

Local woman helps treat cancer patients

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Glendale resident Ginger Lee helps cancer and skin disease patients feel good again with her knowledge of healing treatments. Lee has suffered from a rare skin disease, so she knows exactly how to care for even the most sensitive of patients.

By **KATHRYN STAFFORD, Staff Writer** |  **0 comments**

Glendale resident Ginger Lee has worked as an esthetician for 10 years. But, it's not just her expertise in beauty treatments that makes her good at her job. Lee has an insider's perspective on dealing with painful medical treatments. This is why she has dedicated much of her practice to treating patients suffering from an illness.

Lee said she hadn't felt quite right for several years, but only found out recently, in the past few months, what was truly wrong. Doctors later diagnosed Lee with Sarcoidosis, a rare autoimmune disease. Lee said at the present time, there isn't an identifiable cause or a specific cure. The treatment approach is to focus on containment and treatment of the symptoms.

Lee has undergone several procedures and treatment regimens, especially during the last several months. Those have included radiation, high doses of steroids, and "a myriad of antibiotics and other drugs." Lee's side effects have included hormone imbalance, hair loss, extreme hair growth, low immune system, and shingles.

"The list continues to expand because one thing often leads to another," she said.

Lee admits it can be difficult to take care of herself as well as others.

"I have really been trying to find a healthy balance between my health and my passion for helping others," she said.

Although her health complications have been painful, Lee said she feels like her own struggles give her an added perspective in treating patients.

"Being an esthetician and going through these physical challenges has both educated me and strengthened my passion to help others look and feel their best, while going through challenges, including disease, cancer, divorce, death, or any life-changing event that takes the wind out of your sails," she said.

"I believe that you can take some control back of your life," she said. "You can address your physical and emotional needs that, in turn, will help you achieve more balance and allow you to become a healthier and happier person."

Lee was quick to acknowledge the fact there is no shortage of skin care facilities around the Valley, but contends that Blume Skin Center (where she works) has something more to offer patients who want to heal.

"Because of what I've gone through and my years of experience in this business, I feel that I am a little more sensitive toward individuals going through this process," Lee said. "There is no judgment and I really work to be gentle and sensitive in my work, because I have an understanding of what it is to be in pain or be uncomfortable."

Lee said she hopes to shed some light on the concept of using aesthetic treatments to help patients recover.

"It's not something that's really talked about," Lee said. "But, I'm hoping people will learn that they can help heal themselves through using some of our treatments."

Lee said the most commonly used treatments for ailing patients include:

- Enzyme masks
- Exfoliating treatments to soothe irritated or rough skin from radiation
- Fillers for patients suffering from surgery or facial scars
- Soothing aromatherapy products for patients to take home with them for regular treatment
- Facials
- Chemical peels
- Botox

Lee said it's important for patients not to get bogged down or dwell on their situation.

"Taking an edge off the side effects is key to help you keep your chin up," she said. "Everybody is familiar with the side effects of hair loss and nausea associated with some treatments, but not as familiar with painful skin, which is the body's largest organ."

Lee said treating this condition is very important. It is vital to exfoliate the skin and get rid of all the drugs that are in patients' bodies so they can heal faster.

Lee said although most cancer patients cannot or will not do chemical peels or Botox, it is definitely something they can utilize once their treatment is over. Less harsh treatments active cancer patients can begin using immediately include aromatherapy massage, facials, and light skin cleansing, and nourishing treatments.

Lee said giving a cancer patient a gift certificate for services at the Blume Skin Center is a thoughtful and effective way to lift someone's spirits.

"Many times, people undergoing treatment have to miss work, and spend a lot of time at home, or in doctors' offices," Lee said. "This is such a nice way for them to get out of the house and just have a soothing day of pampering and feeling refreshed, pretty, and leave with a little boost in self-confidence. It helps patients heal physically and emotionally, really allowing them to put everything back together again."

For more information about the Blume Skin Center, or to make an appointment with Lee, visit www.blumeskintreatment.com/ or call 480-699-7999.