



Program Name:	St. Jude-VIVA Survivorship Series 4 Webinar #3
Event Date:	Friday, 30 January 2026
Event Time:	8:00pm – 9:30pm (Singapore Time)

Programme Synopsis

Lecture Title:

Diet in Pediatric Cancer Patients and Survivors – Why Does This Matter?

Prof Fang Fang Zhang, Tufts University

The presentation will discuss the current evidence on diet intake patterns and the role of diet in cardiometabolic conditions among pediatric cancer patients and survivors. The presentation will also provide an overview of the dietary guidelines for cancer survivors during and after treatment, and further discuss the design and impact of nutrition interventions on health outcomes of pediatric cancer patients and survivors.

Lecture Title:

Designing and delivering diet interventions in pediatric cancer patients and survivors

Dr Gabriel Lopez, MD Anderson Cancer Center

Pediatric cancer survivor numbers continue to grow with advances in both treatment and supportive care. However, nearly half a million childhood cancer survivors (CCS) living in the United States are at increased risk for poor health related quality of life and chronic health conditions including obesity and other obesity-related conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and subsequent cancers. Dietary intake is a modifiable behavior that can prevent and/or delay onset of chronic diseases. However, poor dietary patterns have been documented in CCS. CCS have been shown to exhibit poor diet quality, including excessive caloric intake and inadequate fruit and vegetable (FV) consumption. It has been suggested that future behavioral interventions must be personalized and emphasize peer support and social relationships including parental involvement.

The presentation will describe diet quality among cancer patients and survivors, with an emphasis on pediatric cancer patients and survivors. The design and rationale for nutrition interventions will be discussed, and recommendations will be offered to integrate nutrition assessments during and after cancer treatment for individuals diagnosed with cancer. Resources available to aid in nutrition education to cancer patients, survivors and caretakers will also be discussed.



Presenter Bio

Prof Fang Fang Zhang

Professor

The Neely Family Professor & Chair

Division of Nutrition Epidemiology and Data Science

Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy

Tufts University

USA

Dr. Zhang is a cancer epidemiologist with experience in conducting population-based studies and clinical trials to investigate the role of nutrition in cancer prevention and control.

She has led pioneering work that assessed dietary intake in adult survivors of childhood cancer and its associations with treatment exposure, chronic health conditions, and quality of life. Following her study that identified adult cancer survivors in the US have poor diet quality, she builds partnerships with key stakeholders in learning about the complex web of factors that influence the dietary intake patterns of cancer survivors.

Dr. Zhang is committed to translating scientific evidence into programs, practices, and policies. She has developed intervention programs that help parents transition their family into healthy eating soon after the child completes active cancer treatment, and is working on food is medicine interventions that integrate food and nutrition into oncology care through food-based interventions and nutrition counseling for vulnerable patients with cancer.

Dr. Zhang's research interests also include quantifying preventable cancer burden associated with suboptimal diet, assessing the cost-effectiveness of population strategies to improve diet and reduce cancer burden and disparities in the US, and evaluating the health, environmental, economic, and social impact of sustainable diet. Dr. Zhang's work has been highlighted in the NIH Director's Blog, NIH Research Matters, and NIMHD Community Health and Population Sciences Feature Articles.

Dr. Zhang received her PhD with distinction in Epidemiology from Columbia University. She directs the course on epidemiology methods for graduate students at Friedman School and School of Medicine and is a recipient of the Eileen O'Neil Citation for Excellence in Teaching. She is also the inaugural recipient of the Miriam E. Nelson Tisch Faculty Fellow from Tufts University.



Dr Joya Chandra

Professor

Department of Pediatrics, Division of Pediatrics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

USA

Joya Chandra, Ph.D., is a Professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center with a primary appointment in the Department of Pediatrics Research and a joint appointment in the Department of Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis. Translational research in her lab is directed towards leukemia and brain tumor therapeutics with an emphasis on cell signaling, oxidative stress, and epigenetics. She has provided key insights into how several classes of small molecule inhibitors can be deployed for cancer treatment including proteasome inhibitors, histone deacetylase inhibitors and histone demethylase inhibitors. The impact of modifiable behaviors during cancer treatment on therapy outcomes and on survivorship is a major focus of her lab and she carries out clinical research related to diet and nutrition for pediatric cancer patients and survivors. Dr. Chandra has published over one hundred scientific manuscripts, review articles and book chapters and serves on the editorial boards of four journals. She has developed unique nutrition related resources for cancer patients and survivors such as a web-based cookbook. At MD Anderson, she serves as co-Director of the Center for Energy Balance in Cancer Prevention and Survivorship. She is an active mentor to trainees of all levels and currently leads three NIH training grants.



Moderator

Dr Stephanie Dixon

**Assistant Member, Department of Oncology,
Division of Survivorship, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
USA**

Dr. Stephanie Dixon MD, MPH is an Assistant Member in the Division of Cancer Survivorship at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Dr. Dixon received her medical degree from the University of Michigan College of Medicine and her Master's of Public Health from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. She completed a combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency at the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati Children's Hospital followed by fellowship in pediatric hematology and oncology and childhood cancer survivorship at St. Jude. She joined the faculty at St. Jude in 2020 where her clinical care focuses on patients with lymphoma and survivors of childhood cancer. Dr. Dixon's research focus is in late mortality and cardiometabolic health outcomes in survivors of childhood cancer including translating findings from observational research into interventions to prevent or mitigate late-effects of treatment. Her combined experience in survivorship, internal medicine, obesity medicine and population health is uniquely suited for research focused on cardiometabolic outcomes and targets for intervention to reduce risk in children and adolescents being treated for cancer and survivors.