



Livestrong Cancer Navigation Center

A one-stop-shop for treatment, support and resources

By Kate Hull
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CENTRAL TEXAS — Gretchen Flatau remembers when dealing with husband Art Flatau's 1992 leukemia diagnosis meant trips to the library to find information and making countless phone calls to area doctors to discuss treatment plans.



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The Southwest Austin couple had to make the connections themselves. Now, Gretchen said, the missing links are readily available to those who need it because of the Livestrong Foundation.

On March 25, the couple celebrated the grand opening of the Livestrong Cancer Navigation Center, which helps cancer patients and their families find support, services and treatment options in one location and connects them to services in a convenient way to suit their personal needs.

The navigation center began offering services in November but held its official opening in March at the Livestrong Center, 2201 E. Sixth St. The center is the newest branch of

Livestrong, the advocacy nonprofit founded in 1997 by international professional cyclist, seven-time Tour de France winner and testicular cancer survivor Lance Armstrong.

"My journey to this building started in Austin in 1996 when I was diagnosed," Armstrong said at the opening. "And my journey down to the doctor's office [that day] was very similar to the journey people will make [to this center]. They will walk through these doors and have the very same questions that I had and they will want answers."

Those visitors will want to know what their chances of survival are, how they can afford the treatments they need and other questions about what to do next, he said. The center also offers support for the family members of those dealing with cancer.

Navigation Center Director Chris Dammert said the center wants to be a part of the community and a resource in Austin. "People can call us, go online or come into the center to meet one-on-one with our navigators to help connect them with all the resources they may need as they go through their cancer journey," he said.

The center works with medical providers across the city to coordinate care to help the patient and family facilitate a plan that fits with their specific needs, Dammert said.

The center has partnered with local and national nonprofits to provide additional services individuals may need such as helping to find health insurance.

Center staff also answer questions about fertility preservation, financial concerns and treatment, as well as provide emotional support.

Hoping to bridge the gap between a diagnosis and a plan, the navigation center is the first of its kind for cancer treatment and, if successful, will be duplicated around the country, Dammert said.

Inside the center's doors, photos of those affected, along with their personal testimonials underneath, decorate the walls. The center's motto hangs overhead in large yellow lettering: "It is one thing to live. It's another to live strong."

Livestrong Cancer Navigation Center
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- Wed Jun 08 @ 6:30PM - 08:30PM
Free IVF Orientation
- Thu Jun 09 @ 7:00PM - 08:30PM
Self-Healing Through Faith Lecture Series
- Fri Jun 10 @ 7:30AM -
BUSINESS BUILDER
- Fri Jun 10 @ 9:00AM - 09:00PM
2011 DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING CONFERENCE
- Fri Jun 10 @ 6:00PM -
2nd Annual Fox Fit Weekend
- Sat Jun 11 @ 9:00AM - 09:00PM
2011 DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING CONFERENCE
- Sat Jun 11 @ 9:00AM - 12:00PM
Maximized Living Makeover
- Sat Jun 11 @ 4:00PM -
"Pasi6n!" summer concert series
- Sun Jun 12 @ 12:00PM - 06:00PM
Bridal Extravaganza
- Wed Jun 15 @ 8:00AM - 05:00PM
Community lunch and dinner with Chef Alejandro of TNT / Tacos and Tequila