Martha Ramos  
Germantown, Maryland  
54 years old  
Disease site: Brain  
1st proton therapy patient at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

Martha Ramos was the very first patient to receive proton therapy when the MedStar Georgetown University Hospital Proton Therapy Center opened its doors in March 2018. She received the treatment for a recurrent brain tumor. Martha had surgery to remove the tumor in 2006, but it came back more than a decade later and was about the size of a golf ball. Doctors at MedStar Georgetown performed surgery in January 2018 to remove it again but there was still some tumor in her brain that surgery couldn’t reach. Proton therapy was able to remove the remaining cancer cells and today Martha is cancer free and back to enjoying her life as a happy, active mother of two.

Kathleen Norris  
Hollywood, Maryland  
72 years old  
Disease site: Lung  
100th Proton therapy patient at MedStar Georgetown

Kathleen Norris was diagnosed with lung cancer in March 2019 and wasn’t a candidate for surgery because she is a former smoker with emphysema. So the Southern Maryland mother of three, grandmother of eight and great grandmother to two—with one more on the way in June—says she was thrilled to learn proton therapy was an available option to remove her tumor. She was especially pleased to learn how precise proton therapy can be. She is well aware of the side effects and risks with traditional radiation because one of her granddaughters received it when she was diagnosed with cancer as a toddler about a decade ago.

Kathleen recently completed her proton therapy treatment, which has shrunk her tumor considerably. She is also a candidate for cutting-edge immunotherapy which she will receive for the next year.
Proton Therapy Patients

Chester Jarosz  
Rural Retreat, Virginia  
81 years old  
Disease site: Esophagus

When Chester Jarosz was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in 2017, the first doctors he saw told him it was inoperable because of his age, which at the time was 79. They said normal radiation wasn’t an option either because it would damage vital organs, like his heart and lungs.

So Chester did his own online research and discovered that MedStar Georgetown was the only hospital offering proton therapy with HYPERSCAN™. He received 28 treatments between August and September 2018, with no side effects, and when he went back for his follow up scan, the cancer in his esophagus was gone.

Before his treatment, Chester could only eat small meals because of his cancer, but now he eats normally again and said he can even enjoy a steak. He’s also back to enjoying free time with his wife of 54 years and helping to babysit his grandkids.

Carol S. Marks  
Washington, D.C.  
66 years old  
Disease site: Liver and Lungs

Carol didn’t think much about the fact that she had was losing some weight in 2014. But when lab work done at her annual physical showed some abnormalities, her doctor sent her for a CT scan. The results were upsetting. First, doctors found cancer in the bile ducts of her liver and later they also discovered tumors in her lungs.

Surgery was able to remove some of the tumors but not all of them, so the D.C. resident was in and out of the hospital for the next few years dealing with a variety of issues relating to her cancer. In 2018, when one of the tumors looked like it was growing in a way that it could cause a serious and even life-threatening impact on a major artery and vein affecting blood flow throughout her body, doctors suggested proton therapy.

Carol did 15 sessions between December 2018 and January 2019, and while she won’t know the full results for a year, she says initial signs look positive. She isn’t jaundiced or seeing any other negative side effects that could indicate more problems.

Carol says she is a bit tired, but otherwise feels well enough that she and her husband of 34 years are able to get out and about and go to the theatre, which they love. Carol says she would highly recommend proton therapy because it is focused and doesn’t damage surrounding tissue and the process of receiving it is painless.
Visa Debnam
Washington, D.C.
56 years old
Disease site: Esophagus

Visa Debnam knew something was wrong in the fall of 2018 because she suddenly had great difficulty eating and swallowing. She thought it was acid reflux. But when she went to her local doctor, he performed an endoscopy and diagnosed her with esophageal cancer and referred her to MedStar Georgetown for further treatment.

By that point, she was on a feeding tube because she'd been unable to eat or drink anything for several months. Doctors started her on proton therapy—five days a week for five weeks—with chemotherapy once a week.

After just two weeks, she started to feel better and was able to start eating and drinking again. When the five weeks of proton therapy were complete, doctors did surgery to remove her tumor and at a follow up scan a few months later, she was cancer free.

And just last month, her feeding tube was removed. Now Visa is back to eating normally and is looking forward to heading back to work later this summer at a local grocery store. She says proton therapy was an excellent treatment option for her, didn’t cause any side effects, and she never imagined it could get rid of her cancer so quickly.

Deborah Albers
Arlington, Virginia
65 years old
Disease site: Breast

Deborah Albers required a lumpectomy, chemotherapy and traditional radiation the first time she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2003, and it all worked. But in early 2018, after a routine mammogram, cancer was found a second time in her other breast.

Doctors said Deborah needed another lumpectomy, but chemotherapy wasn’t recommended or needed. This time she was given a choice between traditional radiation and proton therapy. After thoroughly researching the two options, Deborah opted for proton therapy because it could target the cancer in her left breast without affecting her heart or other nearby organs.

She received proton therapy five days a week for five weeks, and today her second bout of cancer is now gone.