A KUMC researcher is finding ways to incorporate breast cancer prevention into a comfortable postmenopausal life.

Carol Fabian, MD, director, Breast Cancer Prevention Center, announced a promising new means of postmenopausal breast cancer prevention at the 27th Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium held Dec. 7-11.

The announcement comes on the heels of Fabian’s pilot study of the drug Letrozole (Femara) in high-risk postmenopausal women taking hormone replacement therapy. The study involved 24 women who had abnormal, but not cancerous, cell growth within their breasts and were taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT). They were given six months of Letrozole, an aromatase inhibitor, and continued on HRT. The main study endpoint was change in the rate of abnormal cell growth.

The results are promising. Fabian and her research team found that Letrozole actually reduced the rate of growth of these abnormal cells even while patients continued taking HRT.

This is a significant finding for women struggling to be healthy and combat the symptoms of menopause. Hormone replacement markedly reduces menopausal symptoms but is not usually recommended for high-risk women because it elevates their risk for cancer.

Scientists have recently discovered that estrogen is produced in the breast by the aromatase enzyme, and breast tissue estrogen levels can be 50 times higher than in the blood. Letrozole cuts estrogen production in the breast and lowers tissue levels even while women are taking hormones.

“This may be a kinder, gentler antihormonal therapy for breast cancer prevention …” Carol Fabian

breast cancer while also combating insomnia, hot flashes, decreased libido and other problems of menopause.”

Fabian’s pilot study is only a first step. The next step is proving that women on HRT taking Letrozole develop fewer precancerous areas in the breast than those taking hormone replacement plus a placebo.

“These results are very exciting and were well received at the San Antonio Breast Symposium,” said Roy Jensen, MD, director, Kansas Masonic Cancer Research Institute. “This study suggests that we may be able to reduce the slightly increased risk for breast cancer in women taking HRT by adding an aromatase inhibitor.”

Fabian’s announcement at the San Antonio conference is just a beginning. Now that initial results indicate that Letrozole is a viable alternative to traditional breast cancer prevention, the next step would be a nationwide clinical trial.
Student Research Forum

Abstract submission deadlines are approaching for the annual Student Research Forum (SRF), a symposium produced by all students on the KUMC campus.

Students from the schools of Medicine, Graduate Studies, Allied Health and Nursing are invited to participate. The SRF provides an opportunity for students to organize and present their research to a general audience in the form of classroom and poster presentations.

The SRF begins April 7 with oral presentations by students followed by the A.L. Chapman Keynote Speaker, Esther M. Sternberg, MD, from noon-1:30 p.m. Poster presentations will be in the evening. The April 8 session will include a workshop and an awards banquet honoring students with the best presentations in each disciplinary category.

Abstract deadlines are Jan. 28 for oral presentations and Feb. 4 for poster presentations. Students should submit abstracts online at www.kumc.edu/student/GSC/SRF2005/submission.html.

Cardiac Consults

Staff at The University of Kansas Hospital may now call a cardiac consult pager at 917-3089 to request a consult from the cardiology physician making rounds.

Nurses will triage calls and assign patients to the appropriate cardiac rounding physician.

Use of the consult pager will expedite patient care and provide additional resources for nurses.

Hematology/Oncology Nurses Receive Excellence Awards

Two University of Kansas Hospital nurses were honored for nursing excellence in hematology and oncology during a Dec. 9 awards reception.

Carleen Keese, RN, Cancer Center, and Margo Sweany, RN, Unit 42, were presented the 2004 Award for Excellence in Hematology and Oncology Nursing. The ceremony began with tributes from Tajquah Hudson, senior vice president, Business and Strategic Development; Stephen Williamson, MD, medical director, Cancer Center; Tammy Peterman, RN, chief nurse executive; and nominating nurse managers Marci Bailey, RN, Cancer Center; and Dana Cunningham, RN, Unit 42.

“You inspire us all to be more professional and compassionate to our patients each and every day,” commended Williamson.

The award was established by the division of Hematology/Oncology and has received additional contributions from The University of Kansas Hospital Cancer Center physicians, pharmacists and grateful patients. The fund is administered by the KU Endowment Association.

The annual $1,000 awards are given to two full- or part-time nurses who work in inpatient or outpatient care in the following areas: the Cancer Center, Radiation Oncology, Unit 42, Hematology Marrow Transplant and the KU MedWest Cancer Center.

Nominations are reviewed by a selection committee that looks for exceptional performance in the Five-Star areas of service, people, quality, cost and growth.
Hagen Tribute

State, campus and community leaders gathered to honor retiring KUMC Executive Vice Chancellor Donald Hagen, MD, at a luncheon tribute Dec. 14 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. During the event, Hagen announced the establishment of the Mayor Carol Marinovich Good Neighbor Award, a $5,000 annual award given to a KUMC student group in support of an outstanding community service project in Wyandotte County. Pictured, from left, are Dorothy Knoll, PhD, dean of students; Alan Zidek, second-year physical therapy student; Carol Marinovich, mayor, Unified Government of Wyandotte County County and Kansas City, Kan.; Hagen; and Teresa Orth, fourth-year MD/PhD student. Zidek and Orth are co-presidents of the KUMC Student Governing Council and helped with the award presentation. Hagen retires Dec. 31 after 10 years of service to KUMC. The University's Dec. 17 holiday party will give the faculty and staff an opportunity to say good-bye to Hagen and his wife, Karen. The celebration, “The Hagen Polar Express,” will be held from 2-5 p.m. in the School of Nursing Atrium.

Rodriguez Earns Respiratory Therapy Honor

Respiratory care is more than a profession for Homer Rodriguez, RRT, director of Respiratory Therapy at The University of Kansas Hospital. It is a lifelong dedication that has earned him national recognition.

During a Dec. 5 ceremony in New Orleans, the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) presented Rodriguez with the prestigious 2004 Robert H. Miller RRT Award. The annual award recognizes respiratory care practitioners who have been instrumental in serving and shaping the profession.

Rodriguez’s dedication to the field and his help establishing Respiratory Therapy credentialing programs and national boards in Central and South America made him a strong candidate for the award.

He also helped establish the Latin American Board for Professional Certification in Respiratory Therapy.

This award follows many others throughout his respiratory care career. Rodriguez is a former member of the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts’ Respiratory Care Council, past president of the Kansas Respiratory Care Society, former NBRC member and current member of the International Respiratory Care Council and honorary Fellow of the American Association for Respiratory Care.
### Classifieds, etc.

#### Automotive

- **1997 Chevy Astro conversion van**: 88K miles, full power, AC, rear heat/AC, tilt steering, running boards, bucket seats, 3rd-row seating, tinted glass, $6,800. 816-578-4362.
- **1984 Ford E-150 van**: 174K miles, 351 V-8, good tires, new brakes, rough body, some rust, interior tool shelving, trailer hitch, runs well, $725. 913-220-0220.

#### For Sale

- Bocceball on 51"x37"x2" game table, 2001 "toy of the year," excellent condition, $60; Sears X-Cargo car-top carrier, includes clamps, good condition, $25. 816-525-2177.
- Bowflex XTL, accessories/instruction manual/video included, barely used, excellent condition, $600 OBO. Leave message at 913-789-7419.
- Beautiful Overland Park 2-story, treed lot, fence, sprinkler system, 4 BR, 2 1/2 BA, finished basement with 1/2 bath, large deck/patio, walk to park/school/Oak Park Mall, April occupancy, $240,000. 913-541-9655.
- House in nice area near KUMC, 2 BR, garage, patio, 1,000 sq. ft., nice kitchen, fireplace, available Jan. 1, $900/month. 913-677-0564.
- House, 83rd and Metcalf, 2 BR, 1 1/2 BA, LR with fireplace, large kitchen/new appliances, fenced-in patio, small pets welcome, $775/month. 913-219-5021.
- Cute 2 BR house, walking distance to KUMC, all new amenities, garage, nice yard, $875/month. 816-686-4333.

#### For Rent

- House, 83rd and Metcalf, 2 BR, 1 1/2 BA, LR with fireplace, large kitchen/new appliances, fenced-in patio, small pets welcome, $775/month. 913-219-5021.
- 2 BR townhouse with 2 1/2 BA, 15 minutes from KUMC, north of the river in KC, must be nonsmoker and OK with small dog, rent $375, utilities $150/month (electric/water/trash/cable). 816-510-1100.
- House, 83rd and Metcalf, 2 BR, 1 1/2 BA, LR with fireplace, large kitchen/new appliances, fenced-in patio, small pets welcome, $775/month. 913-219-5021.

#### Free

- 3 tickets to Chiefs final home game in December. 913-897-5163.

#### IN THE CENTER

- **Irene M. Cumming**
  - President and CEO
  - The University of Kansas Hospital
- **Donald Hagen, MD**
  - Executive Vice Chancellor
  - Medical Center
- **Laura Coffey**, Editor
- **Carolyn Collins**, Internal Communications Manager
- **Kirk Buster**, Graphic Design
- **Jan Lewis**, Editorial Manager
- **Val Rentz**, Senior Writer
- **Mary King**, Communications Services Director

*In The Center* is a weekly employee publication published by The University of Kansas Hospital’s Communications Services Department. Send story ideas to Laura Coffey, Bldg. 48, Room 1074, e-mail lcoffey@kumc.edu or call 8-0446.

### Coming Up

#### Thursday, Dec. 16
- **Clinical Trials Educational Lecture Series:** “Investigator-Initiated Research: Pearls and Wisdom from Both Sides of Proposal,” Tom E. Peddicord, PharmD, FCCP, noon-1 p.m., Clendening Auditorium.
- **“Novel Inductive Mechanisms in Kidney Development.”** Jordan Kreidberg, MD, PhD, 4-5 p.m., Orr-Major 1025.
- **Senior health services counseling:** 9 a.m.-noon, outside cafeteria. For more information, contact Maxine Williams at 8-5949.

#### Friday, Dec. 17
- **Pediatric Grand Rounds:** “Overview of Omega-3 Fatty Acids in Maternal and Infant Nutrition,” Susan Carlson, PhD, 8-9 a.m., Lied Auditorium.
- **Psychiatry Grand Rounds:** “Medical Cost Offset of Mental Health Services,” William Stiers, PhD, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Sudler Auditorium.
- **Biochemistry Formal Seminar:** “Siderophore Biosynthesis by ‘Pseudomonas Aeruginosa’” Audrey Lamb, PhD, 11 a.m.-noon, Orr-Major 1023.
- **Landon Center on Aging Research Seminar Series:** “Compensatory Brain Activation After Stroke,” noon-1 p.m., School of Nursing 1050.

#### Tuesday, Dec. 21
- **Surgery Grand Rounds:** Niaz Selim, MD, 7-8 a.m., Clendening Auditorium.

#### Wednesday, Dec. 22
- **Hospital holiday party, “Celebrate the Sharing,”** 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m. See invitation for location.