

An Update on Cancer in American Indians and Alaska Natives, 1999–2004

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The opinions or views expressed in this supplement are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or recommendations of the journal editors, the American Cancer Society, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Native Art for Cancer Project created by Native People for Cancer Control



Roger Fernandes (Lower Elwha Klallam), *Slapu the Terrible Monster*, 2006,
acrylic ink on paper, 14 inches x 11 inches

“In this painting, Slapu, the mythical monster of the Klallam people of Washington State, represents cancer. The eight green and orange crabs circling Slapu’s face symbolize the community working together to defeat the monster. In the traditional Klallam tale, a little girl and an elder crab fisherman and his crabs outwit the monster and send it to the bottom of the ocean. While western societies may view a crab as a symbolic representation of cancer, the Klallam tale overturns that expectation. Just as the crabs work with the community to defeat the monster Slapu, so can tribal community members work together to defeat cancer through education, screening, and treatment.”

Roger Fernandes

Native People *for* Cancer Control

WORKING TO CONTROL CANCER THROUGH EDUCATION,
PREVENTION, ACCESS TO CARE, AND RESEARCH



"Healing Mother", 1994, colored pencil and mixed media by Roger Fernandes (Lower Elwha Klallam).
Artwork courtesy of the artist and the Seattle Indian Health Board.
ARTIST STATEMENT: This piece is a multi-tribal expression of the belief of many Native people that the earth is a loving mother who cares for all her children.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BREAST CANCER

- *Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among American Indian and Alaska Native women*
- *Every woman is at risk for breast cancer*

EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION

- *All women should be screened for breast cancer*
- *Ask your doctor or nurse about a mammogram (x-ray of the breast).*

Roger Fernandes (Lower Elwha Klallam), *Healing Mother*, 1994

The Native Art for Cancer project features Native art on brochures, posters, and printed materials to raise cancer awareness and increase cancer prevention activities. Working together with researchers at Native People for Cancer Control, Native artists are sharing their creativity and stories to help fight cancer in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The pages following the manuscripts in this supplement highlight the work of these artists.

Native People *for* Cancer Control

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Grandmother © (from the series Portraits Against Amnesia®), 2003. Lambda digital print, 30 x 20 inches. Hulleah Tsinhabjinnie (Seminole/Muskogee/Navajo) "Grandmother" artwork courtesy of the artist.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER

- Cervical cancer is almost always caused by Human Papillomavirus, or HPV.
- Sexually active girls and women are at risk for HPV.
- American Indian and Alaska Native women with cervical cancer die twice as often as other women in the United States.

CERVICAL CANCER CAN BE DETECTED EARLY AND PREVENTED

- A Pap test detects cervical cancer early and takes only a few minutes.
- A vaccine for girls and women 9 to 26 years old can prevent infection with HPV.
- The vaccine works best if it is given before a girl or woman becomes sexually active.
- Ask your health care provider about a Pap test and the HPV vaccine.

“**T**his work pays tribute to Grandmother McGirt, who died of cancer in 1963.”

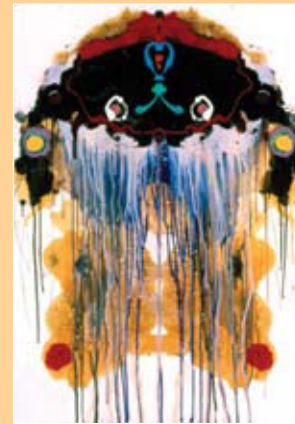
Hulleah Tsinhabjinnie
(Seminole/Muskogee/
Navajo) *Grandmother*, 2003

“**M**Y WORK REFLECTS both the inner and outer beauty of Native American people and the importance of practicing good health in transcending this universal beauty. In ancient days, toxins were few and tobacco was used for special occasions during rituals... and it only seems fitting that the magic of tobacco not be abused.”

Neil Parsons
(Southern Pikunni/Blackfeet)
Medicine Shield, 2004

Native People *for* Cancer Control

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Medicine Shield ©, 2004. 44 x 30 inches, acrylic on paper, Neil Parsons (Southern Pikunni/Blackfeet). Courtesy of the Rides-At-The-Door Collection.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LUNG CANCER

- Lung cancer kills more American Indians and Alaska Natives than any other cancer.
- Even if you don't smoke, just being around other people's smoke increases your risk of lung cancer.
- Parents who smoke around their children increase the chances their children will smoke.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT LUNG CANCER

- If you smoke, the best thing you can do is quit.
- Encourage all people, especially youth and parents, not to smoke.
- Ask your health care provider about ways to quit smoking.

A CONTEMPORARY

Southwestern canvas and denim
quilt from the 1994 exhibition
titled *Traditions Rewoven/
Rewoven Traditions*.

Conrad House
(Navajo)
1958-2000

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Untitled[®], 1994, canvas and denim, 60 x 60 inches, Conrad House (Navajo)
Private Collection. Photo: Ken Wagner.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CANCER CLINICAL TRIALS

- Cancer clinical trials are research studies that help answer questions about new ways to prevent, diagnose, and treat cancer.
- Clinical trials test a standard, often used treatment against a newer one that doctors think could work better.
- In a clinical trial, doctors ask the question "Does the new treatment work better than the standard treatment?"
- Almost all standard cancer treatments used today were once tested in clinical trials.
- Ask your health care provider about cancer clinical trials.

Native People for Cancer Control

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PREVENTION, ACCESS TO CARE, AND RESEARCH



Brown Twins of Starr Hill[®], 2004, dyed sheep's wool, 34 x 66 inches,
Anna Brown Ehlers, Of the Whalehouse (Chilkat Tlingit). Artist's courtesy of the artist.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

- Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death among American Indian and Alaska Native people.

SCREENING TESTS FOR COLORECTAL CANCER

- Screening tests can detect colorectal cancer before it causes symptoms, when treatment is more effective.
- If you are over 50 years old, ask your health care provider about different types of screening tests for colorectal cancer.

“MY CHILKAT TEXTILES

are adorned with land, air, and sea creatures. They are meant to convey the connection of humanity to the earth and heavens. Enjoy the visage of the Chilkat blanket, as I did in weaving it. The tour de force that I strive for in Chilkat weaving is spiritual wellness.”

Anna Brown Ehlers
(Chilkat Tlingit)
Brown Twins of Starr Hill, 2004

Native Art for Cancer Project created by Native People for Cancer Control

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

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Chholing P. Taha (Cree First Nations), *Octopus and Crow*, 2007, acrylic on paper, 30 inches x 22 inches

“Using a Northwest Coast art style to illustrate the story of Octopus and Crow, I began with the expression of the octopus. I designed a double octopus to express that we have two choices in our lives when it comes to smoking: we either smoke or we choose not to smoke. It is truly up to the individual. The octopus expresses its role as the risk of cancer. The yellow crow caught in the tentacles of the octopus develops lung cancer while the blue crow escapes this fate by quitting smoking. At the center of this drawing, two hands are found. It is through our hands that we most often affect what goes into our bodies and our lives. The color red has many, many meanings throughout Indian country. Here, red is being used to express knowledge of the material or physical world, knowledge that we gain by using our five senses. Similarly, when a researcher studies a physical phenomenon to understand its underlying patterns and trends, that researcher will begin with knowledge of the physical world.”

Chholing P. Taha