The 2019-2020 Society Campaign
Colorectal Cancer Care

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THE SOCIETY of MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER
The Society’s support will be a major push toward our goal: offering patients the best care possible with as few side effects as possible. Genomic data will provide these missing clues—and give fresh hope to patients not only at MSK, but at hospitals everywhere.

*Julio Garcia-Aguilar, MD, PhD*
CHIEF, COLORECTAL SERVICE
BENNO C. SCHMIDT CHAIR IN SURGICAL ONCOLOGY
**Transforming Colorectal Cancer Care through Research**

The mission of MSK’s Colorectal Cancer Research Center is to develop new and better treatments that improve outcomes without harming patients’ quality of life. Sequencing the tumor of every single colorectal cancer patient with next-generation technologies is essential to drive this research forward. This is what The Society’s 2019-2020 campaign will help make possible.

**A Common Cancer, A Global Threat**

Colorectal cancer is the third most common form of cancer—with about 145,000 new cases in the United States in 2019. Globally, nearly 1.4 million people are diagnosed with colorectal cancer annually. It is also the second most common cause of cancer-related death.

Nearly 2,500 people with colorectal cancer seek care at MSK each year—and of those, more than 400 are age 50 or younger. This points to a growing public health concern: an uptick in the numbers of young people diagnosed with a disease typically associated with old age.

The research arm of MSK’s clinical program—the Colorectal Cancer Research Center—is run by surgeon-scientist Julio Garcia-Aguilar, MD, PhD. The team has built a nimble infrastructure so that discoveries made in the lab can be quickly and seamlessly translated to help patients fight for their lives.

A key part of this endeavor is the country’s first Center for Young Onset Colorectal Cancer, led by MSK oncologist Andrea Cercek, MD, and devoted to helping young patients facing this traditionally older person’s disease.
A Pioneer in Precision Medicine

Central to our colorectal cancer research program is the application of precision medicine: where genomic mutations causing an individual's cancer are identified and targeted with specialized drugs. Tumor samples are run through a technology invented here called MSK-IMPACT™, which detects 468 cancer-causing genetic mutations.

Right now, only patients with advanced colorectal cancer receive IMPACT testing. By extending this and other next-generation sequencing technologies to people at all stages of disease, never-before-considered options can be explored—and more lives spared.

Beyond IMPACT, MSK is leading the way in whole-genome sequencing, the deep analysis of all 25,000 of a patient’s genes. MSK is one of only a few cancer hospitals that performs this sophisticated analysis on site. The importance of this knowledge cannot be overstated: having genomic results at hand can guide the care team to recommend a less invasive treatment that may preserve a person’s quality of life.

Andrea Cercek, MD
How Your Support Will Help

MSK is driving forward important research to help bring less invasive options for those facing all stages of colorectal cancer. The 2019-2020 Society Campaign will bring precision medicine to all our patients—an effort with worldwide implications. Your philanthropy will be directed toward the following initiatives:

**Attacking Colorectal Cancer with Greatest Precision**

- Run genomic sequencing on every colorectal patient at MSK.
- Integrate all patient data—e.g., imaging scans, sequencing results, tumor samples, etc. This real-time synchronization will ensure that treatment can be as precise as possible, allowing patients to avoid more invasive approaches.
- Establish a colorectal cancer “biobank” of patient specimens for future research.

**Getting to the Root Causes of Young Onset Disease**

- Expand our Center for Young Onset Colorectal Cancer’s research program. Top objectives are to uncover why this common cancer is striking an uncommon group of people, and to develop better strategies to counter it.
- Develop tools (with tissue samples and genetic testing) to predict how a patient will respond to treatment.
- Learn how treatment impacts our patients’ quality of life—and how to improve these approaches.
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MSK is leading the charge against young onset colorectal cancer. Our approach involves not only top-notch care, but an expansive research program designed to uncover how and why these diseases are developing in young people.

Andrea Cercek, MD