

## DONATE THE WEIGHT

### Statement of Need

The epidemic of obesity in our community is readily apparent. And the long-term benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle are well-documented. It is particularly true for leukemia survivors, who are at elevated risk for obesity, cardiovascular disease, and related mortality in the years after treatment.<sup>1</sup> There is a significant prevalence of obesity in young acute lymphocytic leukemia survivors, and studies show an association between excessive weight gain and patients undergoing all therapy.

There is also a link between fitness and the prevention of leukemia. An increase in body mass index was found to be associated with a 13% increased risk of leukemia.<sup>2</sup> Four studies found that obesity was associated with a statistically significant risk of all types of leukemia, and summary results indicate that overweight and obese individuals have a 14% and 39%, respectively, greater risk of leukemia compared to non-overweight individuals.<sup>3</sup> The European Journal of Endocrinology reports that obesity, particularly abdominal obesity, is one of the main characteristics of leukemia.<sup>4</sup>

The need to encourage and assist members of our community to overcome or avoid disease by adopting healthy eating practices and active lifestyles, is obvious from both treatment and prevention perspectives.

---

<sup>1</sup> Janiszewski, P. M., Oeffinger, K. C., Church, T.S., et al. Abdominal Obesity, liver Fat, and Muscle Composition in Survivors of Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, 92 (10), 3816-3821.

<sup>2</sup> Larsson, S. C. & Wolk, A. Overweight and obesity and incidence of leukemia: A meta-analysis of cohort studies. *International Journal of Cancer*, 122 (6), 1418

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Jarfelt, M., Lannering, B., Bosaeus, I., Johannsson, G., & Bjarnason, R. Body Composition in young adult survivors of childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia. *European Journal of Endocrinology*, 153, 81-89.