

Fighting to Win the War on Breast Cancer

NEVER LOSE FAITH

Did you know that over 4,000 women in Arizona will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year?

With such a large population of both survivors and newly diagnosed breast cancer patients, quietly over the past several years, some of the most exciting research and clinical trials surrounding breast cancer treatment and technology have been taking place right here in Arizona – largely due in part to Dr. Robert Kuske.

Dr. Kuske moved to the valley after leading the breast cancer program at the University of Wisconsin as Full Professor of Human Oncology. Before that, Dr. Kuske was chairman of Radiation Oncology at the famed Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans, where he was also Chief of Staff over 470 physicians.

Recently named a Health Care Leadership Award Winner in the category of Research and Innovation, he is the original pioneer of a breast cancer treatment called brachytherapy, which is a five day radiation alternative for women with early stage breast cancer.

“The procedure places radiation sources – usually tiny pellets the size of pencil lead, inside and adjacent to a cancer, or inside an area that may contain residual cancer after surgical removal of the visible tumor mass,” Dr. Kuske says. “Using brachytherapy, doctors can reduce the radiation exposure to nearby normal tissues that do not need – and can be harmed by – the radiation.”

Given the level of success of this treatment option, Dr. Kuske is currently serving as co-principal investigator in the largest radiation trial in medical history, squarely focused on breast brachytherapy. This trial, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, has now completed testing 4,300 women.

“We believe the results, once analyzed and presented in coming months, could inspire the biggest paradigm shift in how patients will be treated since Marie Curie herself discovered radium in 1896,” Dr. Kuske says.

However, this inspirational hometown doc does not stop at simply researching ways to help women fighting breast cancer– he is jumping in and helping with the fight right alongside them. Most recently, he partnered with Arizona Center for Cancer Care to move onto the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center at Scottsdale Healthcare to take on all radiation oncology services provided by, the facility –



Dr. Robert Kuske

with Dr. Kuske firmly focused on solely assisting women with breast cancer.

Dr. Kuske is equally passionate about new treatment techniques/technologies and teaching/sharing knowledge with medical students, residents and practicing physicians. He lends time to delivering at least 25 lectureships yearly on breast cancer technologies and patient care.

The American Association for Cancer Education, where he held office as president and a “Fellow of the AACE” has recognized his expertise in this important and often understated role for oncologists – mentorship.

Dr. Kuske is also a member of the volunteer medical board of the Arizona Institute for Breast Health (AIBH), an organization focused on giving recently diagnosed women options before having to make decision on their treatment program. He is focused on ensuring he takes time to educate anyone seeking help with a breast cancer diagnosis.

“Our team evaluates the best medical and surgical options for the preservation of a woman's life, body and emotional well-being, as well as the continued quality of her life,” Dr. Kuske says.