



養和醫院

HONG KONG SANATORIUM & HOSPITAL

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One Quarter of Women with Breast Cancer has Familial Cause and 10% has Hereditary Cause that Increases Lifetime Risk Significantly to 85% HKSH Cancer Genetics Centre Brings Access to Early Screening, Treatment and Counselling

(20 March 2007, Hong Kong) The Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital launches today its Cancer Genetics Centre, which is the first of its kind in Hong Kong. In the first stage, the Centre will be focusing on clinical and support services for breast and ovarian cancer.

1 in 22 women in Hong Kong will have breast cancer, being the most common cancer in women in Hong Kong and a major cause of death. The numbers of women affected are increasing rapidly from 1,280 new cases in 1994 to 2,273 new cases in 2004. This increase is most significant in women who are in their 40s. One quarter of women with breast cancer have a family history of breast cancer and this increase is likely to be due to genetic-environmental interaction. A percentage of these women especially the younger patients, has a hereditary cause. This can increase the lifetime risk of breast cancer significantly to 85% and ovarian cancer to 50%. Men can also inherit this hereditary syndrome and their breast cancer risk may increase by 6 fold.

“Early diagnosis and preventive measures of breast cancer can have a significant impact on the prognosis and outcome of the disease particularly for those who are at high risk of developing breast cancer,” said Dr. Ava Kwong, Consulting Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery, Stanford University School of Medicine and Chief of Breast Surgery Division, Department of Surgery, The University of Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital has taken the initiative to establish the Cancer Genetics Centre that offers a full spectrum of clinical and support services, from genetic screening and diagnosis to treatment and counselling. The Centre provides innovative, integrated and high quality patient centered care. Highly skilled medical professionals enable patients to have access to the most advanced tests and therapies available in the world.

On the same occasion, the Hospital introduces the Hong Kong Hereditary and High Risk Breast Cancer Programme, which is the first community-wide programme of its kind to collect data on the relevant high-risk population.

“We are delighted to introduce to the public this high-risk breast cancer programme in collaboration with the experts from the Stanford University School of Medicine. This is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary breast care programme offering a full range of



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clinical and support services, including screening, diagnosis, treatment, general and genetic counseling, both locally and via teleconferencing, laboratory testing and research”, said Dr. Walton Li, Medical Superintendent, Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital.

The programme is partially funded by the Dr. Ellen Li Charitable Foundation in order to bring the state-of-the-art care, community-based programme and culturally relevant resources to the Hong Kong population. “We want to ensure that all women have increased awareness and access to early screening, treatment and follow-up care, regardless of their socioeconomic circumstances. With the University of Hong Kong and Stanford University School of Medicine, multi-centre studies both locally and internationally on the spectrum of high-risk breast cancer are being undertaken,” Dr. Li explained.

The Hospital shares this vision and believes that understanding the specific medical needs of our population will not only ensure a culture-specific approach but also offer appropriate screening, treatment and preventative measures of breast cancer. With the advisory support of the North California High Risk Breast Cancer Family Registry, the Hong Kong Hereditary Breast Cancer Family Registry will be established so that information and resources will reach the people in need and benefit the public at large. The Registry is also supported by the Cancer Fund.

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