

# [Cō'lon] Cancer Patient

## The Sacred Garden

Learning that one has cancer is devastating; discovering later that one's cancer is incurable is even more sobering, as I have found. Thankfully, at this time my cancer is stable and contained! I am deeply grateful for the wonderful care I have received from Dr. Petar Vukasin, my surgeon, and Dr. Kalust Ucar, my oncologist, and the entire Pacific Shores /Glendale staff; they are competent, caring and fun! I have learned to reorganize my priorities and reduce my commitments to the realities of my limits and strength. I have tried to take my "losses" with grace and enjoy the memories of what I used to do and be deeply grateful for all I did do in my life before cancer. Equally, I have been learning how to live with the attitude of "one day at a time" in ways not required of a person without an incurable disease. This is an important and spiritual struggle. Chief among its results is my deep, daily gratitude for the presence of God in my life, my family, and my rich circle of friends. Perhaps one could say that I have a significantly increased sense of gratitude for the joys of the past and a profound appreciation for what I am and for what I will yet enjoy.

by David M. Scholer, PhD

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### DOCTOR'S COMMENTARY

by Kalust Ucar, MD

"Do you think I have any chance of watching the next Olympics in China four years from now?" Dr. Scholer asked me last year while we were discussing his treatment for rectal cancer that had spread to his lungs. A simple question, however, a difficult one for any oncologist to answer. The challenge we face every day is to find a treatment that will control the cancer even when it is incurable, and allow the patient to have a good quality of life despite treatments. Cancer has the biggest impact on the person who is facing it, but also on family members; invariably, it has a direct impact on the nurses and oncologists as well. In many instances now, with the advent of new, more effective, and better-tolerated therapies, we are able to tell our patients that it is possible to control their disease for prolonged periods.



### Facts about Colon cancer

Colon cancer is the third most common cancer in both men and women. You should seek medical attention immediately if you experience blood in your stool or a change in your bowel habits, unexplained weight loss, narrowing of stool diameter, or abdominal pains. These are the warning signs of colon cancer. A history of colon polyps may increase your risk of developing colon cancer. A screening colonoscopy is recommended for most people over 50. It can help detect polyps, premalignant conditions, and early cancers.