients, while recognizing the distinct needs of Stage 3 patients who typically follow curative treatment paths.

POWERED BY

**AMGEN**

 **MERCK**

 **astellas**

HOPE FOR  
**STOMACH  
CANCER**  
PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.



# STOMACHCANCERBIOMARKERS.ORG ADVANCING PATIENT EDUCATION

StomachCancerBiomarkers.org continues to serve as a vital resource for patients and caregivers by providing tools to:

- Understand all available treatment options.
- Discuss these options with their cancer care team.
- Access clinical trial information and emerging biomarker insights.

The campaign’s vision remains steadfast: to empower patients and caregivers through knowledge, leading to better practice, increased survivability, and improved quality of life.

Looking ahead, Hope for Stomach Cancer is committed to advancing biomarker use in patient care and evolving this resource to meet the stomach cancer community’s needs.

Thank you to Amgen, Astellas, Merck



STOMACHCANCER-  
BIOMARKERS.ORG



FULL FDA OCT 2024  
UPDATE REPORT





## 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA SPREADING HOPE, ONLINE







We share HOPE to all those affected by this disease. We are constantly researching and providing information. We share your stories of struggles, success and loss.

### **SOCIAL FOLLOWERS\***

- 10,735 Facebook
- 3,894 X (Twitter)
- 2,407 Instagram
- 80,384 YouTube
- 247 LinkedIn
- Started HOPE's TikTok account for our 30 Stories in 30 Days campaign!

***WE ARE COMMITTED TO FINDING A CURE TO THIS DISEASE AND WALKING BESIDE YOU IN CONSTANT SUPPORT.***

### **FOLLOW US!**

-  @StomachCancerAwarenessNetwork
-  @StoCANcer
-  @HopeForStomachCancer
-  @hope4stomachcancer
-  @hope-for-stomach-cancer
-  @hopeforstomachcancer

### **FACEBOOK STOMACH CANCER GROUP MEMBERS:**

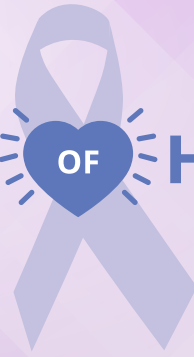
- 1,878 Support
- 94 Advocacy Movement
- 13 Social Support: Let's Talk (new for 2024!)



# STORIES OF HOPE

HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

2024



## 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA 30 STORIES OF HOPE

### REAL STORIES. REAL IMPACT.

In November 2024, Hope for Stomach Cancer proudly launched the third annual “30 Stories in 30 Days” as part of the November Stomach Cancer Education Campaign. Each day of Stomach Cancer Awareness Month, we shared the voices of patients and caregivers, asking three critical questions:

1. How were you diagnosed?
2. What is your treatment journey?
3. What is your hope or advice to others?

These personal narratives became a lifeline for thousands, offering not only information but also the strength, hope, and courage that only shared experiences can provide.

### KEY OUTCOMES

- Over 71,000 New YouTube subscriptions, demonstrating the global demand for relatable and impactful stories.
- The campaign achieved a remarkable reach of over 17.6

million individuals globally across YouTube, YouTube Shorts, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, X, and Stocan.org.

- Diversity and Equity: Stories from underrepresented communities highlighted disparities in diagnosis, treatment, and access to care, fostering essential conversations about health equity. By elevating these voices, the campaign not only increased awareness of systemic inequities but also empowered affected communities with information, hope, and resources to navigate their journeys.

### IMPACT BEYOND NUMBERS

This campaign is about more than metrics; it’s about lives changed:

- Patients discovered treatment options they hadn’t considered.
- Patients and caregivers found solace in shared struggles and victories.
- Communities came together, united by the universal need for understanding and connection.



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### Comprehensive Campaign Metrics

These metrics highlight the exceptional reach and meaningful engagement achieved by the 30 Stories in 30 Days campaign. With over a million views on Facebook and millions of impressions across platforms like YouTube Shorts and Instagram, the campaign has proven its ability to inspire, educate, and connect diverse audiences. Each platform played a unique role in amplifying patient voices and raising critical awareness, solidifying the campaign's position as a powerful catalyst for change within the stomach cancer community.

#### Facebook

- Views: 1,195,007
- Reach: 935,658
- Engagement: 32,399
- Shares: 303
- Link Clicks: 985

#### Instagram

- Views: 58,827
- Reach: 41,231
- Reactions: 2,903

#### YouTube

- Likes: 5,493
- Video Impressions: 7,629,472

#### YouTube Shorts

- Views: 398,129
- Comments: 29
- Impressions: 9,071,870

#### TikTok

- Views: 8,916
- Likes: 209

#### LinkedIn

- Impressions: 3,616
- Views: 1,653
- Clicks: 250

#### X (Twitter)

- Impressions: 1,744
- Engagements: 116

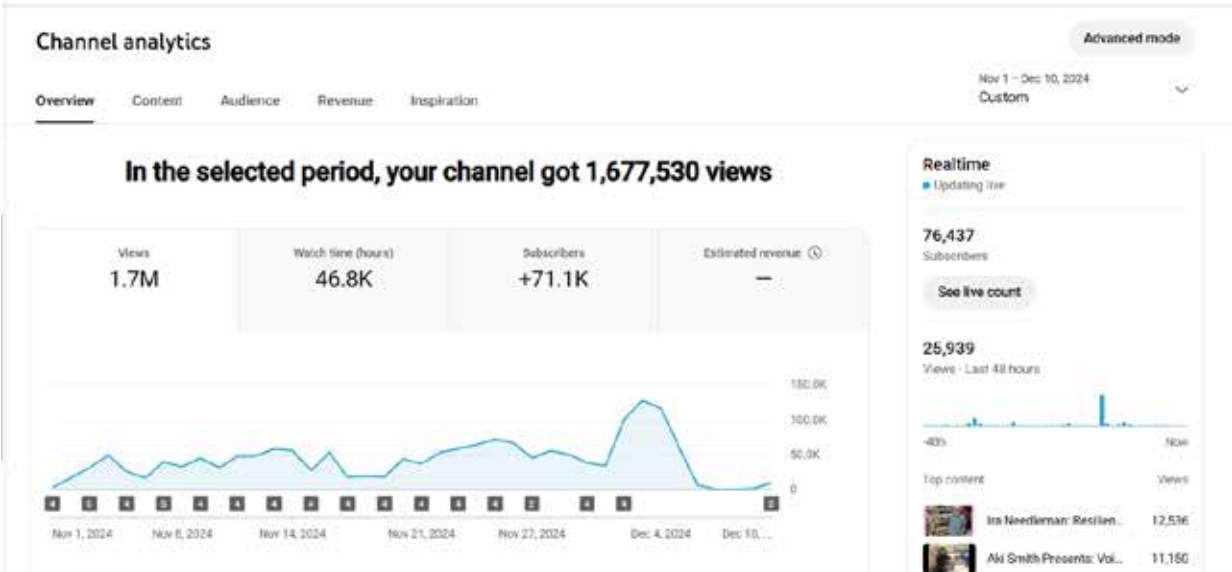


# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

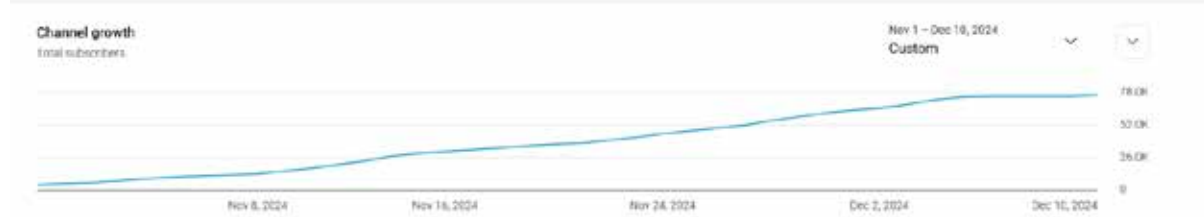
## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### YOUTUBE VIDEO VIEWS



**76,437**  
Subscribers





# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER**  
PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.

**STORIES OF HOPE**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION  
2024

**JEROME WHITE**  
Beating the odds: Jerome's fight against Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

**BeiGene** **AMGEN**

**TAIHO** **RAOON** **Eisai** **MERCK** **Lilly**

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.  
**STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.01.24 | JEROME WHITE

Beating the odds: Jerome's fight against Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

Diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer at 37, Jerome White faced a daunting battle. Despite the late-stage diagnosis, his medical team took an aggressive, curative approach, combining surgeries and chemotherapy to combat the cancer's spread. Jerome's story highlights how even with advanced cancer, individualized treatment can lead to remission. Now cancer-free, Jerome reflects on the mental and physical toll of his journey, emphasizing the importance of perseverance and hope, reminding others that even in the darkest times, there's a chance to defy the odds.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



**STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER**  
PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.

**STORIES OF HOPE**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION  
2024

**DEBBIE MARQUEZ**  
A caregiver's love: Debbie's story of advocacy for her husband

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

**BeiGene** **AMGEN**

**TAIHO** **RAOON** **Eisai** **MERCK** **Lilly**

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.  
**STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.02.24 | DEBBIE MARQUEZ

A caregiver's love: Debbie's story of advocacy for her husband

Debbie Marquez reflects on the life and legacy of her husband, Jerry, who passed away from stage 4 stomach cancer. Despite undergoing chemotherapy and participating in a clinical trial, Jerry's treatment options were limited due to the absence of biomarkers that could qualify him for immunotherapy. Debbie shares the emotional toll of being a caregiver and her hope for changes in cancer treatment guidelines, advocating for more screening and access to advanced therapies. Her story emphasizes the power of advocacy and the importance of never giving up, even when options seem limited.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**RAFAEL G VERA**  
From street art to Stomach Cancer Survivor at 25 years old

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. [STOCAN.ORG](https://STOCAN.ORG)

### 11.03.24 | RAFAEL G VERA

From street art to Stomach Cancer Survivor at 25 years old

At just 25, Rafael Vera was diagnosed with stage 3 stomach cancer. Now, nine years later, he shares his powerful story of survival, faith, and the healing power of art. From enduring intense chemotherapy to finding strength in his community, Rafael reveals how cancer changed his life and gave new meaning to his art. His journey, from street artist to a vessel of hope, illustrates resilience and determination, inspiring others who face similar battles. Rafael's passion for sharing his story through both words and art highlights the importance of community, creativity, and staying grounded through adversity.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**ALLYSIA DODGE**  
Stage 4 at 32: Carol and her daughter, Allysia, search for options

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. [STOCAN.ORG](https://STOCAN.ORG)

### 11.04.24 | ALLYSIA DODGE

Stage 4 at 32: Carol and her daughter, Allysia, search for options

Allysia was active, fit, and unstoppable—until sudden fatigue, cramps, and pain changed everything. At just 29, she was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer after tumors the size of water balloons were discovered, spreading from her stomach to her ovaries. Doctors advised her to get her affairs in order, but Allysia didn't give up.

Watch her emotional journey through a 12-hour surgery that removed 85% of her stomach. With faith, strength, and the support of loved ones, Allysia found hope when it seemed impossible.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 11.05.24 | FRANK BLANDON

Navigating Stage 4 Gastric Cancer and finding Hope in immunotherapy

Frank Blandon, a 37-year-old software developer from Nicaragua, was initially misdiagnosed with testicular cancer after experiencing unusual symptoms. Following multiple rounds of chemotherapy, further tests revealed his true diagnosis: stage 4 gastric cancer. Transitioning to gastric cancer treatment, Frank began immunotherapy based on his high tumor mutation burden. Despite the challenges, Frank remains resilient and hopeful, envisioning a future where gastric cancer can be managed as a chronic condition. He reflects on the importance of support, the need for earlier detection, and his wish for more treatment options for future patients diagnosed with this aggressive disease.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 11.06.24 | CAROL BETH ANDERSON

Finding Hope beyond cancer: Beth and Jason's journey with immunotherapy

Her husband was diagnosed with Stage 4 stomach cancer in May 2023 at the age of 53. He tested positive for PD-L1 and initially underwent first-line treatment with FOLFOX + Opdivo, later transitioning to 5FU + Opdivo for a year. Recently, as the cancer began to spread, he started second-line treatment with Cyramza and Taxol. As his caregiver, her role has primarily involved research, advocacy, and supporting him by asking questions and taking notes. To make the most of their time together, they decided to travel, which has been a meaningful way to focus on life rather than just the challenges of metastatic cancer. Despite his condition, her husband continues to live as normally as possible—working, playing guitar, exercising, and even mowing the lawn. He occasionally slows down due to side effects but never stops. After his diagnosis, they discovered he has a pathogenic variant of CDH1, highlighting the importance of genetic testing for their family.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 11.07.24 | ALYSSA BURKS

Staying ahead of Stage 4: Intraperitoneal chemo and Signatera testing

Alyssa Burks shares her inspiring journey of resilience and determination after being diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer. What began as fatigue and weight loss quickly escalated into a battle for survival. Refusing to accept a life-limiting prognosis, Alyssa sought out innovative treatments, including intraperitoneal chemotherapy, and advocated for the use of Signatera testing to monitor her condition when standard scans failed to detect changes. Throughout her treatment, Alyssa's unwavering hope to be there for her family—especially her teenage son—keeps her motivated. Her story highlights the importance of self-advocacy, exploring new treatment options, and staying ahead of the disease through personalized care.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 11.08.24 | ARELLY RODRÍGUEZ

Miracle story: Stage 4 Cancer Diagnosis during pregnancy

Arely Rodriguez's life took an unexpected turn when, at 28 weeks pregnant, she was diagnosed with stage 4 gastric adenocarcinoma. While navigating a complex pregnancy, she underwent surgery and began chemotherapy, all while ensuring the health of her unborn child. Arely reflects on how her son was both a blessing and a reason for discovering the cancer. Her journey emphasizes the importance of advocating for oneself, leaning on support systems, and finding strength in the face of uncertainty.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 11.09.24 | AMANDA JOHNSON

A CDH1+ story: Three siblings choose stomach removal to prevent cancer

After discovering she carried the CDH1 genetic mutation, Amanda Johnson faced the high risk of developing stomach cancer. With a family history that included her mother's breast cancer and her grandmother's stomach cancer, Amanda and her siblings took proactive steps to protect their health. She shares her journey through the life-altering decision of undergoing a prophylactic gastrectomy, adapting to a life without a stomach, and learning to manage daily challenges. Amanda's story underscores the importance of genetic awareness, family support, and her hope that future generations may have better options.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 11.10.24 | CARRIE ARGUETA

From early detection to recurrence: When Cancer doesn't show up on scans

Carrie Argueta was first diagnosed with gastric adenocarcinoma at age 44 during a routine procedure for swallowing issues. After surgery and chemotherapy, she believed she was cancer-free—until her instincts told her otherwise. Despite normal scans, Carrie pushed for further tests, leading to the discovery of her cancer's recurrence. Now facing the challenge of poorly differentiated cancer that doesn't appear on scans and not qualifying for clinical trials, Carrie continues advocating for herself and others. Her journey highlights the importance of early detection, persistence, and the urgent need for targeted treatments.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 11.11.24 | CARMITA LASSO'S DAD & BROTHER

A surviving family: Her father thriving with Stage 4 Stomach Cancer and her brother cured of a rare nasal tumor

Carmita opens up about her family's ongoing battle with cancer, a journey marked by resilience and humor. Her father, diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer at 73, faced a daunting prognosis but embraced treatment with determination, progressing from FLOT chemotherapy to a maintenance regimen of capecitabine. Now, at nearly 80, he continues to defy the odds and lead an active life. Carmita also shares her brother's experience, who was diagnosed in 2015 with a rare nasal tumor. After six months of intensive radiation, which affected his swallowing and required a feeding tube, he overcame the cancer but still manages lasting effects with physical therapy. Without a known hereditary gene, Carmita reflects on her family's shared strength, humor, and unwavering resolve, highlighting the powerful bond that fuels their journey through cancer's many challenges.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 11.12.24 | RUBEN OROZCO

A Cancer battle: From family tragedy to Stage 4 Stomach Cancer survivor

Ruben Orozco, a retired correctional officer from Chino, California, was shocked when a routine knee surgery revealed a stage 4 stomach cancer diagnosis. With no symptoms prior to surgery, the cancer had already spread to his lymph nodes and liver. This news was even more devastating as Ruben's mother had passed away from stomach cancer years earlier. Through 30 rounds of chemotherapy and ongoing immunotherapy, Ruben remained determined to fight for his family. Now with no evidence of disease, he shares his story of resilience, family, and faith. His journey offers hope to others facing similar battles, showing that with today's treatments, like immunotherapy, survival is possible. His message is simple but powerful: there is hope, and together, we can beat this.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**CHELSEA AUTOVINO**  
Diagnosed while pregnant: A young mom faces Stage 4 Cancer and a genetic twist

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: **BeiGene AMGEN**  
TAKIHO ONCOLOGY, RACEN, Eisai, MERCK, Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. **STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.13.24 | CHELSEA AUTOVINO

Diagnosed while pregnant: A young mom faces Stage 4 Cancer and a genetic twist

Diagnosed with stomach cancer while pregnant, Chelsea Autovino's life changed in an instant. What seemed like pregnancy symptoms turned into a fierce battle for survival—both for her and her unborn child. As Chelsea fought through chemotherapy while carrying her baby, she discovered a shocking twist: a genetic mutation that made her even more vulnerable to cancer. Later facing a stage four diagnosis, Chelsea's courage and resilience shine through her journey, offering hope and strength to others in similar fights. Her story is a powerful reminder that no matter the odds, hope and determination can turn the impossible into reality. Share Chelsea's journey to inspire others facing their own battles.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**ESSIE GRAEBER**  
From curative Hope to Stage 4 Stomach Cancer warrior in a clinical trial

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: **BeiGene AMGEN**  
TAKIHO ONCOLOGY, RACEN, Eisai, MERCK, Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. **STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.14.24 | ESSIE GRAEBER

From curative Hope to Stage 4 Stomach Cancer warrior in a clinical trial

Essie Graeber was 52 and feeling healthy when a routine colonoscopy unexpectedly revealed stage 3 stomach cancer. With no symptoms, the diagnosis was a shock, but she faced it with determination, undergoing chemotherapy and partial stomach removal. After being declared NED (no evidence of disease) in 2023, Essie was hopeful for a cure. However, in 2024, her cancer returned as stage 4, leading her to join a clinical trial for treatment. Despite this devastating setback, Essie remains a fighter, relying on her faith, family, and inner strength to push forward. Her journey is one of resilience and courage, as she advocates for more research and support, with the hope that cancer treatments will one day offer long-term survival and fewer recurrences.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**BETZA DE LEON**  
Research and advocacy lead to life-saving treatments for Stage 4 patient

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

BeiGene AMGEN  
TAKEDA Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.15.24 | BETZA DE LEON

Research and advocacy lead to life-saving treatments for stage 4 patient

Betza shares her powerful journey from fitness enthusiast to stage 4 stomach cancer patient. Faced with a devastating diagnosis, she was determined to find answers and treatment options, eventually leading her to the Mayo Clinic for cutting-edge therapies and clinical trials. From intense chemotherapy to life-saving surgeries, Betza's story underscores the impact of research, advocacy, and resilience. Her positive outlook, proactive research, and supportive medical team give hope to others navigating similar battles, demonstrating that even in the face of a grim prognosis, there is a path forward.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**HELEN GIANNIOS**  
Symptoms blown off: An aunt cares for her niece with Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

BeiGene AMGEN  
TAKEDA Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.16.24 | HELEN GIANNIOS

Symptoms blown off: An aunt cares for her niece with Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

When Kathryn Dean, a devoted mother of three, began experiencing persistent health issues, her symptoms were dismissed as minor concerns. By the time doctors took her seriously, she was diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer, which had already spread extensively. Helen Giannios, Kathryn's aunt, became her caregiver, offering steadfast support through the final years of her niece's battle. This story sheds light on the challenges of navigating complex medical decisions, the importance of seeking multiple opinions, and the heartbreaking realization of life's fragility. Helen recounts Kathryn's bravery, her love for her family and Greek heritage, and their unforgettable trip to Greece—a final wish fulfilled. Through moments of strength and sorrow, this narrative speaks to the resilience required in caregiving and the lessons learned in accepting the inevitable.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**PAM HALL**  
Fighting through five Cancer recurrences with Hope for a breakthrough

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN Taiho Eisai Merck Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.17.24 | PAM HALL

Fighting through five Cancer recurrences with Hope for a breakthrough

Pam Hall's battle with stomach cancer has been marked by resilience and determination. Following her initial diagnosis, Pam endured multiple rounds of chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation, only to face five recurrences in her abdominal wall. Refusing to give up, she has explored innovative treatments, including a CAR T-cell trial targeting Claudin 18.2, which kept her cancer-free for a year. Now on HER2-targeted infusions, Pam remains hopeful, inspired by the rapid advancements in cancer research and treatment. As a mentor to other cancer patients, her journey highlights the power of hope, the importance of persistence, and her vision of a future where cancer can be overcome.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**STORIES OF HOPE 2024**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**CARMITA LASSO**  
A family affair: From Stage 4 Stomach Cancer Caregiver to patient

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN Taiho Eisai Merck Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.18.24 | CARMITA LASSO

A family affair: From Stage 4 Stomach Cancer Caregiver to patient

Carmita shares her transformative journey from a caregiver to a patient after being diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer. Having previously cared for her father, who also battles stage 4 stomach cancer, Carmita thought she understood the challenges of cancer. However, her own experience opened her eyes to the profound impact of fatigue, treatment side effects, and the emotional toll of fighting the disease. Despite undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, and a HIPEC procedure, her battle is ongoing as she faces potential new lesions. With no known hereditary gene involved, Carmita emphasizes the importance of self-advocacy, genetic counseling, and persistence in seeking second opinions. Her message to others is clear: stay informed, ask questions, and lean on a strong support network.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



STORIES OF HOPE 2024  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**JAMI SUE BECKER**  
A journey from Stage 2 clinical trial to thriving after total gastrectomy

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN Taiho Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.19.24 | JAMI SUE BECKER

A journey from Stage 2 clinical trial to thriving after total gastrectomy

Jami Becker shares her incredible journey after being diagnosed with stage 2 gastric cancer, a battle made even more challenging by her Lynch syndrome diagnosis. Opting for a groundbreaking clinical trial, Jami received immunotherapy as a first-line treatment, a rare opportunity for stage 2 patients. Her remarkable response to treatment allowed her doctors to re-stage her to stage 1 post-surgery. Jami talks about overcoming physical hurdles, from losing weight to adapting to life without a stomach, and finding hope through resilience. Through her journey of climbing, running, and thriving, Jami hopes to inspire others facing similar battles and push for advancements in immunotherapy to benefit future stomach cancer patients.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

STORIES OF HOPE 2024  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION

**ANDREW GOODSPEED**  
Thriving beyond Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN Taiho Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.20.24 | ANDREW GOODSPEED

Thriving beyond Stage 4 Stomach Cancer

When Andy was diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer and given only months to live, his world turned upside down. Through years of innovative treatment, including chemotherapy and immunotherapy, Andy's persistence and optimism helped him achieve a remarkable outcome. Now cancer-free, he reflects on his journey with a heartfelt message about resilience, finding purpose, and the importance of hope. Andy's story offers inspiration and encouragement to those facing similar challenges, demonstrating the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 11.21.24 | ALICIA HALVORSON

Her father's diagnosis led to a life-saving discovery

When Alicia's father was diagnosed with stage 4 gastric cancer, his journey became the key to saving her life. Despite enduring 18 months of treatment, his strength and love for his family remained unwavering, ultimately leading to Alicia's own diagnosis of the CDH1 gene mutation. At just 27, Alicia chose to undergo a total gastrectomy to protect her future and provide hope for her young son, who faces a 50% chance of inheriting the gene. Alicia's story honors her father's legacy while emphasizing the importance of genetic testing, early intervention, and the resilience needed to face life's greatest challenges.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 11.22.24 | NICCOLE BRANSON

The unexpected diagnosis and recurrence: Nicole's resilient journey

At 37 years old, Nicole Branson was living an active, healthy life when a sudden diagnosis of stage 3 stomach cancer turned her world upside down. Despite initially undergoing aggressive treatment, including chemotherapy and surgery, Nicole faced a heartbreaking recurrence in 2024 when her cancer spread to her ovaries and peritoneum. Through every setback, Nicole continues to fight with determination, sharing her experience with the warning signs, treatments, and her plans for the future.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**JOLINDA WILSON**  
Choosing a different path in her Stage 3 Stomach Cancer battle

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. [STOCAN.ORG](https://STOCAN.ORG)

### 11.23.24 | JOLINDA WILSON

Choosing a different path in her Stage 3 Stomach Cancer battle

Diagnosed with stage 3 stomach cancer in 2013, Jolinda Wilson made the courageous decision to forgo traditional oncological treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation. Instead, she focused on surgery and a rigorous, nutrition-centered lifestyle to support her recovery. Jolinda reflects on the physical and emotional trials she encountered, including drastic weight loss, adapting to life without a stomach, and her journey as a mentor to others facing similar diagnoses. Her story is one of resilience and advocacy, as she champions early detection and empowers patients to explore all treatment paths, including those outside of conventional oncology.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**CECILLE DESIMONE**  
A mother's journey through her daughter's battle

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. [STOCAN.ORG](https://STOCAN.ORG)

### 11.24.24 | CECILLE DESIMONE

A mother's journey through her daughter's battle

In this deeply moving story, Cecille DeSimone shares her heartfelt journey as a caregiver to her only child, Katrina, who was diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer at just 25 years old. Cecille recounts the challenges of navigating misdiagnoses, advocating for her daughter's care, and finding strength in the face of unimaginable heartbreak. Despite the devastating prognosis, Katrina's resilience and willingness to participate in clinical trials inspired those around her, leaving a lasting legacy in the fight against stomach cancer. Through moments of hope, pain, and courage, Cecille's story shines as a testament to a mother's unconditional love and determination to honor her daughter's memory by making a difference for others. This video captures the raw emotions and lessons learned from their journey—offering hope, strength, and advocacy for families facing similar battles.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE. STORIES OF HOPE HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION 2024

**LAUREN KIM**  
Youth advocate for Stomach Cancer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN TAIHO RACER Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.25.24 | LAUREN KIM

Youth advocate for Stomach Cancer

16-year-old Lauren Kim is a passionate advocate for stomach cancer awareness. After watching her dad battle this disease and learning the story of 12-year-old Brayden Peerson – the youngest stomach cancer patient in the world – Lauren dedicated herself to shedding light on stomach cancer.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE. STORIES OF HOPE HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION 2024

**DOREEN SEVILLA**  
A nurse's journey through cancer: Doreen's story of Hope and advocacy

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: BeiGene AMGEN TAIHO RACER Eisai MERCK Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE. STOCAN.ORG

### 11.26.24 | DOREEN SEVILLA

A nurse's journey through cancer: Doreen's story of Hope and advocacy

Doreen Sevilla, a 38-year critical care nurse, was accustomed to caring for others when a sudden diagnosis of NTRK gene-mutated stomach cancer turned her world upside down. As she fought through multiple rounds of chemotherapy, surgery, and the challenges of immunotherapy, Doreen continued to work, support her family, and advocate for cancer research. Her resilience and hope, bolstered by faith and medical innovation, are a testament to the power of never giving up, even in the face of terminal illness.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER**  
PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.

**STORIES OF HOPE**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION  
2024

**THAD HAMILTON**  
CDH1 patient battles recurrence and advocates for research

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

**BeiGene** **AMGEN**  
TAKEDA **Eisai** **MERCK** *Lilly*

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.  
**STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.27.24 | THAD HAMILTON

CDH1 patient battles recurrence and advocates for research

After losing his sister to stomach cancer and discovering his own CDH1 gene mutation, Thad Hamilton faced a personal battle with recurrent cancer. Despite multiple surgeries, chemotherapy, and clinical trials, he has turned his journey into a mission to support others. Thad founded the DLH Foundation in honor of his sister to provide resources and guidance for families facing hereditary gastric cancer. Through his advocacy, he also established Save Our Stomach, an endowment fund dedicated to supporting life-saving research. Thad's resilience and dedication to funding breakthroughs offer hope to patients and families facing similar challenges.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



**STOP FOR STOMACH CANCER**  
PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.

**STORIES OF HOPE**  
HEARTBREAK & DETERMINATION  
2024

**TRISH MCGUINNESS**  
From Stage 4 to survival: Trish McGuinness' journey with Lynch Syndrome

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

**BeiGene** **AMGEN**  
TAKEDA **Eisai** **MERCK** *Lilly*

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.  
**STOCAN.ORG**

### 11.30.24 | TRISH MCGUINNESS

From Stage 4 to survival: Trish McGuinness' journey with Lynch Syndrome

Trish McGuinness' life took an unexpected turn with the discovery of Lynch syndrome, a condition that led to her battles with three cancers—breast, colon, and stage 4 stomach cancer. Facing delayed diagnoses and grueling treatments, Trish found hope in precision medicine and immunotherapy tailored to her cancer. Her resilience through surgeries, chemotherapy, and the challenges of stage 4 cancer has taught her the power of self-compassion and the importance of advocating for access to personalized care. Trish's journey is a testament to strength, hope, and the possibility of survival against all odds.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



### 12.01.24 | KENDLE SALISBURY

From hospice to Hope: Kendle's fight against the odds

After a gastric bypass surgery decades earlier, Kendle's tumor hid undetected, leading to a stage 4 stomach cancer diagnosis. Initially told she had only months to live, Kendle refused to accept defeat and sought a new oncologist who supported her determination to explore every option. With treatment shrinking her tumors, Kendle now embraces life with gratitude, focusing on her health, creating memories with loved ones, and finding strength in community and positivity. Her journey highlights the importance of perseverance, mental health, and finding joy amid life's uncertainties.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

### 12.02.24 | STACY MARTIN

The tough choice to remove her stomach and advocate for Hope

After learning she carried the CDH1 gene mutation, Stacy faced an 80% lifetime risk of developing stomach cancer. Determined to take control of her future, she made the life-changing decision to undergo a total gastrectomy. The path was far from easy—grappling with the physical and emotional challenges of living without a stomach and learning to navigate a new normal. Despite the hurdles, Stacy rebuilt her life, founding Seahorse Snacks, a thriving business, while also becoming a tireless advocate for stomach cancer awareness and genetic testing. From securing Tennessee's proclamation for Stomach Cancer Awareness Month to inspiring others with her resilience and determination, Stacy proves that even the toughest decisions can lead to hope, empowerment, and a renewed sense of purpose.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

# 2024 SOCIAL MEDIA

## 30 STORIES OF HOPE



**AKI SMITH**  
From outdated treatments to Hope:  
advancing Stomach Cancer awareness

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

BeiGene AMGEN  
TAKIHO ONCOLOGY  
RAOEN  
Eisai  
MERCK  
Lilly

THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.  
STOCAN.ORG

### 12.03.24 | AKI SMITH

From outdated treatments to Hope: advancing Stomach Cancer Awareness

In this heartfelt closing video, Aki shares her father's remarkable journey with advanced stomach cancer. Diagnosed in 2013, his treatment combined outdated and experimental approaches, ultimately leading to a clinical cure. Today, treatments have advanced significantly, offering more hope to patients and families. Through clips from other survivors, this video highlights the progress being made every month in stomach cancer research and treatment. Aki closes with an important message: If someone in your family has had stomach cancer, explore the causes—environmental or genetic—with your doctor today. Early awareness and screening can save lives. Every month is Stomach Cancer Awareness Month, and every month we're making strides toward a brighter future. Join us in raising awareness and making a difference.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)

**IRA J. NEEDLEMAN**  
Resilience, recovery, and rediscovery after  
Stomach Cancer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

BeiGene AMGEN  
TAKIHO ONCOLOGY  
RAOEN  
Eisai  
MERCK  
Lilly

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### BONUS POST!

### 12.10.24 | IRA J. NEEDLEMAN

Resilience, recovery, and rediscovery after Stomach Cancer

In this powerful story, Ira shares his journey from the initial diagnosis to a life transformed by resilience. From the physical challenges, like a broken leg and enduring chemotherapy, to the emotional battle between fear and determination, Ira's story reveals the strength it takes to face cancer. Through each setback, he leaned on his support network and found inner strength. Now, as a survivor, he reflects on the lessons learned and the renewed perspective that guides his life, captured in his symbolic periwinkle tattoo.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



## 2024 PROGRAMS: SUPPORT GROUPS

▶ LIVE, ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP ▶ REGISTER AT [STAGE4SUPPORT.ORG](https://stage4support.org)

### ESOPHAGEAL, GEJ, & STOMACH CANCER Monthly Support Meeting for Stage IV

▶ WEDNESDAY 08.28.24  
5PM PST / 8PM EST

▶ PREVENT. TREAT. LIVE.




▶ MORE INFO AT [STOCAN.ORG](https://stocan.org)

		
MODERATED BY ESOPHAGEAL CANCER SURVIVOR <b>BART FRAZZITTA</b>	GI ONCOLOGIST <b>DR. STEVEN MARON</b> Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center	GI ONCOLOGIST <b>DR. MICHAEL GIBSON</b> Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Every initiative at Hope for Stomach Cancer is centered on improving survivability rates and access to care for stomach cancer patients.

We hold a unique position as a trusted advocate for patients and families and a valuable partner for stakeholders advancing medical research and treatment options. Thus, our support groups are critical for uniting people in the often fragmented and under-resourced

stomach cancer community.

### CURRENTLY, HOPE PROVIDES 2 MONTHLY VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS.

The goal of each group is to give participants an opportunity to learn about the latest treatments. The group is a safe space to discuss new ideas and provide support, no matter where members are on their treatment journey.

The support group is led by a

qualified moderator, but retains a relaxed atmosphere to facilitate discussion and inspire candid dialogue among participants of all backgrounds. All groups meet monthly for one hour via Zoom. The sessions are never recorded to maintain privacy and confidentiality. All groups include gastroenterologist oncologist, surgeons or other appropriate medical or trained practitioners. The meetings are free, but registration is required.

### STAGE IV SUPPORT GROUP WITH THE ESOPHAGEAL CANCER EDUCATION FOUNDATION (ECEF)

Hope for Stomach Cancer held many support group meetings during 2024. Twelve of these meetings were in conjunction with the Esophageal Cancer Education Foundation (ECEF), another non-profit institution that serves individuals with an esophageal cancer diagnosis. These groups focused on providing support, resources, and guidance





## 2024 PROGRAMS: SUPPORT GROUPS

**LIVE ON ZOOM!**  
**STOMACH CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**  
A MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR PATIENTS & CAREGIVERS  
**MONDAY 08.19.24 AT 5PM PST/8PM EST**

**MODERATED BY DR. SAM KLEMPNER**  
GI ONCOLOGIST  
MASS. GENERAL HOSPITAL

**GUEST STOMACH CANCER SURGEONS:**

**DR. TRAVIS GROTZ**  
MAYO CLINIC

**DR. SAM YOON**  
COLUMBIA UNIV.  
IRVING MED. CENTER

**DR. MARK GIRIS**  
UCLA HEALTH

**REGISTER AT**  
[STOMACHCANCERSUPPORT.ORG](https://STOMACHCANCERSUPPORT.ORG)

for people with either a stage four stomach cancer or esophageal cancer diagnosis, as well as caregivers.

These meetings were moderated by Bart Fraittzza, the Founder of Esophageal Cancer Education Foundation and a 21-year esophageal cancer survivor. Each educational and uplifting meeting featured one or more GI oncologists.

This collaboration between HOPE and ECEF provided a much-needed space for people to discuss questions, concerns, treatments, and other points regarding their diagnoses. Esophageal and stomach cancer share many characteristics, and patients had the opportunity to learn from each other as they shared their experiences. Further,

the online format provided a relaxed atmosphere where people could discuss their thoughts and feelings with professionals outside of the typical clinical setting. These monthly meetings drew between 30-50 participants (accurate?), and many came prepared with personal questions or stories to share.

### **SURGEON SUPPORT GROUP**

A partial or full gastrectomy is an option for many stomach cancer patients depending on the stage of their diagnosis. Hope for Stomach Cancer's Surgeon Support Group exists to help patients understand the nuances of these complex surgeries so that they can best prepare for their own procedures and for life post-surgery. This

oncologist-moderated group met 12 times in 2024 and featured one or more guest surgeons at each meeting.

These groups often drew between 30-50 participants. Some people had stomach cancer diagnoses of their own and were preparing for surgeries, while others had already had a partial or full gastrectomy and needed guidance as they adjusted to life post-surgery. Additionally, caregivers attended these meetings to gain insight into how to best support spouses, family members, and friends who have stomach cancer.

### **HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER PROUDLY HOSTS THREE PRIVATE FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUPS.**

Each of our Facebook groups is designed to address specific aspects of the journey with stomach cancer. These groups provide a safe, intimate environment for participants to share personal experiences, learn coping strategies, and access firsthand information about the disease and its treatments. They are moderated by patients, caregivers, and HOPE staff to ensure appropriate content and a supportive atmosphere.





# 2024 PROGRAMS: FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUPS

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP AT [BIT.LY/HOPE\\_FBSUPPORTGROUP](https://bit.ly/HOPE_FBSUPPORTGROUP)

Join our **private** Facebook support groups; learn, heal, cope, and survive.

**STOMACH CANCER ADVOCACY MOVEMENT**  
A place to take action and create change.

**STOMACH CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**  
A peer-to-peer support group to share stomach cancer experiences.

**STOMACH CANCER SOCIAL SUPPORT: LET'S TALK**  
A social support group to discuss the emotional tolls of stomach cancer and uplift each other in laughter.

[Facebook.com/StomachCancerAwarenessNetwork/groups](https://Facebook.com/StomachCancerAwarenessNetwork/groups)

STOMACH CANCER  
ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

STOMACH CANCER  
SUPPORT: LET'S TALK

STOMACH CANCER  
SUPPORT

## STOMACH CANCER ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

*A place to take action and seek change.*

This group connects like-minded individuals ready to advocate for policies and initiatives to make stomach cancer a thing of the past. Participants engage in meaningful discussions about advocacy efforts and collaborate on ways to drive progress.

## STOMACH CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

*Share stories and experiences.*

A supportive space for individuals battling stomach cancer and their caregivers. This group fosters connections, encourages open dialogue about treatment options and personal

experiences, and provides emotional support.

## STOMACH CANCER SOCIAL SUPPORT: LET'S TALK

*Discuss the emotional aspects of stomach cancer.*

This group is dedicated to exploring the mental and emotional challenges of living with stomach cancer. Participants lift each other up, share coping mechanisms, and remind one another that they are not alone.

All groups are private, moderated

communities where participants can openly discuss topics such as symptoms, diet, lessons learned, and more. Medical professionals also participate, contributing valuable insights. These forums have become invaluable resources for hundreds of participants, providing both practical solutions and emotional support.

## NEW IN 2024: SOUL CARE WORKSHOPS AND HEALING YOGA

In 2024, we introduced two transformative initiatives designed to foster emotional healing, mindfulness, and physical wellness within our community: **Soul Care Workshops** and **Healing Yoga with Hannah**. These programs provided essential tools and support to

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**WE ARE HAPPY TO  
CONNECT WITH  
1,985 FACEBOOK  
MEMBERS!**

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# 2024 PROGRAMS: NEW PARTNER: HEALING WITH HANNAH

## INAUGURAL YEAR WITH *HEALING WITH HANNAH'S* YOGA CLASSES

individuals affected by stomach cancer, empowering them to navigate their journeys with greater resilience and hope.

These events focused on promoting holistic well-being by addressing not only the physical challenges of stomach cancer but also the emotional and mental aspects of healing. Participants engaged in practices that nurtured their mind-body connection and developed strategies for maintaining balance and self-care.

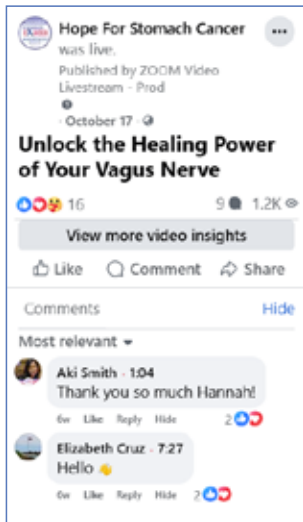
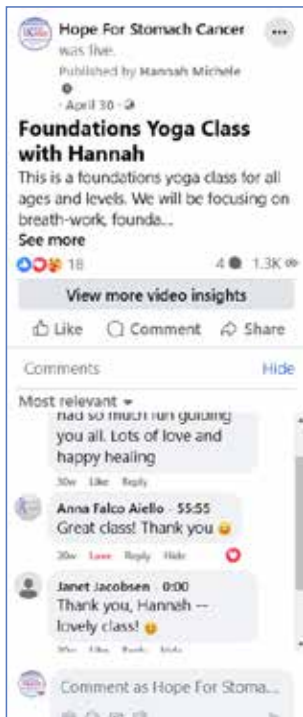
The metrics presented in the following section highlight the profound impact of these programs in 2024, demonstrating the importance of holistic care in supporting those affected by stomach cancer. In the coming year, we will stay committed to creating programs that empower and uplift our community, advancing the journey toward healing and hope.





# 2024 PROGRAMS: NEW PARTNER: HEALING WITH HANNAH

## INAUGURAL YEAR WITH HEALING WITH HANNAH'S YOGA CLASSES



**HEALING YOGA SESSIONS  
(MAY 28 - NOV. 26, 2024)**

Views: 9K+  
Reach: 4,598  
Impressions: 5,006  
Interactions: 166  
Reactions(Likes): 96  
Comment: 13  
Shares: 58

*These sessions were widely appreciated for their focus on holistic wellness, offering a restorative experience for both the body and mind.*

**SOUL CARE WORKSHOPS  
(APRIL 4 - DEC. 5, 2024)**

Total Attendees:  
88 participants

*These workshops created a safe and nurturing space for participants to reflect, heal, and connect, fostering a strong sense of community.*



# 2024 PROGRAMS: INTRODUCING THE HOPECAST

LISTEN TO THE **HOPECAST** ON YOUR FAVORITE PODCAST APP



LISTEN + LEARN MORE!

### NEW IN 2024: THE HOPECAST

Each episode features candid conversations with guests who bravely open up about their diagnosis, treatment journey, and life beyond stomach cancer. From the initial shock of diagnosis to navigating treatment options, managing side effects, and finding hope and inspiration along the way, “Stomach Cancer Stories” explores the highs and lows of the cancer journey with honesty, empathy, and resilience.





## 2024 PROGRAMS: WEBINARS



### ASCO ANNUAL MEETING: AN UPDATE ON RECENT GASTROESOPHAGEAL CANCER STUDIES

Hosted by Dr. Dan Catenacci, *GI Oncologist, Catenacci Consulting Ltd*  
6.14.24 | Zoom Webinar  
Registered Attendees: 44  
Comments/Questions: 7  
YouTube Views: 288  
YouTube Impressions: 2,574



### UNLOCK THE HEALING POWER OF YOUR VAGUS NERVE

Hosted by Healing with Hannah  
10.3.24 | Facebook  
Views: 1,298  
Reach: 726  
Impressions: 726  
Interactions: 35  
Reactions (Likes): 17  
Comment: 9  
Shares: 8

*This special event provided participants with valuable insights into the vagus nerve's role in healing, sparking curiosity and engagement within our community.*



### NAVIGATING TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR GASTROESOPHAGEAL CANCER WITHOUT KEY BIOMARKERS

Hosted by Dr. Sam Klemptner *GI Oncologist, Mass. General Hospital*  
08.30.24 | Zoom Webinar  
Registered Attendees: 53  
Comments/Questions: 9  
YouTube Views: 220  
YouTube Impressions: 4.5K



## 2024 PROGRAMS: HOPE IN A BAG



### *PROVIDED TO PATIENTS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH!*

Hope for Stomach Cancer has partnered with Bag-It, an Arizona regional nonprofit 501(c)3, to provide Hope-in-a-Bag. This beautiful Tote Bag is filled with physical and digital resources for newly diagnosed patients and caregivers. It includes a Patient Navigation Binder filled with tips and tools to help patients, their families and caregivers to keep track of their appointments, treatment information, lab results and medical history. Publications from the NCI and NCCS cover topics like understanding cancer diagnosis and treatments, questions to ask medical providers, and tips and tools for caregivers. It offers suggestions on how to talk with your friends, family and caregivers about your cancer, nutrition and transitioning to life after treatment.

In addition, Hope-in-a-Bag contains Stomach Cancer specific information:

- Biomarker updates
- NCCN Guidelines for Patients® booklet

In 2024, we are planning to update resources and add dietary recommendations.

### *IN 2024, WE SENT OUT:*

- **January – June**  
81 English Bags,  
7 Companies
- **July-December**  
110 English Bags  
2 Spanish Bags  
4 Companies

**Total:** 193 Total Bags  
11 Companies



## BRINGING AWARENESS THE PEDIATRIC PROJECT

**2,000**

stomach cancer patients  
between 2016-2021 diagnosed  
were under the age of 18  
*(that's approx. 400 a year)!*

PEDIATRIC PATIENTS  
**PROGRESS  
VERY QUICKLY.**

**1,200**

Healthcare organizations  
seeing pediatric patients  
with the help of 1,800  
practitioners.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP ADD PEDIATRICS INTO RESEARCH, CLINICAL TRIALS, AND DRUG DEVELOPMENT:

1. Collaborate in order to build a tumor tissue/germline research lab.
2. Help HOPE create + promote an outreach program for the newly diagnosed.
3. Join our Capitol Hill Coalition as we advocate for legislation to help.



Meet Brayden, an 11-year-old facing an incredibly rare and aggressive form of stomach cancer, called Diffuse Signet Ring Cell Gastric Carcinoma, even though he does not carry the usual gene marker that predisposes patients to this type, making his diagnosis even more rare and unusual.

He is the youngest pediatric patient to face this type of cancer and had his stomach removed on 01.10.23.





# BRINGING AWARENESS

## THE PEDIATRIC PROJECT



Approx. 400 pediatric patients are diagnosed with stomach cancer annually in the USA, and most are not part of clinical trials or research. Hope For Stomach Cancer has presented the problem.

We have validated the statistics and we know it's actually under-reported...  
**AND NOW WE DEMAND A SOLUTION!**

### ADVOCATING FOR OUR FUTURE: A SPOTLIGHT ON PEDIATRIC CANCER LEGISLATION

Entering 2025, the urgent needs of childhood cancer patients call for united action. Congress failed to include critical bipartisan policies for pediatric cancer in its 2024 year-end package. These cuts have left gaps in vital research funding, clinical trial accessibility, and life-saving innovations.

#### Key legislative omissions include:

- **The Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act**, reducing barriers for timely, cross-state care.
- **The Creating Hope Reauthorization Act**, which expired due to inaction, halting essential research.

- **The Innovation in Pediatric Drugs Act**, ensuring timely pediatric studies for new treatments.
- **The Give Kids A Chance Act**, advancing the study of innovative drug combinations for children.
- **The Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act 2.0**, ending funding for groundbreaking childhood cancer research.
- **The RARE Act**, clarifying the Orphan Drug Act to support pediatric research.

Hope for Stomach Cancer will stand alongside our partners to ensure that in the next congressional session, children with cancer are not forgotten. Together, we will push for legislative action that brings hope, resources, and progress for young patients and their families.



## BRINGING AWARENESS 2024 CONFERENCES + EVENTS



In 2024, Hope for Stomach Cancer participated in a variety of impactful events focused on education, advocacy, and collaboration. Below is an updated chronological list of these events and our contributions:

### ASCO GASTROINTESTINAL CANCERS SYMPOSIUM

Dates: January 18-20, 2024

Location: San Francisco, CA & Online

Details: Hope for Stomach Cancer hosted a booth and collaborated with Medscape Oncology Global and the American Liver Foundation for a live symposium, Understanding the HER2 Story in Gastrointestinal Malignancies. Aki Smith contributed to the discussions, sharing insights with the audience.

### STAND UP TO CANCER (SU2C) SCIENTIFIC SUMMIT

Dates: January 27-29, 2024

Location: Coronado, CA

Details: Aki Smith presented during the summit in closed sessions. Her presentation focused on the importance of patient advocacy and addressing disparities.

### AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH (AACR) ANNUAL MEETING

Dates: April 5-10, 2024

Location: San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, CA

Details: Hope for Stomach Cancer hosted a booth and participated

in Cancer Research Night with the San Diego Padres, where Aki Smith presented and rang the bell to honor survivors and advocates.

### GASTRIC CANCER DISPARITY IN THE US: A THREAT TO RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

Date: May 7, 2024

Location: Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC

Details: Hope for Stomach Cancer highlighted the disproportionate burden of gastric cancer among racial and ethnic minorities, advocating for equitable solutions to these disparities.





# BRINGING AWARENESS

## 2024 CONFERENCES + EVENTS



**SAVE THE DATE!**

See our very own **Aki Smith** speak at **AACR** as a panelist



**SEPTEMBER 22 @ AACR 2024**  
09.21-09.24.24 Los Angeles, CA

**10-11:30 AM: SPECIAL SESSION  
ADVANCES IN EARLY DETECTION  
AND SCREENING**  
Organized by Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C)  
More information at [aacr.org](http://aacr.org)

**STOMACH CANCER** PRESIDENT: TREAT. LIVE. **SU2C** STAND UP TO CANCER **AACR** American Association For Cancer Research

**THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE | STOCAN.ORG**

Details: Aki Smith presented on critical disparities in stomach cancer, advocating for equitable access to resources and emphasizing innovative approaches to addressing cancer health disparities.

### VIRTUAL PATIENT TOWN HALL: HER2+ GASTRIC AND ESOPHAGEAL CANCER

Date: October 23, 2024

Details: A virtual event featuring Dr. Jaffer A. Ajani, focused on advancements in HER2+ gastric and esophageal cancer treatments. Hope for Stomach Cancer co-hosted the event with patient advocate Mahathi Vojjala.

### 3RD GASTRIC CANCER SUMMIT AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Dates: November 7-8, 2024

Location: Stanford University

Details: Aki Smith presented on advocacy and patient-centered approaches to advancing gastric cancer care and research, contributing to discussions on cutting-edge innovations and strategies.

These events reflect Hope for Stomach Cancer's dedication to fostering collaboration, advancing education, and advocating for equitable care in the fight against stomach cancer.

### ASCO ANNUAL MEETING

Dates: May 31 – June 4, 2024

Location: McCormick Place, Chicago, IL & Online

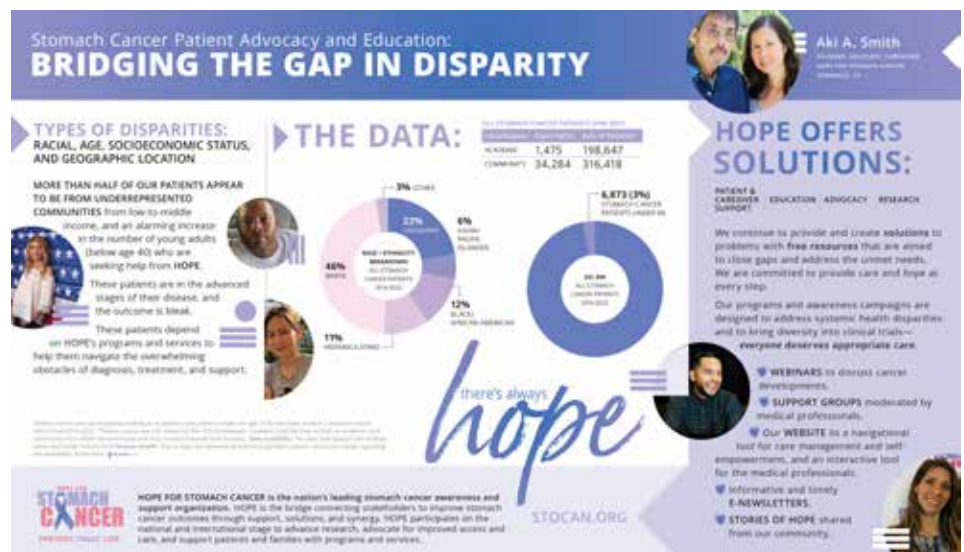
Details: Hope for Stomach Cancer hosted a booth and collaborated with PeerView on educational initiatives to advance understanding of gastric cancer treatment and research.

### 17TH AACR CONFERENCE ON THE SCIENCE OF CANCER HEALTH DISPARITIES IN RACIAL/ETHNIC MINORITIES AND THE MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED

Dates: September 21-24, 2024

Location: The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites, Los Angeles, CA

Stomach Cancer Patient Advocacy and Education:  
**BRIDGING THE GAP IN DISPARITY**



**HOPE OFFERS SOLUTIONS:**  
PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION • AWARENESS • RESEARCH SUPPORT

We continue to provide and create solutions to problems with free resources that are aimed to close gaps and address the unmet needs. We are committed to provide care and hope at every step.

Our programs and awareness campaigns are designed to address systemic health disparities and to bring diversity into clinical trials—everyone deserves appropriate care.

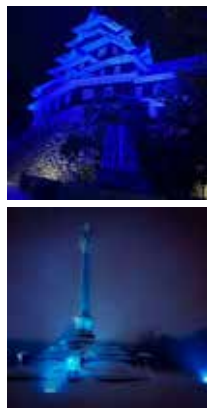
- WEBINARS to doctors, cancer investigators.
- SUPPORT GROUPS moderated by medical professionals.
- OUR WEBSITE is a navigational tool for care management and self-empowerment, and an interactive tool for the medical professionals.
- Informative and timely E-NEWSLETTERS.
- STORIES OF HOPE shared from our community.

**there's always hope**  
STOCAN.ORG



# BRINGING AWARENESS

## 2024 CONFERENCES + EVENTS



### *THE POWER OF PERIWINKLE 2024: OVER 150 LANDMARKS ILLUMINATED WORLDWIDE*

On November 30, 2024, the Power of Periwinkle campaign united communities worldwide to honor Stomach Cancer Awareness Month. Spearheaded by My Gut Feeling Stomach Cancer Foundation of Canada and supported by Hope for Stomach Cancer alongside 10 other organizations, the initiative saw more than 150 landmarks globally illuminated in periwinkle blue, symbolizing solidarity, hope, and resilience for stomach cancer patients, survivors, and their loved ones.

From the iconic CN Tower in Toronto to the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and from Kyoto's Osaka Castle to Los Angeles' Crypto.com Arena, the stunning displays inspired awe and raised critical awareness about one of the world's deadliest but under-recognized cancers. These illuminations stretched across five continents, including North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania.

Hope for Stomach Cancer, headquartered in Los Angeles, played a pivotal role in securing iconic sites in California and regions with active volunteers. Highlights included the dazzling displays at Union Station, San Diego Convention Center, LA Live, and the Ritz-Carlton, each a beacon of hope in their communities.

The campaign's reach was amplified through social media, where breathtaking images of periwinkle-lit landmarks were shared widely, bringing attention to the need for early detection, better treatment options, and increased research funding.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to every organization, volunteer, and supporter who made this campaign a monumental success. Together, we are shining a light on the fight against stomach cancer, ensuring that no one faces this disease alone.



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | WASHINGTON, D.C.

**YOUR  
STORY  
MATTERS**

CONNECT / LEARN / SHARE / ADVOCATE

**2nd  
SUMMIT** STOMACH CANCER  
PATIENT EMPOWERMENT  
SUMMIT | MAY 5-6, 2024  
POWERED BY AMGEN

**INAUGURAL EVENT**

**GASTRIC CANCER  
ADVOCACY ON CAPITOL HILL DAY**

May 5-7, 2024

Hyatt Place Arlington/Courthouse Plaza and Association of the  
United States Army (AUSA) Conference and Event Center

THANK YOU TO OUR PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT SPONSORS:





# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



*HELD ON MAY 5, 2024 FROM 10 AM – 12 PM, THE FOCUS GROUP OF 9 PATIENTS AND 2 CAREGIVERS PROVIDED VALUABLE INSIGHTS, FACILITATED COLLABORATION, AND INFORMED DECISION-MAKING IN UNDERSTANDING THE UNMET NEEDS OF THE GASTRIC CANCER PATIENT.*





# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA

### FOCUS GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

**In-depth insights:** The focus group provided rich, qualitative data, allowing participants to express their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in detail. This yielded nuanced insights that may not have been captured through surveys or quantitative methods alone.

**Understanding diverse perspectives:** By bringing together a diverse group of participants, the focus group enabled us to understand a range of perspectives, experiences, and attitudes. This diversity helped uncover insights that might have otherwise been overlooked.

**Exploration of complex topics:** The focus group proved effective for exploring complex or sensitive topics. Participants engaged in open discussions, clarifying their viewpoints and providing context for their opinions.

**Interactive environment:** The interactive nature of the focus group encouraged participants to build upon each other's ideas and responses. This dynamic exchange led to deeper exploration of topics and the generation of new insights.

**Immediate feedback:** We received immediate feedback on ideas and concepts presented during the focus group sessions. This real-time feedback allowed for iterative

refinement.

**Participant engagement:** The focus group involved active participation from participants, resulting in higher engagement. This led to more candid responses and a richer understanding of participants' perspectives.

**Flexibility:** The focus group offered flexibility in terms of format, size, and composition. We were able to tailor sessions to meet specific objectives and adapt the discussion guide as needed based on participant responses.

**Thank you to all for being part of this important discussion!**



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA

## EVENT PARTICIPANTS

**109** IN-PERSON,  
REGISTERED  
PARTICIPANTS  
*(MANY MORE JOINED IN ON THE DAY OF!)*

	Gastric Cancer Prevention and Early D... *Join us for an enlightening livestream event focused on Gastric Cancer...	Streaming software	 Public	None	May 6, 2024 Streamed	225
	2nd Patient Empowerment Summit W... Experience the 2nd Patient Empowerment Summit like never before with our ...	Streaming software	 Public	Copyright	May 6, 2024 Streamed	344

**565+** LIVE, ON-LINE  
PARTICIPANTS  
VIEWS CONTINUE TO GROW!  
[YOUTU.BE/LB8FKONKH1M](https://youtu.be/LB8FKONKH1M)

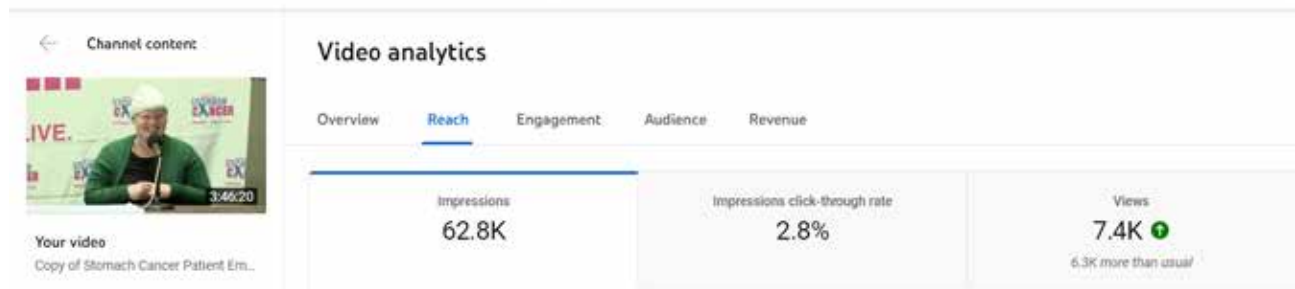




# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA

## HOPE'S PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT CONTINUES TO

the first Patient empowerment summit was held in Los Angeles in November 2023.  
views of the videos from the live session continue to reach new audiences!



**412** LIVE, ON-LINE PARTICIPANTS  
1-5PM SATURDAY, 11.11.23

CONTINUED VIEWERSHIP:  
**62.2K IMPRESSIONS**  
**7.4K TOTAL VIEWS**

SEE THE LOS ANGELES VIDEO AT: [YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=9QV0PKRKO6S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QV0PKRKO6S)  
STATS SHOWN AS OF 05.22.24

**VuMedi** ABOUT US CAREERS PARTNER WITH US

**Round 1 – 141 responses**

Stomach Cancer with Symptomatic Peritoneal Metastases

**STOMACH CANCER** **V** Management of Peritoneal Metastases: Guidelines From a Consortium Group  
BY: HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER FEATURING VARUN BANSAL  
December 10, 2023

ADDITIONAL VIEWERSHIP:  
**OUR PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT SESSIONS WERE PICKED UP AND POSTED BY VOLUME**



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



*The training for Advocacy and the Advocacy itself were fantastic! Loved the informative speakers!!!*

*I feel very grateful to hear from all the experts in person. Anonymous.*



### MOMENTS OF HOPE



I found the presentations from the doctors and the patients to be informative and enjoyable. Overall, the I felt the event was impactful and full of useful information. I am already looking forward to the next one! Helen (shown to the left)



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



*I always find interaction with other patients to be very impactful and have the most meaning for me. I'm not sure how to explain it but being around so many people that share my cancer experience is both humbling and invigorating. The speakers at this summit were top notch. I think due to the location we were able to have speakers that are in high places in the government.*

*The patient empowerment summit always seems to help me re-align my vision for myself and my family's future. Sometimes it's tough when you're in the trenches of treatment because it can feel like you're all alone. Connecting with fellow patients that are going through the same or similar treatments just has some kind of indescribable healing vibe to it that can't be emulated. I don't know, you just have to experience it! Greg Myers*



## MOMENTS OF HOPE





# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



I found great takeaways in the time and listening to surgeons, during the pre-meeting with other patients, and in the information shared about transposons.

Thank you to my fellow patients for sharing your raw personal stories, they were all really great. I am thankful for the advice and ideas given by the dietitian, they sound awesome! **Jeff Stewart** (*shown to the right*)



## MOMENTS OF HOPE





# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



### ADVOCACY METRICS

**53**

MEETINGS HELD  
ON CAPITAL HILL!

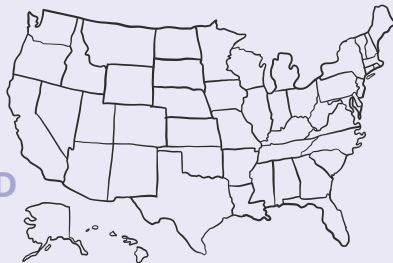


**50**

HOPE ADVOCATES ON CAPITAL HILL

**15**

STATES  
REPRESENTED



**2-HOUR**

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING

**5** HIGH-LEVEL,  
SCHEDULED MEETINGS

\*PLUS SEVERAL IMPROMPTU  
CONVERSATIONS WITH CONGRESSIONAL  
REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE VERY  
INTERESTED IN OUR ASK FOR ACTION!

#### MEETINGS INCLUDED:

26 SENATE MEMBERS  
27 HOUSE MEMBERS  
17 REPUBLICANS  
36 DEMOCRATS  
47 STAFF MEMBERS

#### CANCELLATION NOTES:

- 3** MEETINGS DECLINED DUE TO THE  
CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES BEING UNABLE  
TO ACCOMMODATE A MEETING ON THE  
REQUESTED DAY.
- 9** MEETING REQUESTS WERE CANCELED DUE  
TO CONSTITUENTS DROPPING OUT OF THE  
CAPITOL HILL DAY.



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

## 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



### ADVOCACY METRICS

#### \* THE GASTRIC CANCER DISPARITY IN THE US: A THREAT TO RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES FORUM WAS FILLED TO CAPACITY!

*Congresswoman Young Kim (CA-R) spoke. Lots of Congressional staff members, and Coalition leaders including representatives from the Deadliest Cancers Coalition, One Voice Against Cancer, AACR, and more. More than half of our advocates were unable to attend due to capacity limits, needing to stand in the hallway during the presentation. Plus, our stories hit congressional staff so hard, the actual representatives were brought out to the meetings!*

#### \* CONGRESSWOMAN MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE BRIEFLY SAID HI TO US AND POSED FOR PICTURES.



#### \* AKI SMITH HAD A 6-HOUR CONGRESSIONAL MEETING WITH CONGRESSWOMAN MAXINE WATERS ON THEIR FLIGHT TO LAX.



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



*This event would not have been possible without Aki, the committee, the volunteers, and sponsors. I did not know what to expect before attending and I am glad I was able to experience such a meaningful event as my wife is going through late stage cancer. The fear and uncertainty I have been going through will continue to be there but the community of advocates provided another support system to help me be more informed of this cancer and bring awareness to others. **Thanh Bui** (shown to the left)*



# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT 2024 SUMMIT | LOS ANGELES, CA



**WE ARE ALREADY LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025!**





# HOPE IN ACTION

## ADVANCING SOLUTIONS FOR HEALTH EQUITY IN STOMACH CANCER



### ***1. THE BIRTH OF THE STOMACH CANCER PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION ACT***

In 2024, Hope for Stomach Cancer reached a significant milestone with the introduction of the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act. This landmark legislation aims to improve health equity by addressing early detection, prevention, and treatment disparities in stomach cancer care. Bipartisan support from Representatives Yadira D. Caraveo and Joe Wilson showcased the growing recognition of the urgent need to combat stomach cancer's disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations.

Hope for Stomach Cancer's efforts during the inaugural Gastric Cancer Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill brought patients, caregivers, and advocates together to meet with legislators and highlight critical issues such as access to early screening tools, increased research funding, and public

education about high-risk factors. These efforts marked a pivotal step toward closing gaps in care and driving systemic change.

### ***2. LAUNCH OF GASTRICCANCERADVOCACY.ORG: A TARGETED ACTION PLATFORM***

To further address health equity in stomach cancer, Hope for Stomach Cancer launched **GastricCancerAdvocacy.org** in 2024. This dynamic platform empowers patients and caregivers to take meaningful action, offering tools and resources to raise awareness, connect with representatives, and advocate for impactful solutions—all from home.

The platform emphasizes the urgency of addressing disparities in early detection and treatment,







# HOPE IN ACTION

## ADVANCING SOLUTIONS FOR HEALTH EQUITY IN STOMACH CANCER



 **798** MESSAGES SENT

providing a space for grassroots efforts to flourish. By enabling individuals to contribute to this movement, this site strengthens collective advocacy efforts and supports the goal of ensuring equitable care for all.

These initiatives represent tangible progress in advancing health equity for stomach cancer patients and



caregivers. As we move into 2025, Hope for Stomach Cancer remains committed to championing solutions that address disparities, improve outcomes, and bring meaningful change to the fight against this disease.

### *PROGRESS ON THE STOMACH CANCER PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION ACT*

In 2024, significant strides were made in advancing the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act, a crucial piece of legislation aimed at improving early detection, prevention, and treatment outcomes for stomach cancer. The bill gained traction on Capitol Hill, with growing bipartisan support and increased public awareness through advocacy efforts. Hope for Stomach Cancer played a pivotal role by engaging patients, caregivers, and advocates in grassroots campaigns, including meetings with legislators during Advocacy Day. These efforts emphasized the urgent need for access to early screening tools, increased funding for research, and education about high-risk factors.

As we move into 2025, our focus remains on rallying further support for co-sponsorship and ensuring the bill moves closer to becoming law, bringing us one step closer to saving lives and improving outcomes for stomach cancer patients nationwide.



# HOPE IN ACTION

## ADVOCACY + MEMBERSHIPS ON CAPITOL HILL



*HOPE FOR STOMACH CANCER ARE MEMBERS OF THE FOLLOWING COALITIONS ON CAPITOL HILL*



### FORCE (FACING HEREDITARY CANCER EMPOWERED)

FORCE aims to improve the lives of people with genetic cancers through education, awareness, and advocacy. Their wide-ranging programs encompass risk management and treatment, policy and legal issues, and research and clinical trials. They work with a number of partners to advance hereditary cancer research worldwide.

### DEADLIEST CANCERS COALITION

#### DEADLIEST CANCERS COALITION

This coalition includes multiple non-profit organizations that are raising awareness and funds for the most persistent and fatal cancers. Deadly cancers are defined as those that have a five-year relative survival rate of below 50 percent. These cancers - including stomach cancer - were identified as part of the Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act of 2012.



#### THE HAYSTACK PROJECT

The Haystack Project focuses on treatment options for people with rare and ultra-rare diagnoses. Founded in 2016, the organization recognizes and actively addresses barriers that impede medical treatment, such as income level or geographic accessibility. They work with policymakers to improve access for those with rare diagnoses who need life-saving treatments.



#### ONE VOICE AGAINST CANCER (OVAC)

For more than 20 years, OVAC has lobbied tirelessly at the federal level for more funding toward cancer research. It's one of the largest coalitions in Washington, DC, and aims to represent cancer patients, their families, and healthcare providers nationwide. Their efforts benefit cancer patients from all walks of life.



#### RARE CANCER IRA (RARECANCERIRA.ORG)

The Rare Cancer IRA coalition is dedicated to addressing the unique challenges faced by patients with rare cancers. This includes advocating for expanded access to treatments and advancing rare cancer research initiatives. They collaborate with policymakers and stakeholders to ensure that the voices of rare cancer patients are heard on Capitol Hill.



#### SAVE RARE TREATMENTS TASK FORCE

The Save Rare Treatments Task Force works to safeguard access to rare disease treatments by addressing regulatory, legislative, and funding challenges. This coalition actively engages with Congress to promote policies that protect and expand treatment options for those with rare diseases, ensuring that patients can continue to receive life-saving care.



# HOPE IN ACTION

## ADVOCACY + MEMBERSHIPS

### ON CAPITOL HILL

#### COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

**NCI Patient Advocate Steering Committee (PASC):** Aki Smith actively represents Hope for Stomach Cancer on this committee, ensuring patient voices are heard in shaping cancer research priorities and strategies.

**NCI Esophagogastric Task Force:** As a representative of Hope for Stomach Cancer, Aki Smith contributes to advancing research, clinical trials, and treatment protocols specifically for esophagogastric cancers.

#### ENDORSED LEGISLATION

#### H.R. 2407/S. 2085: THE NANCY GARDNER SEWELL MEDICARE MULTI-CANCER EARLY DETECTION SCREENING COVERAGE ACT

Hope for Stomach Cancer supports this critical legislation, which aims to expand Medicare coverage for multi-cancer early detection tests. This bill represents a significant step toward improving early detection and saving lives through timely and comprehensive screening.







REMEMBERING THOSE WE LOST IN 2024

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS TODAY AND ALWAYS

*This candle burns in honor of all survivors, fighters, and those who have lost their lives to Stomach Cancer.*



**SANDRA YOUNG**  
1940-2024



**CHARLES ANDREW ZARKIS, SR.**  
1942-2024



**PAMELA JANE HENDRICKSON**  
1944-2024



**FRANS DE WAAL**  
1948-2024



**STEVEN JOHN MASON**  
1949-2024



**BILL SACCO**  
1949-2024



**TOM HENRY**  
1952-2024



**LORENZO ANGULO**  
1954-2024



**CATHERINE HARRINGTON**  
1955-2024



**GLENN M. KIEL**  
1956-2024



**DONALD HAMILTON**  
1957-2024



**TOBY KEITH**  
1961-2024



**EDDIES DRISCOLL**  
1963-2024



**JACK JACO PITCHON**  
1963-2024



**MATTHEW BORSCH**  
1964-2024



**SEAN ERIC SMITH**  
1965-2024



**JENNIFER J. BERNHARD**  
1967-2024



**JEFF CARTER**  
1967-2024



**LEE ROSE**  
1968-2024



**RAISA CALDWELL**  
1969-2024



**TIM MICHAEL DROVER**  
1969-2024



**SUSAN SUCHAN**  
1969-2024



**KARI C. DAVIS**  
1970-2024



**THAD DUANE HAMILTON**  
1970-2024



**JOSE MARTINEZ FARIAS**  
1971-2024



**JULIA-KIM TAHARA**  
1971-2024



**SUZANNE OTTINGER**  
1971-2024



**SCOTT CHURCH**  
1972-2024



**EDWINA MARIE**  
1973-2024



**JEFFREY CARL MEYERS**  
1973-2024



**GONZALO GALVEZ**  
1977-2024



**SHAREEN ROSALES**  
1977-2024



**MANNY CORTEZ**  
1978-2024



**CARRIE KRAMER RODGERS**  
1978-2024



**JENNIFER DENNIS**  
1979-2024



**ROBERT CLIFTON PITTS**  
1979-2024



**JENNY KANG**  
1981-2024



**PHILIP SMITH**  
1982-2024



**STEPHANIE RUBIANO**  
1987-2024



**JAYLEN MEYER**  
1988-2024



**DUSTIN ROBERTO**  
1990-2024



**VICTORIA RANGEL**  
1992-2024



**DONNA ZHANG**  
1992-2024



**EDUARDO JARDINEZ**  
1997-2024



**KODY H. WRIGHT**  
1998-2024

THERE IS ALWAYS  
*hope*  
STOCAN.ORG





## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

As we reflect on the progress made in 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the strides achieved and the incredible support from our community. Together, we've educated, empowered, and advocated for thousands of stomach cancer patients, caregivers, and supporters.

Now, we set our sights on a transformative 2025—a year filled with ambition, innovation, and hope.

### KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR 2025

#### 1. ADVANCING RESEARCH AND BIOMARKER DISCOVERIES

Research remains at the forefront of our mission in 2025. We aim to understand what drives stomach cancer in youth and young adults, discover predictive biomarkers to guide treatment responses, and find innovative solutions to overcome chemotherapy resistance. Additionally, we hope for breakthroughs that eliminate the need for stomach removal, envisioning curative and less invasive therapies for patients.

#### 2. EXPANDING BIOMARKER EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

Building on the success of our Biomarker Website, we will expand its reach to include the latest advancements and practical resources for patients and caregivers. By bridging the gap between patients and cutting-edge research, we will empower individuals to make informed decisions about their care while advancing precision medicine.

hope



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

### 3. BRINGING BACK THE PATIENT EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON, DC, AND LOS ANGELES

We are thrilled to announce that our Patient Empowerment Summit will take place in both Washington, DC, and Los Angeles in 2025. These events will bring together patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and advocates to share stories, foster connections, and inspire a deeper sense of community.

### 4. ADVOCACY FOR POLICY AND EQUITY

We are renewing our focus on the Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act, striving to secure its reintroduction and passage. By collaborating with coalitions and organizations, we will amplify our efforts to expand access to care, raise awareness of stomach cancer, and tackle systemic disparities. Through these partnerships, we aim to build momentum for impactful policy changes.

### 5. AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND STORYTELLING

Our ability to foster community and connection remains one of our greatest strengths. Following the success of 30 Stories in 30 Days, we will continue to spotlight patient stories that educate, inspire, and expand awareness through video series and creative platforms. By sharing diverse voices and fostering meaningful conversations, we build the foundation of a community that thrives on empowerment, resilience, and support.

#### *A VISION OF HOPE*

As we step into 2025, we remain steadfast in our mission to improve the lives of stomach cancer patients and their families. Through groundbreaking research, empowering education, compassionate support, and meaningful advocacy, every step we take brings us closer to a future filled with possibilities.

We invite you to join us in making 2025 a year of progress, resilience, and hope. Together, we can create a world where stomach cancer is met with understanding, innovation, and solutions. Here's to the transformative year ahead!



# LOOKING AHEAD

## THE 2025 NUTRITION GUIDE!

### NUTRITION: A VITAL RESOURCE FOR STOMACH CANCER PATIENTS

After four years of collaborative effort with Eat Right, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Oncology Nutrition DPG, and Hope for Stomach Cancer, we are proud to announce the upcoming release of the Stomach Cancer Nutritional Guidelines Booklet in 2025.

#### WHY NUTRITION MATTERS

At Hope for Stomach Cancer, we recognize the vital role that nutrition plays in patient advocacy and care. Proper nutrition is critical during gastric cancer treatment, as dietary needs and nutrient absorption evolve throughout different stages of the journey. With ongoing advancements in research and a steadfast commitment to education, we aim to provide patients and caregivers with reliable, evidence-based resources to help navigate these challenges effectively.

#### INSIDE THE NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES BOOKLET:

This booklet is designed to empower patients and caregivers with practical tools and knowledge about nutrition from diagnosis to survivorship. Key topics include:

- **Weight management strategies** to maintain strength and health.
- **Nutrition tips** for managing treatment side effects.
- **Post-surgery recovery** guidance for optimal healing.
- **Customized nutrition plans** tailored to different stages of treatment.

### ADDITIONAL NUTRITION RESOURCES

We encourage patients and caregivers to explore educational webinars available at [stocan.org](https://stocan.org), such as:

- **Dietary Interventions** for Gastric and Esophageal Cancer: Practical Tools for Patients by Nancee Jaffee, MS, RD, UCLA's Vatche & Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases.
- **The Role of Nutrition in Managing Symptoms and Recovery** by Natalie Manitius, MPH, RDN.

### ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE

The Nutritional Guidelines Booklet will be **available for free** in both online and print formats. To ensure inclusivity, the booklet will also be translated into Spanish, making this essential resource accessible to a broader community of patients and caregivers.

**We are thrilled to provide this groundbreaking resource in 2025** and remain committed to supporting stomach cancer patients with the tools and knowledge needed to thrive. Stay tuned for updates and the official release!





## WE ARE INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

In 2024, the unwavering support of our corporate sponsors enabled us to expand our core programs, reaching more patients, caregivers, and advocates. Their contributions have been instrumental in our mission to improve survivability and access to care for stomach cancer patients.

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## A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

*From myself, our Board of Directors, and the many dedicated volunteers, I want to express my deepest thanks to everyone who supported Hope for Stomach Cancer in 2024. Every act of support—no matter how big or small—brings us one step closer to mitigating the suffering caused by this disease.*

*To our generous donors, both ongoing and new, thank you for enabling us to expand our reach. Your contributions have allowed us to educate and serve more patients, families, medical professionals, and friends affected by stomach cancer. Greater awareness creates more options, more resources, and more support—all of which are critical to achieving the best possible outcomes.*

*I hope you've found inspiration in these pages. Your time, energy, and generosity made all of this possible and inspire me every single day.*

*I look forward to all we will accomplish together in 2025!*

*with love, Aki*

