

# INNOVATION IN CANCER CARE CLOSE TO HOME

Innovative cancer care is exceptionally important as dedicated physicians work toward cures and better treatments. It is often a race against time. Locally headquartered Illinois CancerCare, P.C. is one of those innovators attacking cancer from many angles for the past 45 years. From the beginning, Illinois CancerCare has been dedicated to cancer research which means state-of-the-art opportunities for our community and better cancer treatment worldwide. Discoveries from cancer research are featured in national publications as they become the new standard in care for patients. Recently, Illinois CancerCare's Dr. Madhuri Bajaj was published in the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* for clinical research she brought to central Illinois. Illinois CancerCare physicians are also passionate about increasing accessibility of care for patients by traveling to clinic locations in central and western Illinois and introducing other ways to save the patient resources such as time and money. This past year, Illinois CancerCare's Dr. Bajaj and Dr. J co-founded the Multidisciplinary Clinic for Gastrointestinal Cancers that brings cancer specialists from Illinois CancerCare, Springfield Clinic, OSF HealthCare and UnityPoint Health in the same room with the patient to determine the best plan of action.

## CANCER RESEARCH

Illinois CancerCare is a national leader in cancer research with enrolled clinical trial participants double that of the national average. Over 40 years, this research has led to recognition in the most prestigious worldwide medical journals, including five publications in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM). In 2016, Dr. Bajaj was published in a landmark study that targeted two of a patient's biggest anxieties when starting chemotherapy: nausea and vomiting. Illinois CancerCare enrolled over thirty patients who by participating received medication before it became established as a standard treatment countrywide. The medication Olanzapine was proven to significantly lower occurrence of nausea and vomiting and is now a standard of care around the world. Recently, Dr. Bajaj and her colleagues submitted another clinical research study to the *New England Journal of Medicine* that will establish what the first and best treatment regimen will be for patients with advanced skin cancer (melanoma) – a disease Dr. Bajaj is tirelessly working to remedy. Last year, Dr. Bajaj was published in ASCO's (American Society of Clinical



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Oncology) *Journal of Clinical Oncology* for a treatment that uses immunotherapy to help a patient's own immune system stop or slow tumor growth when battling advanced melanoma. Dr. Bajaj recognizes the remarkable legacy of these local patients, **"This is the largest study of its kind and Illinois CancerCare was the top enrolling research site in the nation for this clinical trial. Our patients are making a difference in a major way!"**

## MULTIDISCIPLINARY CLINICS BRING EXPERTS TOGETHER

Two Illinois CancerCare physicians, Dr. Bajaj and Dr. J, have achieved a new level of collaboration in healthcare with their Multidisciplinary Cancer Clinic for gastrointestinal cancers. By bringing the cancer specialist, surgeon, radiation oncologist and nurse navigator together in one room with the patient, the clinic aims to ease the burden of navigating multiple appointments in various locations as well as offer the highest level of cancer treatment as it evolves over the course of patient's journey. Dr. Bajaj elaborates, **"We want to coordinate, package, and deliver care quickly, efficiently, as comprehensively, and to the highest level of quality as possible.** That is really the goal of this clinic and why it got started."



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EXPERTS IN  
CANCER RESEARCH