

MalibuPatch

THE NEIGHBORHOOD FILES

Defeating Cancer With a Different Approach

Dianne Burnett's new foundation will raise money and awareness for preventative and integrative cancer treatments.

By **Jimmy Tallal** January 17, 2011

The Malibu home of actor, producer, author and philanthropist Dianne Burnett played host on Wednesday to a luncheon for the top names from the field of integrated medicine, which combines conventional medical treatments with alternative approaches. It was a gathering for those involved in the recently formed Joan Valentine- A Foundation for Natural Cures. They are planning for a major event in the spring that will raise money and awareness for preventative and integrative cancer treatments.

The foundation was formed in 2009 when Burnett's mother, Joan Valentine, was battling esophageal cancer. She was by her mother's side until her mother died on April 20 of last year.

"We're all touched by cancer in some way—through a loved one or friend," Burnett said.

"When my mother got it, it was just a blow. [The cancer] was in her esophagus, in a hard-to-reach place, and was already Stage 4. We were all told it was a death sentence. Even so, the [doctors proceeded with] chemotherapy and radiation, and this went on for 10 months."

Burnett said the foundation will "build awareness that there are other approaches" to treating cancer. It will also raise money to conduct scientific studies of promising new cancer treatments that are unlikely to be pursued by pharmaceutical companies.

The luncheon included people from various backgrounds, including a local psychiatrist that specializes in helping cancer patients and a person with a doctorate in nutrition who scours the earth for indigenous plants with medical value.

"The typical medical model doesn't offer everything people need to be well," said Dr. Gabriel Cora of Miami Shores, Fla. Cora has a medical degree and an MBA. She integrates traditional and alternative medicines in her practice.

Burton Goldberg, author of 18 books on alternative medicine, said pharmaceutical companies, the FDA and even many physicians have little interest in exploring, studying or recommending alternative approaches. They prefer, he said, to stick with the status quo.

Goldberg keeps up with cutting-edge cancer treatments and methodologies that include alternative ways to administer chemotherapy and radiation, genetic testing and even changes to diet.

Dr. Janet Hranicky is a pioneer in psychoneuroimmunology, or PNI, which involves studying the emotional impact of treatments on cancer patients. She said it has been proven that a positive attitude helps the immune system.

"It is important for a patient to look forward to getting better, improve their will to live, be able to see their cancer as a challenge and strengthen their belief that they can get well," Hranicky said.

She co-directs a psychological intervention program for cancer patients. Hranicky also trains other physicians and nurses and is developing "standard of care" guidelines for mind/body medicine and cancer.

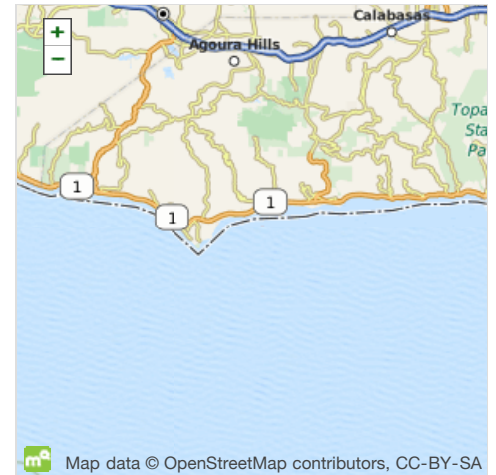
Misty Woodward attended the luncheon as a representative for the Washington D.C.-based nonprofit Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine, which includes "doctors and laypersons working together for compassionate research [without animal testing] and plant-based diets."

More information on the foundation's spring fundraiser will be released later this year. A website for the foundation, joanvalentinefoundation.org, is being designed, and will be up soon.

Do you think pharmaceutical companies are hesitant to seek alternative approaches to cancer treatment? [Tell us in the comments.](#)



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