

WHEN STANDARD CANCER TREATMENTS FAIL,  
CLINICAL TRIALS GIVE PATIENTS LIKE SHAWN GILES

# Hope FOR A CURE



Shawn Giles, a 42-year-old machine tool electrician from Redford, didn't suspect anything was wrong in 2010 when he experienced a stomach ache while traveling on business. But then he noticed blood in his stool, so he called his doctor. When the appropriate medical tests came back normal, Giles' doctor ordered a colonoscopy, a procedure usually recommended for people 50 and over. That's when Giles learned he had Stage III colon cancer.

"The diagnosis blindsided me," Giles says. "My mother had colon cancer, but she's been cancer-free [since receiving treatment in 1998]. I thought I had a stomach ulcer or diverticulitis."

As an African American, Giles is among a racial group with the highest colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rate in the country.

Giles received treatment at another hospital in early 2011 and had 18 inches of his colon removed. He then underwent radiation and chemotherapy. He thought the cancer was gone until a year later, in 2012, when tests showed it had returned, spreading to his chest and lymph nodes. He resumed standard chemotherapy and began taking an oral chemotherapy drug.

Despite treatment, a scan showed the cancer continued to grow. That's when Giles came to Karmanos in January 2013 and entered a Phase I clinical trial. Patients who opt for clinical trials receive newly developed cancer-fighting drugs that aren't available commercially or at most community hospitals. Phase I trials are the first stage in the careful process of developing new cancer treatments. The drugs often help patients live longer and have better quality of life.

"Shawn has responded nicely to the trial without any major side effects," says Muaiad Kittaneh, M.D., a member of Karmanos' Phase I Clinical-Pharmacological Program. He also is Giles' medical oncologist. "His last three CT scans show a reduction in cancer cells, which is very promising."

"Clinical trials give hope to patients who may not have other treatment options. Patients who enter clinical trials should get tremendous credit for helping pave the way for future cancer treatments."

Giles says he's stressing the importance of colon cancer screenings among his large family, which includes 10 siblings.

"It's important to me," Giles says. "I want to do all I can to get the word out about colon cancer and early detection."

## COLON CANCER RISKS

People at increased risk include men and women who:

- Are age 50 and older.
- Have a family history of colorectal cancer or other genetic factors.
- Have a personal history of colorectal polyps.
- Have Inflammatory Bowel Disease, also known as Crohn's disease or Colitis.
- Are of African-American or Ashkenazi Jewish descent.
- Are obese and/or are physically inactive.
- Are regular tobacco or alcohol users.
- Have a diet high in fat or red/processed meat and low in fiber, calcium, fruit and vegetables.
- Have Type 2 diabetes.



## Consider Enrolling in a Clinical Trial

For more information about the Clinical Trials Program at Karmanos, call **1-800-KARMANOS** (1-800-527-6266) or visit [karmanos.org/Clinicaltrials](http://karmanos.org/Clinicaltrials).