

# SCRIPPS PROTON THERAPY

# CONNECT

A quarterly newsletter for Scripps Proton Therapy Center patients, their families, and others interested in proton therapy treatment.

Summer 2016



*Following proton therapy treatment, Rupert Lowe continues his active work and travel schedule and enjoys time at home with his family.*

## Traveling “Across the Pond” for Proton Therapy

### UK Resident Chose Scripps for Prostate Cancer Treatment

Since opening in 2014, Scripps Proton Therapy Center has treated patients not only from California, but from across the country and around the world, including Canada, Dubai, China and the United Kingdom.

One of our first international patients, UK businessman Rupert Lowe, chose to travel to Scripps after he was diagnosed with early-stage prostate cancer. His doctor recommended surgery, but Rupert wasn't convinced that was his best option.

He began to rigorously pursue treatment options. One of his friends had been treated with proton beam therapy in California by Carl Rossi, MD, medical director of Scripps Proton

Therapy Center. Rupert checked it out and liked what he found.

“I did a great deal of research between protons and photons (X-rays). Protons are much more focused. You have very little damage when the beam enters your body and you have no exit damage with the added benefit of avoiding surgery,” he says, adding that he was concerned about side effects, such as incontinence and impotence, which may

occur with other treatment options.

Proton beam therapy was not available in the UK, so after having been in contact with Dr. Rossi, Rupert made the decision to travel to California and meet with him.

“Scripps was incredibly professional, extremely helpful, very well-organized,” he says. “It’s a new hospital, very modern, an incredibly futuristic facility. The staff were absolutely charming.”

“I chose to have my treatments at 8 a.m., and then caught up with emails, and by lunch time England was closing down so we had lunch, played a little tennis and enjoyed the weather, which was fantastic,” Rupert says. “I think any time when you are ill or being treated or suffering any form of stress, it is quite nice to be able to sit outside in weather that is sunny and 80 degrees every day, and be just 10 minutes from the Pacific Ocean.”

Throughout his treatments, Rupert had no pain and no side effects other than fatigue. He would sleep after treatment, and then play tennis, go for a walk or do yoga at Scripps Proton Therapy Center, which offers classes at no cost for patients and their families.

If someone were to ask his advice about proton beam therapy, Rupert would say it is definitely something to look at. He has already referred several people to Scripps.

“Scripps was fantastic and the message needs to get out that there is an alternative,” he says. “At the end of the day it can mean a better quality of life and less side effects after treatment.”



## Roasted Beet & Arugula Salad

Enjoy this heart-healthy, gluten-free recipe as a summer side dish or appetizer.

### Roasted Beet & Arugula Salad

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4 small beets                    | 1 Tbsp chopped fresh basil      |
| 1 small red onion, thinly sliced | 1 Tbsp chopped fresh thyme      |
| 6 carrots, shredded              | 1/8 tsp salt                    |
| 6 radishes, very thinly sliced   | Black pepper to taste           |
| 4oz baby arugula                 | 2 oz crumbled blue cheese       |
| 2 garlic cloves, minced          | 1/4 cup chopped almonds         |
| 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice        | 1/4 cup shelled sunflower seeds |
| 1/4 cup olive oil                |                                 |

Makes 8 servings.

Serving Size: About 3/4 cup salad plus 1 Tbsp dressing.

Preheat oven to 375.° Rinse beets and place on foil. Wrap beets in foil and seal package shut. Bake until beets are tender, about 45 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the beets. Remove from oven, open foil carefully, and let cool completely. With a knife, trim the end of a roasted beet. Wrap a paper towel around the beet, and rub the beet in the paper towel until the skin comes off. Repeat with the remaining beets. Slice the beets. In a large bowl, combine the sliced beets, onion, carrots, radishes and arugula. In a small bowl, combine the garlic, lemon juice, oil, basil, thyme, salt and pepper. Add the dressing to the salad and toss. Sprinkle with the blue cheese, almonds and sunflower seeds. Toss gently to combine.

Calories.....	175	Total Fat .....	12g
Saturated Fat .....	3g	Sodium .....	120mg
Carbohydrate.....	13g	Dietary Fiber .....	4g
Protein.....	4g		

## SPTC Employee Spotlight Kristin Callicotte, Radiation Therapist Lead

### As a radiation therapist, what does your job involve?

Radiation therapists deliver proton treatment to patients. We set patients up for treatment and verify they are aligned and on target with the proton beam. We also try to be a support system as well. Therapists spend more time with the patient than anyone else in the Center. We are the only ones who see patients every day, sometimes for up to eight weeks.

### As a lead, what else does your specific role involve?

I coordinate between all departments within our Center to ensure patient plans are moving along. I've been an integral part of creating protocols for treating patients in the most efficient and safe way possible. We not only personalize each plan based on the

treatment needed, but we also try to accommodate each patient's needs, which is a big part of my role. I also



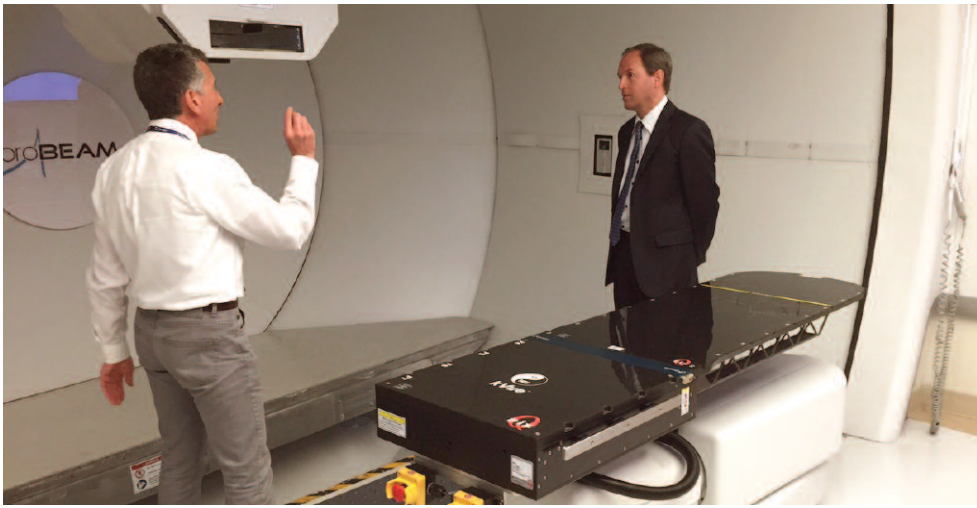
teach and train therapists. I enjoy being a mentor and seeing their interpersonal and technical skills grow.

I have worked hard to create close relationships with not only my therapists but the whole team here at the Center. I touch base with them on a daily basis because I am so involved in every aspect of the patient's treatment. It is such a great feeling to know that they ask for my input, trust my advice and see me as the person who will get things done.

### What brought you to Scripps Proton Therapy Center?

I've been here since we opened three years ago, and liked the idea of being part of something new. Proton is so different than any other radiation treatment. I wanted a new challenge and to continue learning and increasing my knowledge. *continued on next page*





*Scripps Proton Therapy Center medical director Carl Rossi, MD, (left), discusses proton therapy technology with Assemblymember Brian Maienschein in one of the Center's treatment rooms.*

## State & Local Representatives Visit SPTC

The effectiveness of proton therapy in precisely targeting tumors while sparing healthy surrounding tissue has been supported by hundreds of research studies published in peer-reviewed medical journals. Nevertheless, many insurance companies will not cover the cost of this advanced external radiation therapy.

Recently, three local government representatives visited the Center to find out more about the reimbursement issues related to proton therapy.

In June, California State Assembly Speaker Emeritus Toni Atkins, State Assemblymember Brian Maienschein and San Diego Councilmember Todd Gloria (District 3) toured Scripps Proton Therapy Center and met with patients to learn about insurance challenges they often face when seeking appropriate

access to proton treatment.

One of just two proton centers in California, Scripps Proton Therapy Center's sophisticated pencil-beam technology has enabled doctors to treat a wide range of solid tumors in both adults and children. In addition to being a regional resource for patients through our affiliations with Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and UC San Diego Health System, we attract patients from across the country and around the world.

While proton therapy does have an established history of reimbursement by Medicare and some private insurers, it is limited to select tumor types. Scripps Proton Therapy Center representatives and physicians work directly with insurance plans to obtain authorization for patients and file appeals if necessary, and informed patients who have been denied coverage for proton therapy have also been engaging with state review agencies and reaching out to their elected representatives for help in appealing their denials.

"We are so pleased that our patients were able to share their stories during the site visits, and the assemblymembers and councilmember expressed their support to them of proton therapy and



*Scripps Proton Therapy Center patients (from left), Dan Vrakas and Kathleen Hill; Assembly Speaker Emeritus Toni Atkins; Scripps Proton Therapy Center medical director Carl Rossi, M.D.; and proton patient Rebecca Scranton.*

the Center," says Tim Collins, Corporate VP of Operations for Scripps and the Scripps Proton Therapy Center. "They are now more aware and knowledgeable about the capabilities of proton therapy as a cancer treatment option for their constituents."

### Employee Spotlight *continued*

#### **What is the most challenging part?**

The most challenging part is linked with the most rewarding part. Our goal is to create a positive, happy environment. We form bonds, special connections and relationships with each patient, so it is difficult to go through the roller coaster ride of emotions with them. It is something that doesn't disappear when you leave work.

#### **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

I love what I do because I am given the opportunity to help people who have put their lives in our hands and we can turn a negative situation into a positive one. An added reward is hearing that patients are healthy again and living normal lives.

And I have proud moments when I hear positive things from patients about their experience with our therapists.

I have learned so much from our amazing patients who literally have come from all over the world. It has really changed my outlook on life and made me live more in the moment and not take things for granted. All in all, it has really helped me grow in my work and personal life.

#### **How do you spend your free time?**

When I was younger I was a flight attendant, so I still try and travel as much as possible. I love experiencing new places and cultures. With the perfect weather here in San Diego I am able to run along the bay and also enjoy kickboxing, which is a great stress reliever.

# Proton Therapy in the News

A clinical trial starting this year will enroll approximately 2,000 women with locally advanced breast cancer to receive either proton or X-ray therapy. The goal is to assess the effectiveness of protons compared to X-rays in reducing major cardiovascular events in patients 10 years after their radiation treatments.



A 2013 report in the New England Journal of Medicine found that women who received X-ray therapy to their left breast had a higher risk of major heart disease, which was directly linked to the dose and volume of heart that was irradiated during treatment. Scripps Health and clinical partner UC San Diego Health System plan to participate in this national, multi-institutional study, led by the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

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is a quarterly newsletter for Scripps Proton Therapy Center patients, their families, and others interested in proton therapy treatment. We invite you to stay up to date with the latest proton news and developments, both here at Scripps and around the world. We hope you enjoy the newsletter, and we welcome your comments and suggestions for future issues. Email us at [SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org](mailto:SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org).



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