

Among the different types of cancer, pancreatic cancer is perhaps the least predictable. The third leading cause of cancer deaths, pancreatic cancer is especially dangerous because it spreads rapidly and exhibits few specific symptoms in its earliest stages.

**PANCREATIC
CANCER
TREATMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CARE IN
CANTON**



“Pancreatic cancer is indiscriminate; it impacts men and women equally,” says Dr. David Litvak, fellowship-trained Surgical Oncologist and Medical Director for Aultman Cancer Services. “Side effects such as pain, digestive problems, and weight loss even with early stages of the disease can be challenging to manage.”

Residents of Canton and the surrounding communities have hope, however, thanks to the Aultman Hospital Cancer Center and the resources the center has to treat cancers of all kinds. Aultman Cancer Center offers more than just the three most important resources that someone suffering from pancreatic cancer needs—surgical, medical, and radiation oncology services. The center offers an integrated and team-based approach to each person’s prob-

lems and incorporates many aspects of taking care of the whole person into the care of each patient.

Pancreatic Cancer Surgery

According to Dr. Litvak, surgery remains the only potential cure for an individual with pancreatic cancer. “The most important aspects are that the surgeon has specialized training and expertise, and that the hospital is familiar and comfortable with performing complex abdominal surgery and taking care of those kinds of patients—and we are,” Dr. Litvak explains.

In most cases, a pancreatic cancer surgery is completed using a traditional incision. Some pancreatic cancer surgeries utilize robotic or minimally invasive surgery, but these techniques, while helpful in some situations, aren’t known to reduce the major risks of surgery, and their overall benefit is helpful only in a minority of people. However, Dr. Litvak does perform such laparoscopic and robotic procedures for those patients who may benefit from them. He discusses options with each patient, and together they come to a decision. “One of the most important things a surgeon can do is engage in shared decision-making with patients to mutually agree on the best type of surgery for them,” Dr. Litvak says.

Full recovery from any pancreatic surgery usually takes two months or longer, and it most often involves frequent follow-up visits and side effects that require additional care. “Because of the disease’s side effects and prolonged needs after surgery, comprehensive treatment close to home is ideal for most patients.”

Care Close to Home

At Aultman, patients have access to high-quality surgical care—as well as follow-up care—in one convenient location close to where they live.

The Aultman Cancer Center was recently named one of only 16 cancer programs in the nation to receive the Outstanding Achievement Award from the American College of Surgeons’ Commission on Cancer. The honor is based on surveys conducted in the first half of 2017, and Aultman’s cancer program is recognized for offering a wide variety of treatments and contributing to clinical research in an effort to help develop additional treatment options for future patients.



Dr. David Litvak
Medical Director for
Aultman Cancer Services

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The Aultman Cancer Center

Aultman Hospital’s Cancer Center combines a dedicated team of professionals, state-of-the-art treatments, and exceptional talent to diagnose and treat 1,400 cancer cases every year. To contact Dr. Litvak’s office, or for more information, call 330-453-4300.

