

Pancreatic Cancer Research Project



at WCHN

A Three-Year Screening Study in High-Risk Individuals
Including those with Recent-Onset Diabetes Mellitus

Hope for
tomorrow
starts **today.**

Pancreatic Cancer

is one of the most lethal of human malignancies. The fourth leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States, pancreatic cancer has a five-year survival rate of less than 10%.

- Pancreatic cancer is on a trajectory to become the **second leading cause** of cancer deaths in the United States by 2020, and **Connecticut** currently ranks **first** (tied) in pancreatic cancer **incidence** in the U.S.
- Although pancreatic cancer is **curable** when detected at a **very early stage**, no effective means currently exist for pancreatic cancer **screening** in the general population, and pancreatic cancer causes few symptoms until in its **latest stages**.
- **80%** of individuals with pancreatic cancer are diagnosed at **Stage III or Stage IV**.

About the Research Project

- Led by **Richard C. Frank, MD** hematologist/oncologist and the Director of Clinical Cancer Research at the **WCHN Biomedical Research Institute** and Norwalk Hospital's **Whittingham Cancer Center**.
- Focused on individuals with a family history of pancreatic cancer and those with recent-onset diabetes mellitus.
- Will utilize annual magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exams as a screening tool to detect early pancreatic cancer.
- Will create an invaluable serum bio-bank from individuals prior to and at the time of a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.

Anticipated Results:

- Better clinical understanding of risk factors for "sporadic" pancreatic cancer.
- Potential to inform widespread adoption of MRI as a screening tool, which could lead to the **first-ever reduction** in mortality from pancreatic cancer.
- A serum bio-bank with the potential to support the development of novel biomarkers for use in detecting pancreatic cancer at its earliest stages.
- Potential for collaboration with other hospitals and research institutions.

Richard C. Frank, MD

Before joining Norwalk Hospital in 2000, Dr. Frank was an attending physician at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, where he was awarded a National Institutes of Health Physician-Scientist Grant for Research. He graduated from Harvard College and from the State University of New York at Stony Brook School of Medicine, where he received an MD with Distinction in Research.



Western Connecticut
Health Network

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