

## Communication: Key To Managing Cancer Actress Marcia Strassman Praises Oncology Nurses; Stresses Importance of Nurse/Patient Communication

(NAPSA)—Patients living with cancer often depend on their oncology nurses to help them during one of the most challenging times of their lives.

Actress and breast cancer patient Marcia Strassman, recognized for her roles as Julie Kotter in “Welcome Back, Kotter” and Honey in the “Honey, I Shrunk the Kids” movies, knows firsthand how critical the nurse/patient relationship is for people living with cancer. Marcia was diagnosed more than three years ago with advanced breast cancer that spread to her bones.

Throughout the course of her treatment, Marcia has established a strong relationship with her oncology nurses, who continually help ease the stress of coping with her cancer. “The relationship between cancer patients and their oncology nurses is crucial in a patient’s day-to-day journey with cancer. We see our nurses so frequently that they become our friends and confidants, which helps create an atmosphere so comfortable that it makes it easier to manage our diagnosis and keep a positive attitude. My oncology nurses care, advise, listen and help by simply being there. They are truly unsung heroes.”

“I know my treatment would be nowhere near as relaxed and filled with humor without the astounding attitudes of my oncology nurses.” Marcia encourages all people battling cancer to stay positive and maintain an open dialogue with their nurses and doctors.

Growing scientific evidence supports the significance of friendship in the lives of cancer patients—the more friends they have, the better their prognosis. Research from the Harvard Nurs-



**Marcia Strassman**

es’ Health Study found that women who developed breast cancer and had 10 or more close friends were much more likely to survive the disease than women who lacked this kind of network.

A study by Stanford University School of Medicine in 2000 found that disruptions in the normal pattern of the stress hormone cortisol predicted earlier death in breast cancer patients, but a University of Michigan study established that the company of others leads to the release of calming hormones in women, demonstrating positive health effects of social interaction and reducing stress and anxiety. This stress-relieving aspect of friendship plays a role in helping women become healthier.

Marcia continuously applauds the efforts and friendship of oncology nurses and credits them as the driving force to helping successfully manage her cancer and treatment journey. For resources on cancer, cancer support and Marcia’s personal experience, visit [facebook.com/marciastrassman](https://www.facebook.com/marciastrassman). For cancer information and resources from leading nurse experts, visit [InterventionZ.com](https://www.InterventionZ.com).



**Note to Editors:** *May is Oncology Nursing Month.*