

# Leading-edge cancer treatment + compassionate care

Working together to bring you hope and healing



When you hear the word “cancer,” it can be a frightening, confusing experience. What happens next? What are your options? What’s covered under your Kaiser Permanente plan?

At Kaiser Permanente, it’s our goal to make your treatment journey as stress-free as possible, so you can focus on healing. Everyone from our doctors, cancer specialists, nurses, and staff work together and with you to help ensure you’re getting the best care possible. It’s all part of the commitment we make every single day to help beat cancer and save lives.

## Fully coordinated care, close to home

As a Kaiser Permanente member, your care and coverage is coordinated for you. With specialized cancer centers across Northern California, you can get high-quality care closer to the comfort and support of your home and family. We work with you to make sure you have access to the care and doctors you need quickly, and at times that fit your schedule and lifestyle. And your treatment goes beyond medical care to include comprehensive support from social workers to dietitians to care clinics, giving you the help you need, every step of the way. We can even help you make travel arrangements to and from our cancer centers and help you understand what financial assistance options are available if needed.

## Coming together as one dedicated team

Each week, we bring together experienced specialists from virtually every cancer specialty to discuss the most innovative treatments and options we can provide for our members. And once you’re diagnosed, we spring directly into action. From cancer specialists such as oncologists and radiologists to primary care doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, we quickly form a personal cancer care team, one that works together to determine how to best treat your cancer.

And when we say we work together, we’re not just talking about our doctors and caregivers — we mean you as well. We want to know what your concerns are, what treatments you’re

“Everyone from the oncologist to the surgeon to the nursing staff ... they were genuinely touched and concerned, and I felt everybody did their *very* best to make sure that I was going to make it. I don’t know of any other health setting where you would find that kind of care.”

— Kathleen Tebb, Kaiser Permanente member

interested in, and if there are any complementary therapies you feel would help in your recovery.<sup>1</sup> Because you're not a member or patient to us. You're a vital part of your personal cancer care team.

### **The first wave of defense: Screening and early detection**

The most effective way to fight cancer is to find and treat it early. With Kaiser Permanente HealthConnect<sup>®</sup>, we have a built-in system that alerts our caregivers if you're due for any screenings, even if they're not related to that day's visit. We can even schedule them on the spot, sometimes on the same day. Our alert program is so effective, we're ranked number one in breast and colorectal cancer screening rates for California.<sup>3</sup>

If you're diagnosed with cancer, your primary care physician will go over your test results with you and schedule an appointment with an oncologist during your visit. And since we're an integrated organization, you'll be able to see your oncologist quickly — there's no need to wait for referrals or prior authorizations.

### **After your diagnosis: Your dedicated cancer care team**

At Kaiser Permanente, we bring together multiple specialties, from oncology to radiation therapy to genetic counseling, each week for what's called a "case conference." These conferences have one purpose and one purpose only — to review and discuss how to help our members fight cancer.

#### **View your screenings 24/7**

You can view your personal screening schedule online at **kp.org** or through our free apps for iPhone<sup>®</sup> and Android<sup>™</sup> devices.<sup>2</sup> Log in anytime to see when your last mammogram or colorectal screening was, and when your next one is due.

"By the time that patient and family leave, they've got a book about breast cancer. They've got a road map of their treatment plan. Their appointments are scheduled."

— James Hamrick, MD,  
Chief, Medical Oncology  
and Hematology

We'll mobilize all of our specialists and form a dedicated cancer care team as soon as you're diagnosed. Your cancer care team will review your test results, biopsy findings, medical history, the type of cancer you have, and where and how far along it's progressed. We also meet with you so you can let us know about any treatment preferences you may have and what options you'd like to make part of your plan. Then we'll come together in a case conference to create your treatment road map, usually in a single day.

When you meet with us, we'll help you understand your options, answer any questions you may have, and map out your care — including medical treatments, surgical procedures, and complementary care such as emotional support, acupuncture, and nutrition. You'll know exactly what to expect and have the support and experience of your entire Kaiser Permanente cancer care team behind you.

## Your cancer center: Specialized care for your specific cancer

Cancer is a complex disease that requires intricate knowledge of the various types of treatments available — and Kaiser Permanente has the experience to provide you with the best outcome possible. That's why we've recruited and trained specialized cancer physicians and providers and made them available throughout Northern California. Our medical centers include fellowship-trained staff who specialize in your specific type of cancer. That means you'll be referred quickly to the right care center in Kaiser Permanente's network. And with so many locations throughout Northern California, you can stay closer to home, so you'll have the support of your community, friends, and family throughout your treatment journey.

- **bladder cancer** — 2 centers, 4 surgeons, 3 specialized oncologists
- **acute leukemia** — 3 centers
- **brain cancer** — 3 centers, 28 neurosurgeons
- **pediatric brain cancer** — 3 centers, 4 neurosurgeons
- **esophageal cancer** — 5 centers, 20 surgeons
- **gynecologic cancer** — 5 centers, 13 surgeons
- **head & neck cancer** — 5 centers, 6 surgeons
- **liver cancer** — 5 centers, 6 surgeons
- **ocular melanoma** — 2 facilities, 1 specialized ocular oncologist
- **pancreatic cancer** — 5 centers, 15 surgeons
- **thyroid cancer** — 4 centers, 6 surgeons
- **radiation oncology** — 5 centers, 31 radiation oncologists
- **pediatric oncology** — 3 centers, 9 pediatric oncologists

All of our centers are or are in the process of being accredited by the Commission on Cancer, meeting rigorous standards in quality, prevention, treatment, and lifelong follow-up care.

### Better results with specialized care

Women with ovarian cancer experience better outcomes when treated by a gynecologic oncologist.<sup>4</sup> And in Northern California, over 90% of Kaiser Permanente members with advanced ovarian cancer receive care from a gynecologic oncologist. So you can have peace of mind knowing that you're being treated by a physician with experience and special training in your specific type of cancer, which helps ensure a higher level of care and better results.

## Collaborating for better care

As a Kaiser Permanente member, your treatment is coordinated every step of the way. Our doctors, oncologists, pharmacists, and caregivers are part of the same organization, which enhances their ability to collaborate quickly and efficiently. And with our electronic medical record system, they can view your Kaiser Permanente medical history in real time, share treatment notes, view test results and medication lists, and make adjustments as needed to fully customize your treatment. At each visit, every caregiver you see has the most up-to-date information on your treatment and condition to help ensure high-quality care.

## Your treatment: Innovative, high-quality care

Our goal is to fight your cancer as aggressively as needed, but with as little impact to the rest of your body as possible so you can recover quickly and go on with your life. You'll have access to a full spectrum of cancer therapy, including advanced procedures that are specifically designed to target cancer cells without affecting healthy tissue:

**Chemotherapy** — Specific drugs are given intravenously (through an IV), which then circulate throughout your entire body. Chemotherapy can slow or stop cancer cells from growing, destroy them, and keep them from spreading to other areas.

- **Intraperitoneal chemotherapy (also called IP therapy)** — This treatment applies heated chemotherapy directly into the affected area and has been shown to prolong survival in women with advanced ovarian cancer.<sup>5</sup>

**Radiation therapy** — Radiation uses high energy particles or waves to damage or destroy cancer cells. It can also be used after surgery to help prevent cancer from returning to the affected area or to manage pain, and may be done alone or in combination with other treatments such as chemotherapy.

- **Varian® linear accelerator and Novalis® Brainlab** — These innovative systems beam precision radiation directly to the tumor rather than radiating the entire body.

**Surgical care** — When cancer is found in one area of the body, surgery can be used to remove some or all of the tumor and surrounding tissue. If the cancer hasn't spread, this is one of the most effective treatments available.

- **CyberKnife®** — With this noninvasive, robotic radiosurgery system, we can deliver high doses of radiation to tumors with extreme accuracy. In Northern California, our CyberKnife facility performs one of the largest volumes of these procedures in the world, giving our teams a level of experience most facilities can't offer.
- **da Vinci® Surgical System** — Using a robotically assisted surgical device and a magnified 3-D high-definition vision system, our specialists can perform minimally invasive surgery using smaller, more precise movements and instruments that go beyond the limits of the human hand.

### Access to the highest number of clinical trials

Our Kaiser Permanente Oncology Clinical Trials Program is one of the largest programs of its kind on the west coast, enrolling up to 500 members each year. With KPStudySearch, you can set up alerts and review all of the clinical trials available to you as a member — online, anytime.

We have 120 physicians in Northern California who have published cancer research in peer-reviewed journals, and 12 scientists at the Kaiser Permanente Division of Research in Northern California dedicated to cancer.

## During and after treatment: Comprehensive, holistic support

Staying healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally is vital to your treatment and recovery. At Kaiser Permanente, you'll receive care for the whole you, with a full range of complementary care and support services that are designed to help nurture your well-being and maintain your quality of life. And we'll coordinate a comprehensive treatment road map, so your care is simple, easy to follow, and as stress-free as possible.

- **Health education** — Online and printed materials will help you understand the type of cancer you have, your diagnosis, what to expect from treatment, and more.
- **Nutrition and dietary counseling** — Good nutrition can improve energy levels, help manage side effects, and promote healing and recovery. Registered dietitians are available to help you design meal plans and make lifestyle modifications.
- **Support clinics and survivorship groups** — You can request outpatient counseling from a licensed clinical social worker to help with the psychological, emotional, and spiritual aspects of your care. And survivorship groups can help you connect with others experiencing the same journey as you are.
- **Targeted specialties** — Specialized care can help provide rehabilitation based on cancer-specific conditions, such as speech therapy for head and neck cancer.
- **Physical therapy** — Licensed physical therapists can help you regain your strength and recover from any physical side effects of treatment.
- **Pain management** — A wide range of methods, such as medication, acupuncture, massage, and relaxation techniques, can help provide you with some relief from the anxiety and pain that can often occur during and after treatment.
- **Psychiatric oncology** — Mental health clinicians can help you and your family cope with the effects cancer can have on both mental and physical health. Licensed psychiatrists can help with prescribing and monitoring psychiatric medications for adults.
- **Spiritual support** — Spiritual support is available from professional inpatient chaplains who are open to and respectful of all belief systems. And a quiet room is open at all times for prayer and meditation.

### Getting you to the care you need

If your Kaiser Permanente physicians refer you to a facility outside your service area, we'll cover your expenses, and can even arrange your travel for you.<sup>6</sup>

To learn more about our high-quality, personalized cancer care, please visit **cancercare.kaiserpermanente.org**.

<sup>1</sup> Some complementary services may incur a fee.

<sup>2</sup> Does not imply affiliation with or endorsement of these products.

<sup>3</sup> Kaiser Permanente 2014 HEDIS<sup>®</sup> scores. Benchmarks provided by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Quality Compass<sup>®</sup> and represent all lines of business. Kaiser Permanente combined region scores were provided by the Kaiser Permanente Department of Care and Service Quality. The source for data contained in this publication is Quality Compass 2014 and is used with the permission of NCQA. Quality Compass 2014 includes certain CAHPS<sup>®</sup> data. Any data display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion based on these data is solely that of the authors, and NCQA specifically disclaims responsibility for any such display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion. Quality Compass<sup>®</sup> and HEDIS<sup>®</sup> are registered trademarks of NCQA. CAHPS<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

<sup>4</sup> John K. Chan, MD, et al., "Influence of the Gynecologic Oncologist on the Survival of Ovarian Cancer Patients," *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, June 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Denise Grady, "Widespread Flaws Found in Ovarian Cancer Treatment," *The New York Times*, March 11, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Travel and lodging policy guidelines vary. Please see your *Evidence of Coverage* for more information.

Information may have changed since publication.