

## **Getting Well Together: An Online Support Group for Breast Cancer Patients with Limited Access to Support Programs**

In the Prairies and Northwest Territories, there are many women living with breast cancer in rural or remote areas, who have limited access to support and education programs for a variety of reasons. These often include being busy, living too far from a large treatment centre, having limited access to transportation, or not feeling well from treatment. The internet is quickly becoming a way for women with breast cancer to access support from the comfort of their own home.

Our study, "Getting Well Together" is being conducted out of the Alberta Cancer Board and CancerCare Manitoba. It is a web-based pilot study comparing the benefits of participating in an online skills and support group to those obtained by completing a home based coping skills course. These two approaches can help women cope during their breast cancer journey and are accessible to women who may not otherwise have access to psychosocial support.

The study is led by clinical psychologists Dr. Michael Specca of the Tom Baker Cancer Centre in Calgary and Dr. Jill Turner of the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton and in collaboration with others at Cancer Care Manitoba, the BC Cancer Agency, and The Wellness Community. It is funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Prairies/NWT Division. This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary and the Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba.

If you are a woman diagnosed with breast cancer within the last three years and who has access to the internet you may be eligible to participate. Participation is free of charge.

Our next groups are scheduled to begin in early March 2009.

For more information check out the study website:

<http://canada.thewellnesscommunity.org/prairies>

Interested women should call 1-877-355-3214 (toll free) or e-mail:

[osgstudy@cancerboard.ab.ca](mailto:osgstudy@cancerboard.ab.ca)

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