

Lois Kearney & Family Mission Impossible

Celebrating 10 years after advanced lung cancer

Dear Dr. T,

On the tenth anniversary of being a cancer survivor, my husband and I are grateful to be in the Pacific Northwest spending time with our three beloved children, spouses and six adorable grandchildren. This, of course prevents me from being with you on the very special evening as the Beckstrand Cancer Foundation is honoring our own very special "Dr. T." Every patient, family member, and human being, privileged to know you acknowledges your professionalism, expertise, thoroughness and sensitivity; it truly is who you are.

My journey with you began in October 1994 as I faced a stage IV lung cancer diagnoses. You aggressively took me down the path with the best medical care possible. Yes, I became part of your family at Pacific Shores Medical Group along with your wonderful, incredibly caring staff. After two years of chemotherapy, radiation and two surgeries and the overflowing, love and support of family and friends, I was in remission. Dr. T, I trusted you with my life, you left no stone unturned. For this, I am eternally grateful! Yes, I so consider myself your star patient, one of your many many success stories.

Congratulation to my hero, my best to your lovely wife and beautiful family on this well deserved honor

A heartfelt thanks, forever,
Lois Kearney

Dr. Tchekmedyan and his staff are a remarkable group of people. In 1994, my wife Heidi and I were married and at the same time my mom was diagnosed with cancer. It was the happiest and saddest of times, but through Dr. Tchekmedyan's amazing medical technology and the emotional and physical support of his staff my mom is now cancer free. She and my Dad have traveled from Argentina to Alaska, spent many mornings enjoying coffee and the newspaper and have seen their children marry and become parents. The best part is that she has become "GRAMMA" to six grandchildren. There are not enough "Thank You's" for helping our Mom become healthy and continuing to be a part of our growing lives for the last ten years.

Thank you again,
Pat Kearney (Lois's son)

Dr. T,

If my mother, Lois Kearney, had died of the cancer which was raging through her just ten years ago, she never would have seen my two children. They in turn would have missed out having a truly amazing grandma.

During those years I have really come to appreciate how blessed we were that Dr. Tchekmedyan was there for us during that difficult time. He was honest, upbeat, and indefatigable. Hope, prayer, love, and especially Dr. T. made the difference between being able to enjoy regular visits with Grandma Lois, and only envisioning what a wonderful grandmother she would have been.

Signed,
Steve Kearney (Lois's son)

Dear Dr. T,

I will never forget the Sunday evening when you called my Mom to see how she was doing after her chemotherapy treatment. I thought, "you have six children, it is a Sunday evening and you are calling to see how my Mom is feeling? Unbelievable! Thank you for helping our mother, Dr. T! We love you and your incredible staff. You have become my Mom's "second family" and that has made an enormous impact on her morale.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Moaddeli (Lois's daughter)



Con and Lois Kearney & Family

Winning the Battle Over Desmoid Tumor

Last week I talked with a colleague about his wife's health battle with a desmoid tumor diagnosis three years ago. I was astonished to find someone else had this disease and was struggling to find the best treatment and doctor; it was the same struggle I faced years ago.

This compelled me to write to you, Doctor T. I hope by thanking you for your compassion and expertise, I can empower others who may be diagnosed with this mysterious tumor. I vividly recall the day I was told "You have a desmoid tumor."

After the initial shock wore off, my husband and I researched the disease. There was little information about desmoids and most of it was dated. I learned that in the past the most common form of treatment was amputation. I immediately knew that couldn't be an option because the tumor was smack dab on my buttocks. As much as I complain about my derriere, the idea of keeping it intact became very appealing. Thank goodness amputation was no longer practiced!

I learned there were few places that treated this type of tumor. I found two doctors that offered two different choices, an experimental drug or chemotherapy. I wasn't comfortable with either option, so I decided to get a third opinion from Dr. T.

The third opinion was definitely a charm. I depended on Dr. T. to dispel my anxiety and fears. He helped me understand the process that led me to be tumor free.

When the tumor was first diagnosed, I was a first-time mom of a baby girl. My daughter is now three years old. Like most moms of a toddler, I am busy experiencing the different stages of her growth.

Getting through that stage of my life took great love from my family, friends, neighbors, strength from within, and a remarkable doctor who helped me through it.

Dr. T, I know doctors have busy schedules. But when I was under your treatment, I became your only focus from the moment you walked into the examining room. Your expression said everything, "We're going to conquer this together!" And we did!

With enduring gratitude,

One of your patients.

Dr. Tchekmedyan's Response

Over the past 20 years, I have treated several patients with desmoid tumors. The tumor is a rare growth that usually affects young women. It can happen in the abdomen or the pelvis, and predominantly affects the muscles. Sometimes it requires extensive surgery, but it can grow back. When it does, it is sometimes impossible to remove it surgically.

Because the tumors are so rare, few physicians have experience with it. Furthermore, there are not many patients for research to be performed with any level of frequency.

In this case, we were able to control and eventually eliminate a very large, recurrent desmoid tumor that was not responding to previously administered therapies. The tumor had recurred despite extensive previous surgery and was not responding to hormonal and other treatments administered prior to our evaluation.

With a modified, low-dose chemotherapeutic, long-term program, we were able to slowly, but completely eliminate the tumor. This patient is now disease free and enjoying a normal quality of life.

This was not the first time I used this treatment with patients who have desmoid tumors. About 15 years ago, I treated a patient who had a recurrent desmoid wrapped around her entire thigh and right groin area. She was facing an amputation because of the extent of the disease. But with a modified regimen of low-dose treatment over a period of two years, we were able to control the disease and were able to declare her disease free without any surgical procedure.