

PACIFIC SHORES MEDICAL GROUP

A Hematology/Oncology Subspecialty Private Practice
Member, UCLA Affiliated Translational Oncology Research Network

Friendly

Mario *Bridging the Gap*

by Mario Muniz

The ambitiousness of two physicians, loving support from my family, and faith in God bridged the gap from denial to hope. In April of 1999, I was diagnosed with a gastric stromal tumor, a type of cancer that had the propensity to recur. At that time the only medical intervention was surgery. Thanks to Dr. Perez I had several successful surgeries. But the tumors kept coming back, every time larger than the time before. Worse, they kept spreading throughout my body. Dr. Perez, my surgeon and advocate, imparted hope and continued to believe. He told me, "We're going to beat this." He consulted with a medical oncologist, Dr. Ucar, whom he viewed as one of the best in cancer research and treatment. In June of 2003, with my wife standing by my side, as she had been throughout my treatment, I arranged an appointment at Pacific Shores Medical Group for a first consultation with Dr. Ucar. He offered a new option, a "magic pill" called Gleevec, a drug recently approved by the FDA. At that moment I knew I was in good hands and was not merely a patient, but a human being ready to live life and thrive.

"Providing care to a patient is certainly a privilege, and I am always honored to serve the patient in the best possible way."
- Dr. Dario Perez

"Multiple, and very complex, surgeries by Dr. Perez gave Mario time, just enough time, for a great medication, Gleevec, to be discovered." - Dr. Kalust Ucar



Dr. Perez



Dr. Ucar



—Tomorrow's Treatment

Soar To Survive: A Diary of Treatment (cont.)

Seven years ago, Mrs. TJ was diagnosed with breast cancer. She consulted with Dr. Ucar regarding treatment, and today she is cancer free. The following are a few highlights from her personal diary, documenting her journey through diagnosis and treatment.

When I was fifty-nine years old, I was diagnosed with an invasive left breast cancer, and I had to make a choice between two surgical options. I decided to have lumpectomy and axillary node dissection instead of mastectomy to preserve my breast. The surgery went well. The final pathology results after surgery showed that the cancer had spread into four out of fifteen lymph nodes that were removed. A complete body scan revealed that the cancer had NOT spread anywhere else.

Questions:

- 1). What stage was my cancer?
- 2). Was I curable or not?

-To be continued in next month's HealthBeat.

At Pacific Shores Medical Group, patients are provided with information and choices regarding treatment options. It is completely up to them to decide what treatments they are comfortable with.

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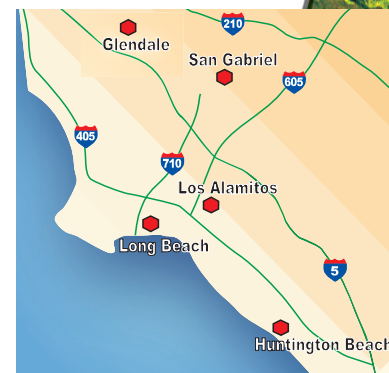
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