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NUTRITION AND EXERCISE PROGRAM CAN HELP BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS MINIMIZE CHANCE FOR RELAPSE

GREENSBURG, PA, November 15, 2012 ... Research has shown that healthy lifestyle changes that include weight loss, a low fat intake and consistent exercise may decrease breast cancer recurrence.

Women in treatment at the Arnold Palmer Cancer Pavilion, a partnership between Excelsa Health and UPMC CancerCenter are invited to attend a new series of classes taught by Excelsa Health dietitians and exercise physiologists.

An evidenced based program, the course called “Move More, Eat Less, Find Success” gives breast cancer patients the power to influence their health through good nutrition and physical activity.

All classes are free and held at the Arnold Palmer Cancer Pavilion, Mountain View Medical Park, Unity Township. Participants will also receive a pedometer and be enrolled in WalkingSpree, a Web based exercise program underwritten by the Latrobe Area Hospital Charitable Foundation in support of cancer care.

“Move More, Eat Less, Find Success” includes an overview of clinical study results, benefits and program objectives, three personal nutrition coaching sessions with a registered dietitian to help set personal, realistic goals and group sessions that cover label reading, recipe modification and dining out, along with special sessions on healthy holiday eating and healthy fats. Additional personal coaching and group education will be conducted by an exercise physiologist to establish a tolerable routine of physical activity.

Clinical study recommendations feature a high fiber, low fat diet, including increased fruit and vegetable consumption; physical activity five days a week for

30 minutes couple with 15 minutes of strength training two to three times a week. Because obesity has been linked to breast cancer incidence, a weight loss diet is also suggested for those whose body mass index is greater than 25.

“Research shows that maintenance of desirable body weight can improve outcomes in early stage breast cancer,” explained Excelsa Health dietitian Anita Gallagher, MS, RD, LDN, CNSC, one of the dietary instructors in the program. “A weight loss program with lower fat intake, along with routine exercise can help to achieve this goal and may provide additional benefits. A lower fat intake has also been shown to reduce breast cancer recurrence. People who try to eat less fat usually eat more fruits and vegetables and grains, which are good for everyone. Fruits and vegetables also have powerful compounds called phytochemicals that may help reduce breast cancer risk.”

Excelsa Health exercise physiologist Erin Centofanto added, “It has been studied and proven that exercise is one of the best lifestyle choices a breast cancer patient and survivor can make. As with any exercise program, people should begin slowly, and alert their doctor that they are starting an exercise program and inform their trainer or class instructor of health history.”

The program is a continuing response to the Women’s Intervention Study (WINS) published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* in 2006, as well as subsequent clinical trials reported in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, linking wellness in cancer patients to long-term improvements in health behaviors, body weight and physical function.

“Decreasing fat intake, eating more vegetables and fruit and becoming more physically active is certainly more desirable than more chemotherapy,” commented Matthew Sulecki, MD, medical oncologist at the Arnold Palmer Cancer Pavilion and a proponent of the program. “In and above the potential to stave off breast cancer, the program helps women play an active role in their treatment, and regardless it helps them become healthier overall.”

According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, other than skin cancer. It is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer.

About 226,870 new cases of invasive breast cancer in women will be diagnosed in 2012.

The chance of a woman having invasive breast cancer some time during her life is about 1 in 8. The chance of dying from breast cancer is about 1 in 36. Breast cancer death rates are going down – most likely the result of finding the cancer earlier and improved treatment.

For more information on “Move More, Eat Less, Find Success” as well as other nutrition or cancer education and support programs, call Excela Health, 724-832-4416.