



# Carol's Story

## Ovarian Cancer



Carol was born and raised in New York City. It wasn't until she retired from Avis® more than six years ago that she moved to Portland to be near her daughter and two granddaughters. In fact, when Carol moved across the country, she purchased a house just across the street from where her family lives and, instead of working full time, her days are spent volunteering, picking up her granddaughters from school, and enjoying much of the culture Portland has to offer.

In July of 2003, just a few years into her new life, Carol was diagnosed with stage IIIc ovarian cancer. She had consulted her physician for what she described as menstrual cramping, although she had not menstruated in years. Her physician recommended Northwest Cancer Specialists and Carol began seeing Dr. Paul Tseng for her diagnosis and treatment.

Carol says the hardest part of her battle with cancer was telling her daughter and her son (who lives in Chicago). While at first she was convinced that an ovarian cancer diagnosis was a death sentence, she listened intently to Dr. Tseng who helped her reframe her mindset to think of cancer as a chronic disease.

Carol's battle with cancer has included surgery to remove her ovaries, followed by chemotherapy. When her chemotherapy was completed, she and Dr. Tseng considered all of the options available to her. They decided together that Carol would participate in the OvaRex clinical trial which is studying the extent of remission in women with stage III or IV ovarian cancer who have a favorable response to surgery and chemotherapy. Carol remained in remission for over 2 years, when it was discovered that cancer cells were starting to grow again. Treating this as a chronic disease, Carol is once again participating in a clinical trial involving the use of Abraxane in Platinum - sensitive patients with recurrent ovarian, peritoneal, or fallopian tube cancers.

For Carol, being a part of cutting-edge medical treatments is important, both for her own therapy and for the future of cancer care. She hopes the interest generated by the trials will lead to greater advances in the treatment of ovarian cancer, and if it is successful, will have a positive impact on future patients.

In addition to participating in clinical trials, Carol is also helping to raise awareness of this insidious disease by joining other members of her support group in speaking with third-year medical students at Oregon State University, nurses, and other medical professionals in the Portland area about ovarian cancer. The support group, which is made up of women with gynecologic cancers, hopes that by helping educate people in the medical field, they'll reach the people who may one day be part of finding a cure.

Carol is known for her sense of humor, and has taken the recent news of her cancer recurrence in stride. She says she will continue to try new treatments as recommended by her physician as well as continue with alternative treatments, such as acupuncture. Her attitude is unchanged. "This is a chronic disease, and I'll do whatever it takes."