

# On 10th anniversary of LCC, Dr. Lillian Chou shares cancer survival story, vision for care

On June 23, Lubbock Cancer Center (LCC) will celebrate its 10th anniversary of delivering comprehensive care to cancer patients by hosting a Survivors Party and Open House from 4 to 6 p.m. at their office, 4002 21st St. The center's patients, their families and care teams, and members of the community are invited to attend the anniversary celebration to mark this milestone.

"Celebrating with cancer survivors and families has become an annual tradition," says Dr. Jui-Lien "Lillian" Chou, a co-founder of Lubbock Cancer Center who is herself a cancer survivor. "Each year is a milestone for cancer survivors, one that's bittersweet. While you celebrate the victory against cancer, you also must acknowledge the permanent marks the fight leaves on the body and the spirit.

"For myself, I'm grateful the feeling is more sweet than bitter," she adds. "Not only am I fortunate to have a wonderful family and the support of my co-workers, I'm also grateful for the opportunity to share my skills and compassion with the community. I'm hopeful my educational background, professional experience, and personal journey as a cancer survivor can serve as a benefit to others."

Dr. Chou was born in Tainan, Taiwan, and received her M.D., with honors, from the prestigious Medical College, National Taiwan University in 1980. In 1983, after three years of ophthalmology residency training at National Taiwan University Hospital, she moved to San Antonio, Texas to pursue her "American Dream" and to start residency training in radiation oncology at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.

Dr. Chou became board certified in Therapeutic Radiology in 1987 and has long been recognized for her excellence in radiation oncology practice. She opened Lubbock Cancer Center in 2001 with Dr. Rodolfo Martinez, and later added Wellness Lubbock, which emphasizes holistic health for women, and The Breast Center, the region's first fully-integrated, comprehensive center for breast cancer screening, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care.

"Even before my diagnosis with breast cancer, I'd thought for many years about the creation of a comprehensive breast care center to bring together resources for complete cancer management," says Dr. Chou.

For Dr. Chou, who has no family history of breast cancer, discovering she had cancer turned her world upside down. In December 2003, a routine annual mammogram showed "very dense breast tissue" but no suspicious lesion for cancer. By the following September, however, Dr. Chou felt a sore spot in her left breast and realized it was something potentially serious. Further imaging confirmed her suspicions and revealed that the now half-inch tumor looked cancerous.

A biopsy was immediately done, and the pathology report indicated an aggressive cancer with the tendency for being in more than one area of the breast. Dr. Chou opted for mastectomy, which was done at North-Star Surgical Center by Dr. David Mangold.

Following surgery, Dr. Chou underwent eight rounds of chemo under the care of Dr. Martinez. Throughout her treatment, she continued to work full-time. She also followed the developments in breast imaging closely, including the emergence of breast MRI as an effective diagnostic tool.

In April 2005, Dr. Chou decided to have an MRI done on her right breast; the scan revealed a small tumor



DR. JUI-LIEN "LILLIAN" CHOU – RADIATION ONCOLOGIST  
CO-FOUNDER, LUBBOCK CANCER CENTER  
7-YEAR BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR

which was not seen on mammogram and ultrasound.

"I was devastated. I just went through breast cancer and now I was facing it again," she says. "The fear conquered me, and I opted to have a second mastectomy."

After surviving her own battle with cancer, it's Dr. Chou's hope that no other woman need be diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer, or face the decision to have a mastectomy, simply because the cancer wasn't caught early enough.

"At this point in time, we cannot prevent most breast cancers, but we have more tools to catch the cancer early enough that women don't have to die," she says.

Today, Dr. Chou's passion continues to be providing comprehensive, compassionate and excellent health care. She is a breast care specialist and has dedicated herself to the development of state-of-the-art breast care centers for the benefit of her patients. In addition to Wellness Lubbock and The Breast Center in Lubbock, she founded Aurora Breast Center San Antonio in September of 2009. Aurora Breast Center is the only comprehensive breast care center in San Antonio featuring a breast care clinic with cutting-edge breast imaging, biopsy and cancer treatment technology and a compassionate team. Just as is the case in Lubbock, Aurora Breast Center in San Antonio is complimented by Aurora Cancer Center, which allows for fully-integrated patient care across a multi-disciplined health care team.

In her personal life, Dr. Chou is married to Dr. Peter Ming-Tao Ho, an ophthalmologist, and they have three grown children. Dr. Chou's other passions are edible organic gardening and promoting urban organic agriculture (UOA) through community education programs.

For experienced care, choose Lubbock Cancer Center, located at 4002 21st St. For information or a referral, contact them at (806) 793-1406. In San Antonio, contact Aurora Cancer Center at 1-210-247-0888.