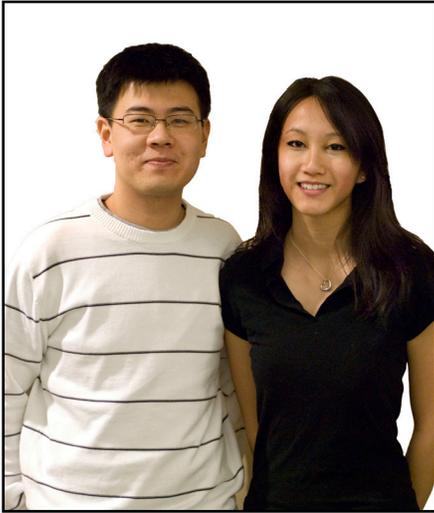


Dear Reader,



What does cancer mean to you? It can affect the ones that we are closest to, the ones that we love, and for many of us it already has. We always hear about this disease – another risk factor, another therapy, another statistic. It is easy to get lost in this sea of information without fully appreciating the evolving knowledge on cancer. Today, the incidence of cancer is growing, but the rate of cancer mortality is decreasing with better treatment options*. This issue, in collaboration with the McMaster Cancer Society (MCS), strives to uncover the current advancements and concerns in the field of oncology.

Specifically, the origin of cancer is discussed, with an investigation into the cancer stem cell hypothesis. Those interested in targeting cancer cells can explore the therapeutic potential of oncolytic viruses, nanovectors, and the Kanzius machine. Additionally, important issues surrounding the ethics of palliative surgery and other psychosocial implications of cancer are described. This issue provides an overview of cancer therapies and other implications during recovery.

This special issue materialized through the joint effort of the McMaster Meducator and the McMaster Cancer Society. The goals of MCS are to support those impacted by cancer and bring awareness to the various issues surrounding this disease. While the society organizes several annual events, such as the Pink Ribbon Campaign and Cranes for Cancer, they continuously provide cancer information to others through a monthly newsletter and website (www.maccancersociety.com). Now, the Meducator provides an additional medium for which students and the community can learn more about the clinical issues and current research within the rapidly expanding field of oncology.

Since this issue is completed funded by community donations, we would like to thank those who donated towards the printing and production of this special issue. Without your support and generosity, we could not educate our readers on the ethical concerns and promising research in cancer.

Finally, please visit our website, www.meducator.org, to see past issues, find information about submitting articles, and read our MedBulletins. The website also provides a form for inquiries and comments; we want to hear from our readers! On behalf of the writers and staff, we truly hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

Crystal Chung
BHSc IV

Kevin Wang (MCS President)
BHSc III

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*Canadian Cancer Society/National Cancer Institute of Canada: Canadian Cancer Statistics 2008, Toronto, Canada, 2008.