



Jim Robeson CLU, ChFC

The Medicare Answer Guy

# MEDICARE NEWS

February 2020 Edition

## America's Newest Tool Against Cancer: Ion Therapy

There is a new alternative to surgery for cancer, and it is said it is the next horizon in cancer care. Our country's first carbon ion therapy center to treat cancer is being built in collaboration with Hitachi on the campus of the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida. The cancer therapy treatment will be part of Mayo's new \$233 million oncology facility. An alternative to surgery, this new treatment has the capability of killing cancer cells that are resistant to traditional radiation therapy. Yet the US has been slow to adopt the treatment even though the technology was developed in California in 1975. According to experts, carbon ion therapy damages the DNA of fast-growing cancer cells, ultimately destroying them. But unlike older forms of radiation, this technique causes minimal harm to normal tissue. Studies also suggest it triggers an immune response against cancer.

The plan is to put together a national Scientific Advisory Board composed of doctors and scientists from the US and abroad to study the efficacy and safety of the treatment and secure FDA approval so the treatment can be offered in 2025. It should also be noted that Mayo Clinic radiation oncologists and physicists have been studying carbon ion treatment in Asia and Europe for nearly a decade. Mayo already has developed a high level of expertise in treatment planning and delivery. Mayo Clinic's Jacksonville oncology center will also include proton beam therapy for cancer patients so it can offer the full spectrum of treatment options.

America has lagged because it has been difficult to obtain federal funds or sufficient private backing to develop such facilities. The lack of scientific research and scientific efficacy has also been a factor. What has flourished instead is a related approach called proton therapy, which also uses charged particles and has some of the same benefits. Today 31 US proton centers offer treatment for cancers in areas where radiation damage to surrounding normal tissue could be dangerous or even deadly, such as tumors at the base of the skull or tumors in young children.

My goal with  
this newsletter  
is to:

1

**KEEP YOU  
INFORMED**

I will be sharing current  
articles about the  
changes in Medicare.

2

**ANSWER YOUR  
QUESTIONS**

I'm available to answer  
issues specific to you.

3

**STAY  
CONNECTED**

I want to make  
Medicare coverage as  
simple as possible.

(858) 935-9120



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## BIRTHDAYS

Rebecca B

Robert P

Nancy J

Bradley J

Randy J

John M

Feliza R

Garold H

Jack M

Ismene V

Vickie W

Sue B

Cole W

Leah O

Martin C

Don W

Ion Therapy article continued...

Carbon ion therapy is similarly precise, but because carbon ions are heavier and 12 times the size, they deliver more cancer-killing power than protons do many experts say. Carbon centers have reported impressive survival rates, particularly for hard to treat bone and soft-tissue cancers such as spinal tumors.

The therapy involves accelerating carbon ions to near the speed of light, then “painting” a tumor with the radiation beam. Accelerated particles deliver their energy in a sort of delayed burst called a Bragg peak, so that very little damage occurs to normal tissue as the beam enters the body in a thin stream at a high velocity, and the killing power is concentrated on the tumor, where the particle track stops. (Traditional radiation damages tissue as the beam enters and exits the body, although radiologists use techniques to minimize the damage.) Clearly, the interest in the field is gearing up in the US, The Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York has collaborated with the Shanghai Proton and Heavy Ion Center in China to conduct a Phase 1 trial of carbon ion therapy to treat pancreatic cancer.

## Local Events

### San Diego Theatre Week

February 13 - 23

More than 30 San Diego performing arts organizations have come together to collaborate on and promote the fourth annual San Diego Theatre Week, a celebration of performing arts that will serve to promote the vast array of performing arts in the city.





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## ***Local Events continued...***

### **Museum Month**

Month of February

Half-Off Admission to 40+ Museums

San Diego area residents and visitors are in for a special treat in February! Pick up your Museum Month discount pass at any of the local libraries. The San Diego Museum Month pass is free.

### **San Diego Bird Festival**

February 26 - March 1

The San Diego Audubon Society invites you to the San Diego Bird Festival, which celebrates the birds and habitats of San Diego county. We're celebrating the birds and habitats of our county, which truly offer some of the best birding in the United States. Know that your experience is giving something back to the birds: the proceeds of this festival support the education, conservation, and sanctuary programs of San Diego Audubon Society. We thank you for your support, and hope to meet you at the Festival.

### **35th Annual Spring Home/Garden Show**

March 6-8

*Senior Special: Friday only is \$1*

Now in its 35th year, the Spring Home/Garden Show returns to Del Mar Fairgrounds for a three-day extravaganza of inspiring real "Garden Masters" landscapes (created exclusively for the Show), hands-on demonstrations, hundreds of home-improvement products and services exhibitors, educational seminars, plant sales and face-to-face consultations with top experts – all with the convenience of one-stop shopping for everything pertaining to home and garden, inside and outside.



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## Marde Gras Eats

### Cajun Chicken Pasta

4 ounces linguine pasta  
2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves  
2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning  
2 tablespoons butter  
1 red bell pepper, sliced  
1 green bell pepper, sliced  
4 fresh mushrooms, sliced  
1 green onion, chopped  
1 cup heavy cream  
1/4 teaspoon dried basil  
1/4 teaspoon lemon pepper  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese



### Directions

Prep: 20 min

Cook: 20 min

Ready in: 40 min

- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain.
- Place the chicken and the Cajun seasoning in a plastic bag. Shake to coat. In a large skillet over medium heat, saute the chicken in butter or margarine until almost tender (5 to 7 minutes).
- Add the red bell pepper, green bell pepper, mushrooms and green onion. Saute and stir for 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce heat.
- Add the cream, basil, lemon pepper, salt, garlic powder, and ground black pepper. Heat through. Add the cooked linguine, toss, and heat through. Sprinkle with grated

**JIM  
ROBESON  
CLU, CHFC**

### MEDICARE MADE EASY

10755 Scripps Poway Pkwy #617  
San Diego, CA 92131 | (858) 935-9120  
jim@themedicareanswerguy.com  
themedicareanswerguy.com