

## Supporting the University of Colorado Cancer Center

# Program of Excellence in Gynecologic Cancer

The Program of Excellence in Gynecologic Cancer (PEGoC) is a far-reaching, ambitious effort with the goal of helping eradicate the serious impact, consequences and cost of gynecologic cancer in the Rocky Mountain region. With its five-pronged approach—Prevention, Research, Detection, Treatment and Outreach—PEGoC is unique in its ability to address these important issues with one comprehensive coordination program. PEGoC is a program of the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine, Anschutz Medical Campus, Division of Gynecologic Oncology, and is located at the University of Colorado Cancer Center in Aurora.

### **For our Patients:** *PEGoC offers care, support and the benefit of the latest advances*

Our patients come primarily from Colorado and the surrounding states of the Rocky Mountain region. All patients have access to the resources of the CU Cancer Center including basic science research, patient support groups and affiliated therapies such as cancer nutrition, genetic counseling, and complementary and alternative medicine. Additionally, PEGoC is a full-participant member in cooperative groups such as NRG Oncology Group and the Phase II Consortium, giving patients access to leading-edge therapies.

### **5 essential elements of our patients' range of care:**

- **Prevention:** Genetic predisposition to gynecologic cancer can be detected by a careful family history, yet many are unaware of their risk. BRCA and HNPCC testing is offered through the Hereditary Cancer Clinic to identify those individuals at high risk of familial gynecologic cancer. As hereditary breast and ovarian cancer are sometimes seen in the same individuals, PEGoC works closely with the Hereditary Breast Cancer Clinic to identify those individuals with a predisposition for hereditary ovarian cancer. Also, proactive ovarian cancer risk-reducing surgery is available to our high-risk patients.
- **Detection:** A hallmark of the PEGoC program is early detection based upon the discovery of circulating tumor cells in the blood prior to the onset of metastases. Investigational technology may provide an important tool for early detection. Recent technology to detect as few as five cells per 10ml of blood has become available, although not yet tested for general use. The presence of these cells might be a more reproducible and reliable method of finding cancer before it has had a chance to spread. This is an active area of research in our program.
- **Treatment:** Patients receive access to cutting-edge drugs through participation in national group trials. Additionally, we continue to push the frontiers of science in searching for new treatments. Identification of genetic changes unique to the tumor cell and not shared by normal human cells will usher in the next breakthrough in gynecologic cancer treatment. We maintain a tumor bank to systematically study these changes and design new treatments. For example, our efforts identified the homeobox gene Six1 as elevated in tumor cells. We have found that this gene is instrumental in tumor progression and metastases and we are currently designing treatments to abolish its detrimental function.

PEGoC is a place where YOU can make a bigger difference for women with Gynecologic Cancer or those who are at risk.

With so many women at risk for Gynecologic Cancer, NOW is the time to make a commitment to PEGoC.



“The CU Cancer Center is a jewel of a facility—there’s no reason for anyone to travel outside of Colorado for the best possible care. There is a team approach, and the focus of every single person I have met has added to my feeling that I am being cared for by not only extremely qualified practitioners who are at the top of their fields, but by people who really cared about me. The Gyn/Onc program is the heart and soul of a top-notch academic medical center.”

**Carol Goldstein, RN, PhD**  
*Grateful Patient*

To learn about the many ways you can make a gift, contact:

**University of Colorado  
Anschutz Medical Campus  
Development Office**  
303-724-8227  
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University of Colorado  
Cancer Center

**Research:** Within PEGoC, research is a key element in comprehensively addressing gynecologic cancers. The PEGoC Gynecologic Tissue Bank is generated from blood and tissue samples collected from patients receiving treatment in PEGoC. These samples allow researchers to examine genes or proteins that may be important in the development of gynecologic cancer.

**Outreach:** Education remains the most cost-effective means of battling gynecologic cancer. PEGoC’s goal is to not only provide state-of-the-art care for our gynecologic cancer patients, but also to spread education about the symptoms of these cancers to patients and primary care providers.

With your support, we are planning an event highlighting Gynecologic Cancer Month each September.

### **The Gynecologic Oncology Fellowship Program**

In 2013, over 95,000 women were diagnosed with gynecologic cancer in the United States. Yet many women who need high-quality care do not have access to a gynecologic oncologist (there are only 11 gynecologic oncologists in the state of Colorado). An insufficient number of young doctors become gynecologic oncologists primarily because there are now only a few fellowship/training programs like ours at the University of Colorado.

CU Gynecologic Oncology fellows receive the country’s best training and education alongside some of the most renowned oncologists in the world. The goals of the Gynecologic Oncology Fellowship Program are:

1. To educate obstetrician-gynecologists in the comprehensive care of women with cancer of the reproductive organs.
2. To foster the development of future physician-scientists and leaders within the field of gynecologic oncology.

This training program is unique in the West: the nearest training programs for this specialty are in California to the West and Oklahoma to the East. A great expanse of the country has no training program other than ours, and our program is in jeopardy due to declining national funding. Our fellows are immersed in all aspects of gynecologic oncology: prevention, detection, treatment, research and outreach, ensuring that current patients and patients of the future will receive the highest level of care.

### **With Your Help, Success is Possible**

We must be bold and ambitious in order to create the positive outcomes we know are possible. Your investment at this time, in this place, will make a real difference.

