



# TIP SHEET Kidney Cancer

## What You Should Know

Your **kidneys** are a pair of organs located in your upper abdomen. As part of the urinary tract, the kidneys remove waste and extra water from the blood, which makes urine.

The kidneys also produce hormones and other substances that help regulate blood pressure and make red blood cells. Kidney cancer occurs when cells of the kidney grow and multiply abnormally.

In  
**90%**

of all kidney tumors, RPCI surgeons are able to remove only the tumor, preserving the kidney and its function.



## Are You at Higher Risk?

People with the following factors may be more likely than others to develop kidney cancer:

- Smoking
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Family history of kidney cancer
- Certain genetic conditions, such as von Hippel-Lindau (VHL) syndrome

## Symptoms to Tell Your Doctor

- ✓ Blood in your urine
- ✓ Pain in the side that doesn't go away
- ✓ A lump or mass in your side or abdomen
- ✓ Unexplained weight loss
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Fatigue

Kidney cancer is more common in **men** than in women, and among **African American, Native American and Alaskan Native** populations.

## QUIT SMOKING? YES, YOU CAN!

Call the **New York State Smokers' Quitline** at **1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)** or visit [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com) for information, support and cessation aids.

These signs may also indicate a kidney **infection**, a **cyst**, or another health problem, but it's important to get an accurate diagnosis with either an ultrasound, CT or MRI scan.



## Why Roswell Park Cancer Institute?

**Nationally recognized urology program.** RPCI was named to Best Hospitals for 2014-15 by U.S. News & World Report, receiving special recognition for high performance in the area of urology.

**Surgeons with high-volume experience.** RPCI performs the most kidney cancer surgeries in WNY, and is one of the highest-volume centers for *robotic* kidney cancer surgery in the nation.

**Access to the latest therapies.** The newest treatments, available through clinical research studies, are important options for many patients.

## Meet the Doctors

(above from left to right)

### Urology

- 1) Khurshid Guru, MD
- 2) Eric Kauffman, MD
- 3) James Mohler, MD
- 4) Thomas Schwaab, MD, PhD
- 5) Willie Underwood III, MD, MPH, MSci

### Medical Oncology

- 6) Amy Early, MD, FACP
- 7) Saby George, MD, FACP
- 8) Ellis Levine, MD

### Radiation Oncology

- 9) Michael R. Kuettel, MD, PhD, MBA
- 10) Anurag Singh, MD

### Nuclear Medicine

- 11) Dominick Lamonica, MD

### Interventional Radiology

- 12) Michael Petroziello, MD

### Pathology

- 13) Gissou Azabdaftari, MD
- 14) Norbert Sule, MD, PhD
- 15) Bo Xu, MD, PhD

## Treatment the RPCI Way

We approach cancer treatment on an individual and personal basis, treating the whole person, not just the cancer. We offer the highest level of kidney cancer care, including:

- **A multidisciplinary approach** by a team of experts including specially trained urologic oncologists, medical and radiation oncologists, psychologists, social workers and others who work together to provide comprehensive and integrated care—all under one roof.
- **Robotic kidney surgery.** This minimally-invasive approach results in less pain, a shorter hospital stay and speedier recovery.
- **High-dose Interleukin-2 (IL-2) Immunotherapy.** Currently, the only curative option for metastatic kidney cancer, IL-2 therapy requires a high level of expertise to administer to select patients.

Early stage kidney cancer can often be cured. The majority of patients are diagnosed with early-stage disease, which has a 5-year survival rate of greater than **90%**

↓ KEEP THE KIDNEY,  
IF YOU CAN

Although a person can live with one kidney, RPCI surgeons aim to remove only the tumor (rather than the whole kidney) whenever possible, to preserve maximum kidney function for patients' later years. This procedure, called a *partial nephrectomy*, is especially important for older patients and those with high blood pressure or diabetes, and often times leads to better outcomes. RPCI performs more partial nephrectomies than any other WNY facility.