Esophageal Cancer Survivor
Nick Peck shares his story

My survival is a tribute to early detection and the strength and depth of the OHSU team.

In September 2010 a bleeding ulcer nearly killed me. In December 2011, my doctor suggested a check-up endoscopy; on December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day, the cancer diagnosis arrived to me by phone as I parked at work. In just one year, Barrett’s Esophagus (a symptomless cancer) had appeared from nowhere.

To my knowledge, I had cancer for 22 days. Shortly after receiving the diagnosis, I underwent surgery with a gastric pull-up that became necrotic a week later. What followed was emergency surgery with a take-down, a spit fistula (such fun!) and a feeding tube for weeks too long (an hour is too long!). Recovery involved getting back into shape and returning to OHSU two months later for the colonic interposition that restored digestive normality.

Faith in recovery is what kept me on the offense.

I knew there was a better state to come and I knew I would reach that state. Cancer had not happened to me, I would happen to it. All the rest was aftermath, and I knew I was in the best possible hands at OHSU.

What is WECAN?

The Western Esophageal Cancer Action Network (WECAN) is a patient education and support group for patients and their families as they explore the issues they will encounter as they evaluate a diagnosis, prepare for, and go through treatment. Sharing in the before, during and after experiences of receiving this initially devastating diagnosis can help patients better understand recommended care, and provide a needed reminder that excellent quality of life can follow this challenging therapeutic journey. WECAN members are invited to attend bi-annual events with guest presenters who offer their expertise and serve to keep all informed on progress in the field of esophageal cancer treatment. Plans are in motion for the creation of local support group meetings, as well as videoconferencing, moderated online discussion sessions and an information library.

To enroll in WECAN, contact our Patient Resource Advocate Dr. Claude Poliakoff at poliakof@ohsu.edu.
Fighting Disease through Research: The Michael J. Newton Foundation

A unique benefit of care at OHSU is the opportunity to participate in research. Our Institutional Review Board ensures that each clinical trial offered will be properly justified, ethically sound and as safe as possible, as we push for new knowledge and better methods of treatment. WECAN supports enrollment in clinical trials to improve the management of esophageal cancer. To learn more about clinical trial participation, visit www.ohsu.edu/xd/health/clinical-trials.

The Michael J. Newton Esophageal Cancer Foundation is WECAN's primary source of research funding. A generous grant from the family of the late Mike Newton now makes it possible for our program to fund specific research aimed at healing and curing esophageal cancer. The Newton Foundation funds research on prevention and early detection of esophageal and stomach cancers, providing education to clinical and research faculty as well as community members to raise awareness and promote prevention of esophageal disease.

You Can Support WECAN!

WECAN focuses on esophageal and upper digestive tract diseases and, in particular, esophageal cancer.

Donating to WECAN will:

• Fund research on prevention, early detection and cure of esophageal and stomach cancers
• Provide education to clinical and research faculty as well as community members to raise awareness and promote prevention of esophageal disease
• Provide support for patients and family members as they explore the issues they will encounter as they evaluate a diagnosis, prepare for and go through treatment

Your support of WECAN through the Michael J. Newton Esophageal Cancer Foundation will allow us to allocate needed resources to new research protocols studying screening, treatment and prevention of esophageal cancer.

If you would like to learn more about becoming a member of WECAN, contact Patient Resource Advocate Dr. Claude Poliakoff at poliakof@ohsu.edu.

Claude Poliakoff, M.D.
WECAN Patient Resource Advocate

Make a Gift

Online
Visit www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/foundation/giving-opportunities/knight-cancer to donate online by selecting “Esophageal Cancer Research.”

By Mail
Mail checks endorsed to the OHSU Foundation with “Esophageal Cancer Research” in the memo line to:

OHSU Foundation
Mail Stop 45
PO Box 4000
Portland, OR 97208-9852

By Phone
Call 503 228-1730 or 800 462-6608 (toll free) to make a gift to “Esophageal Cancer Research” by credit card. We accept MasterCard, Visa, AmEx and Discover.