



"My grandchildren love that granny can eat with them," exclaimed Geneva Fulwiley, who traveled more than 50 miles to NorthShore for life-changing treatment that helped her regain the ability to swallow food.

Here for You

From Chicago Heights to the Wisconsin state line and beyond, NorthShore is here to serve you. With four hospitals and more than 1,900 primary care physicians and specialists, we offer a team of experts representing a vast array of specialties for you to select from for your care. Easily search for physicians online via the Web, tablet or smartphone at northshore.org/h7, or call (847) 492-5700 (Ext. 1274) to schedule an appointment.



EFFECTIVE THERAPIES

Swallowing dysfunction not only affects eating and drinking—it also can impact your ability to speak and clearly communicate. NorthShore's talented speech pathologists work closely with otolaryngology specialists to provide comprehensive voice, airway and swallowing services. To make an appointment, please call (847) 492-5700 (Ext. 1260).

Appetite for Life

Swallowing Expertise Helps Grandmother Regain Her Ability to Eat

By Susan J. White

Imagine not being able to savor your favorite foods or sip a beloved beverage. Picture replacing family meals with a feeding tube—your only source of nutrition. For Geneva Fulwiley, a Chicago Heights resident, eating and drinking became a distant memory following treatment for throat cancer in 2006.

Fulwiley had retired her dreams of dining at restaurants or relishing the taste of desserts, as her doctors at the time offered no solutions.

"The hardest part was always the holidays, to see the cake coming out and see everybody gathered," said 59-year-old Fulwiley. "I would leave the room and pour my meal into the feeding tube. I didn't want to let other people know," she recalled.

MULTISPECIALTY COLLABORATION

Thanks to a fortuitous recommendation from a stranger, Fulwiley found out about the remarkable work of NorthShore Otolaryngologist Mihir Bhayani, MD, an expert in head and neck cancer. The appointment—which was 50 miles from her home—proved to be life-changing.

After examining Fulwiley, Dr. Bhayani determined that she was a good candidate for targeted therapy with Speech Pathologist Jamie Allison, who has specialized training and experience treating patients dealing with weakened throat muscles and swallowing challenges related to chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

The pair met once a month over a six-month period, and the results were dramatic. Fulwiley regained her ability to swallow by starting with soup, bananas and yogurt, eventually working her way toward more solid foods.

"Jamie did a phenomenal job working with her, and Geneva was very motivated," said Dr. Bhayani, who holds an academic appointment at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.

"Geneva was really eager and made the effort," noted Allison, who pointed to the importance of developing patient-specific exercises and collaborating with a team of physicians and nurses focused on helping individual patients. Success stories like Fulwiley's are very gratifying, added Allison.

A SLICE OF DELICIOUS LIFE

"Where Geneva is now is part of what drives me to do what I do," said Dr. Bhayani, who along with Allison, is proud of the progress Fulwiley has accomplished.

"My grandkids are so happy," Fulwiley said, beaming. "I have treats in the house for them, and they love that granny can eat with them. Dr. Bhayani and Jamie were both wonderful and with me every step of the way."

Otolaryngologist Dr. Mihir Bhayani (left) and Speech Pathologist Jamie Allison partnered on Geneva Fulwiley's care.



Breathing Easier

Patient Credits "Dream Team" in Winning Lung Cancer Battle

By Martha Floberg

Judith Kowal has been a loyal patient at NorthShore Evanston Hospital since the 1960s. It is a healthcare partnership that has served her well, especially when a dangerous health scare surfaced five years ago. Following unexplained weight loss, Kowal's affiliated primary care physician Jeffrey Geohas, MD, sent her for a CT scan that found a mass in her right lung confirmed to be cancer.

"I've always had good health," Kowal said, "but when I was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer, it was life-changing. Fortunately, I knew where to turn."

MULTISPECIALTY TEAM EFFORT

Kowal credits what she calls her "dream team" of physicians and nurses at NorthShore Kellogg Cancer Center for an amazing experience that saved her life. That team was led by John Howington, MD, NorthShore Division Head of Thoracic Surgery, and Medical Oncologist Alla Gimelfarb, MD, who both hold academic appointments at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.

"When patients are at Stage 3A lung cancer that has spread to the lymph nodes, it takes more than one approach to treat

them," explained Dr. Howington, who also serves as Vice Chair of Surgery for Quality and Patient Safety.

Dr. Howington noted that every NorthShore patient with lung cancer is followed throughout his or her journey by a multispecialty group of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, thoracic surgeons, pathologists, radiologists and a specialized oncology nurse navigator.

"We have a well-coordinated team that meets weekly," said Dr. Gimelfarb. "Judy is a prime example of how well it works. Our treatment plan for her included an aggressive regimen of chemotherapy and radiation, followed by surgery."

Kowal's presurgical treatment reduced the lung tumor by 90 percent. Then, using a minimally invasive thoracoscopy technique, Dr. Howington removed the lower portion of her right lung. After surgery, Kowal received another round of chemotherapy to keep her cancer in remission.

LEADERS IN ADVANCED CARE

According to Dr. Howington, only a limited number of medical centers perform minimally invasive lung cancer surgery. Even fewer offer the combination of therapies that Kowal received. "NorthShore patients also



HERE FOR YOU

Kellogg Cancer Center's Thoracic Oncology Program offers the most advanced care for patients with lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies. Watch a video to learn more about these life-saving capabilities at northshore.org/h8.

have access to national and local clinical trials," he added.

"In addition, we offer screening CT scans for individuals at high risk for lung cancer so we can diagnose patients at an early stage and intervene right away," added Dr. Gimelfarb.

Today, Kowal receives regular checkups and is cancer-free. "I can't speak highly enough of all those involved in my treatment," said Kowal. "They're so smart, always straightforward and have a great sense of humor. You can't get better than that!"

Medical Oncologist Dr. Alla Gimelfarb and Thoracic Surgeon Dr. John Howington collaborated on Judith Kowal's lung cancer treatment plan.



Lung cancer survivor Judith Kowal is back to enjoying creative pursuits, including furniture painting at her Rogers Park home.

ASSESS YOUR RISK

Early detection is a proven and successful strategy for fighting many forms of cancer, including lung cancer. NorthShore offers screening with low-dose computed tomography (CT) for people at high risk for lung cancer, the only recommended screening test for the disease. Medicare and many insurance companies now cover this diagnostic lung cancer screening for patients who meet certain criteria. For more information, please call (847) 492-5700 (Ext. 1275).