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eNewsletter

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Positive Energy

FEATURE STORY

Positive Energy

Keisha Harris' Zest for Life Has Been Her Best Medicine

Outside of her hospital room, where she was given only two to six weeks to live, thirty-five-year-old Keisha Harris posted a list of words. It read, "Die, Cancer, Can't and Try," and all who entered could not use any of these words in front of her.

"Someone who is fighting for their life doesn't need to hear those words," says Keisha. "I never thought for a second that I would die."

"Take an active role in your own healing." —Keisha Harris

It was this attitude that turned a 5 percent chance of survival into a life dedicated to making a difference in the lives of others. What began as a kidney tumor turned into stage 4 cervical cancer that spread to Keisha's kidneys and spinal cord.

After leaving Hawaii to be close to family in Virginia, Keisha sought treatment at Virginia Commonwealth University Massey Cancer Center. Unfortunately, radiation and chemotherapy had greatly deteriorated her kidneys and other vital organs, lowering her chances of survival. In a last ditch effort, her gynecologic oncologist recommended a risky and extensive procedure, involving double ostomy surgery, a hysterectomy and the reconstruction of internal passageways.

In the midst of the fight for her life, Keisha's fiancé walked out. For the first time, she felt like she had nothing to live for. Though the surgery was successful, she was on 78 pills a day, many of which were narcotic painkillers with significant side effects.



In 2014, Keisha jumped 855 feet off of the Las Vegas Stratosphere Hotel

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FEATURE STORY

Positive Energy

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One day, while in the throes of pain, she resisted asking for another powerful dose and prayed for the pain to go away. Moments later, a nurse came in and offered her Tylenol III which alleviated her pain without the side effects. She considers this an answer to her prayer. It was that day when she realized there were many options to relieve pain and she didn't always have to take the traditional route.

After this, a friend suggested she try an herbal tea designed to stimulate the immune system and detoxify organs. In the span of a week, Keisha started feeling better. She pored over information about the effects of food on the body and put herself on a liquid regimen of nutrients, and later raw foods. She is now off of all medications and teaches nutritional workshops to those with various medical conditions.

"I teach people that they have to restart their body and train it on what its job is," explains Keisha. "What excites me the most is to see people's lab work come back corrected and know I've been a part of it."

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Keisha jumping off of the Las Vegas Stratosphere Hotel



Keisha does something daring each March to celebrate her victory over cancer

FEATURE STORY

Positive Energy

(continued)

Good nutrition was not Keisha's only medicine; support was vital. Her Wound Ostomy Care Nurse (WOCN), Ann Rice, gave her a lot of hope. Within a week after surgery she asked a hospital co-worker with a colostomy to visit Keisha. She remembers the relief she felt seeing an attractive woman in heels living a full life, and vowed to do the same for others. Keisha is now the woman in heels the hospital calls upon to visit patients with ostomies, especially on Christmas Day. She comes bearing gifts to let them know she was once in their shoes and they are not forgotten.

During her entire ostomy journey, Keisha has worn Hollister products with great results. She went so far as to visit the Hollister plant to hug the people who make the products and explain how important they are to her.

"The double ostomy gave me my life back," says Keisha. "To me, changing my pouches is just a little extra thing I have to do in the morning—those people saved my life and they didn't even know me."

"The double ostomy gave me my life back."

To celebrate her victory over cancer, Keisha does something daring each March. In 2014, she jumped 855 feet off of the Las Vegas Stratosphere Hotel to the ground, and in 2015, she went indoor skydiving. In 2016, she waterskied for the first time since surgery. What will 2017's daring act be? Keisha is not sure, but she chuckles remembering when her father begged her doctor to give her some limitations. Much to her delight, her doctor did not comply.



Keisha's book, *Warrior 917: Lessons Before Living*, is available on Amazon

Keisha and her father recently formed Harris United, a nonprofit organization that helps support cancer patients and their families. She is also working on her second book about her battle with cancer. Check out her first book about her journey, available on Amazon: *Warrior 917: Lessons Before Living*.

Financial Disclosure: Keisha received compensation from Hollister for her contribution to this eNewsletter.

NEWS FROM HOLLISTER

Secure Start Corner

Meet the Smile Behind the Voice

Our team is passionate about helping Secure Start members over the phone or by email. If you have a question about your ostomy, they're here to help.

Meghan



Region: Southeast
Title: Acute Care Coordinator
Length of Service: 4 years

What is your favorite holiday memory? Spending every Christmas Day with my whole family... which is huge, about 70 people. I love it!

What's the best toy you got as a kid during the holidays? A bike – it was my first 2-wheeler.

What's your idea of a perfect winter day? Going sledding with my niece and nephew – they are so fun!

Julie



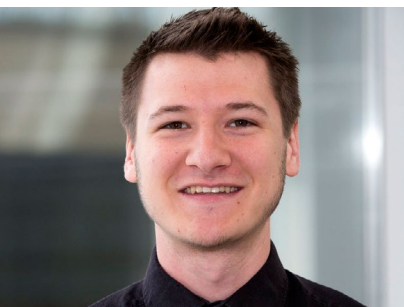
Region: Midwest
Title: Consumer Service Advisor
Length of Service: 3 years

What is your favorite holiday memory? Going to my aunt's house on Christmas morning. In my eyes, she had the most beautiful tree in Chicago.

What's the best toy you got as a kid during the holidays? A tambourine. The house was never quiet after that.

What's your idea of a perfect winter day? Putting on my sweats and slippers, and drinking coffee in front of the TV. I love looking out the window and watching the snow fall.

Sean



Region: East Coast
Title: Home Health Coordinator
Length of Service: 2 years

What is your favorite holiday memory? When I was a sophomore in high school, a lot of my extended family came up for the holidays and stayed at my parents' house. It was a full house, and there was never a dull moment.

What's the best toy you got as a kid during the holidays? I remember getting a metallic blue bike when I was very young. I rode it every day during the summertime.

What's your idea of a perfect winter day? Playing some football in the snow with friends and family, and in the evening watching holiday movies inside and drinking hot chocolate.

ASK THE EXPERT

Prepare for Take Off

Pack These Tips and Advice When Traveling for the Holidays

by Wil Walker, Manager, Clinical Education, Hollister Incorporated

The holidays are a great time to gather with family and friends from near and far. Traveling with an ostomy does not have to slow you down. Whether you're traveling by car or plane, here are some suggestions on how to make your trip worry free.

How many extra ostomy supplies should I pack when traveling?

When traveling, you should pack double the number of supplies you would normally need to make sure you have plenty of pouches and supplies on hand. That way, you are ready for the unexpected, such as a delay in returning home, lost pouches, or changes in climate and environment that call for more pouch changes than usual. In the event that you do need additional supplies while traveling, most manufacturers have products available around the world. Before you leave home, check to see where you can purchase new supplies in the areas where you plan to travel.

Which supplies should I keep with me in my carry-on when I fly?

Your short-term items should go in carry-on luggage so they remain with you at all times and are within easy reach. It's advisable to keep these supplies in a separate, small travel kit to make visits to the toilet simple and discreet.

On long car trips, what should I do about emptying my ostomy pouch?

It could be very messy to attempt emptying an ostomy pouch during a car trip, especially on bumpy roads without the correct type of receptacle in which to empty it. Frequent restroom stops are recommended for the most hygienic emptying.

What should I expect when going through airport security?

Your hand luggage will be inspected at the security baggage check before boarding an aircraft. If you have any prescription drugs with you, have your healthcare professional prepare a card explaining that they are medical supplies. Some countries do not allow certain drugs such as codeine to cross their borders. You may be searched before boarding the aircraft, so be prepared to explain about your stoma and ask to be searched in a private area for medical reasons.

Is there anything I can do to make going through airport security easier?

Pack all of your ostomy supplies in a separate, small travel kit that can go through security independently from your other carry-on items. Also, have your healthcare professional or ostomy association documentation ready to show security officers in case you are questioned.

Are there certain things I'm absolutely not allowed to bring on the airplane?

With more recent changes in airport security, some airlines may not allow scissors onboard the aircraft, even for ostomy products (unless the cutting edge is no longer than 4 inches). If you use a cut-to-fit product, be sure you have enough pre-cut skin barriers to use before reaching your destination. You can certainly pack your scissors into your checked luggage for use once you arrive at your destination.

Read: [TSA's Special Allowance for "Ostomy Scissors"](#)



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ASK THE EXPERT

Prepare for Take Off

(continued)

I heard that I can get a special travel certificate explaining what I am bringing on the plane. What is this and how do I get one?

Travel certificates available through ostomy associations are available to help explain your need to carry ostomy pouches, skin barriers and medications. It is recommended to search online for travel certificates available for ostomy patients.

Read: **UOAA's Travel Communications Card**

What if I have to use the restroom when the "fasten seat belt" sign is on?

Government and airline restrictions could interfere with your access to the restroom during flight. Plan accordingly by emptying your pouch before takeoff. You may also want to consider a private conversation with the flight attendants to inform them that you require restroom trips throughout the flight, and ask them to help you plan accordingly based on your flight schedule.

Will the pressure in the cabin affect my pouch?

A change in cabin pressure on a plane could create a small amount of gas in the pouch. You may consider using a pouch that includes a filter while traveling to help deodorize and slowly release gas from the pouch.

How should I handle emptying my ostomy bag on the airplane?

You should be able to empty your pouch in the airplane restroom as you would at home. It may benefit you to request a seat closer to the restroom for easy access.



Are there any foods I should avoid while traveling?

You may be tempted to reduce the flow from your stoma while traveling by changing your regular eating or drinking routine. However, it is generally not recommended to vary your drinking or eating habits simply because you are traveling. Check with your Wound Ostomy Care Nurse (WOCN) or other healthcare provider for recommendations on your diet.

Helpful Links:

Hollister Travel with an Ostomy:

securestartservices.com/travel

If traveling internationally:

ostomyinternational.org

TSA List of Travel Tips:

ostomy.org/Ostomy_Travel_Tips.html

EVENT UPDATES

Strong Connections

The Run for Resilience Ostomy 5K in Durham, North Carolina, Enjoyed by All

On October 1, we kicked off celebrations for Ostomy Awareness Day in Durham, NC. Early in the morning, 200+ participants assembled for the Run For Resilience Ostomy 5K and the day was off to a great start!

We're a proud Platinum Sponsor of all of the Run for Resilience 5K events. These races all started back in 2014, when two dedicated Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses (WOCN) created an event in Durham, in honor of World Ostomy Day. This year, Hollister Senior Ostomy Specialist, Antoinette Delio, and Secure Start Home Health Coordinator, Sean Kelly, greeted and cheered on participants. Of course, they also caught up with the clinicians, patients and families that they've known for years in the community.

"It's great to interact with the people who use our products..." —Antoinette Delio

"It's great to interact with the people who use our products and get positive feedback about how using them has made a difference in their lives," said Antoinette.



The races have always been family events, designed to educate, support and raise community awareness about people living with an ostomy. The Durham Run for Resilience was no exception. Antoinette's daughter ran the coloring station for kids and her nine-year-old son ran the 5K. The highlight for the kids was an appearance by Wool E. Bull, the mascot of the Durham Bulls baseball team.

The Hollister table at the Durham event



Children at the coloring station



Our team provided Hollister pouches for participants to wear during the events with the goal of improving awareness and educating about some of the challenges faced by people living with ostomies. In addition, we handed out IBD & Ostomy Awareness ribbons to participants.

Additional races were held from coast to coast and overseas. Races took place throughout October in Boise, Idaho; Birmingham, Alabama; and Portland, Oregon. People who were not able to physically attend the events were encouraged to run their own virtual 5K. Runners/walkers pay a registration fee and receive a T-shirt. All proceeds benefit the United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA).

We are impressed by the enthusiasm and support we see within the ostomy community, and pleased to share with you the highlights of each wonderful event.

If you have questions about any of the events we have featured, or would like to get involved, let us know! Call us at 1.888.808.7456 or email us at

securestartnewsletter@hollister.com.

To sign up for a race in 2017 or to get more information go to ostomy5K.org.

EVENT UPDATES

Picking Up Speed

Get Your Rear in Gear® Is Growing by Leaps, Bounds and Miles

The largest colon cancer-focused event series in the country, Get Your Rear in Gear (GYRIG) is picking up speed. In 2016, people from coast to coast walked, ran and biked in 43 events to promote awareness, education and colon cancer screening. Sponsored by the Colon Cancer Coalition (CCC), the events included the GYRIG walk/ride and the more recent Tour de Tush® bike ride.

The first Tour de Tush ride hit the pavement in 2015 in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Participants could choose a 30-mile or 62-mile ride. In 2016, it was held again in Allentown and in the Twin Cities. There, riders could choose between a 25-mile or 8-mile family ride.

Erin Peterson, Communications Director of the CCC, attended the Twin Cities event in August, which drew in 60 survivors and a total of 1,500 participants.

“The most impactful thing for me is talking with the survivors and watching teams and their families cross the finish line with big smiles on their faces,” explained Erin. “And also continuing a relationship with the families who have lost a loved one.”

Though the events are fun, the main focus of the CCC is on screening and education and this is something that is always a priority at the events. The CCC wants to make sure to communicate the importance of screening through colonoscopy or alternative tests. Talk to your doctor about the best test for you.

Passionate local volunteers plan all CCC events, and the money raised stays in the community. Bill Carroll is the local



Lloyd Prater's family in front of the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park at the 2016 event in Mobile, AL

coordinator in Mobile, Alabama. He first launched a local race there to honor his late co-worker, Lloyd Prater. Lloyd participated in the first event in Mobile in 2014 while going through treatment. Today, Bill continues to honor Lloyd's legacy at the Mobile event. This past year, Lloyd's family drove in from Florida and New Mexico to attend the event on April 2, 2016.

There was not a dry eye at the event as Bill told the story of his friendship with Lloyd and why he is so passionate about GYRIG. Members of Lloyd's family, who rarely get a chance to gather, spoke as well at the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park.

The events also attract passionate young people. Eleven-year-old Olive organized a GYRIG team in Columbus, Ohio

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EVENT UPDATES

Picking up Speed

(continued)

to celebrate her Uncle Andy who died of colon cancer two years before she was born. She designed “Happy Butts Crack Us Up” T-shirts and headbands, which Olive and her friends proudly wore. They also sold the T-shirts and headbands to raise money for the event.

“What I say to kids who think they are too young to get involved in a cause is that you are never too young! There are people just like you and me who need our help. You’re young, but you’re mighty,” said Olive.

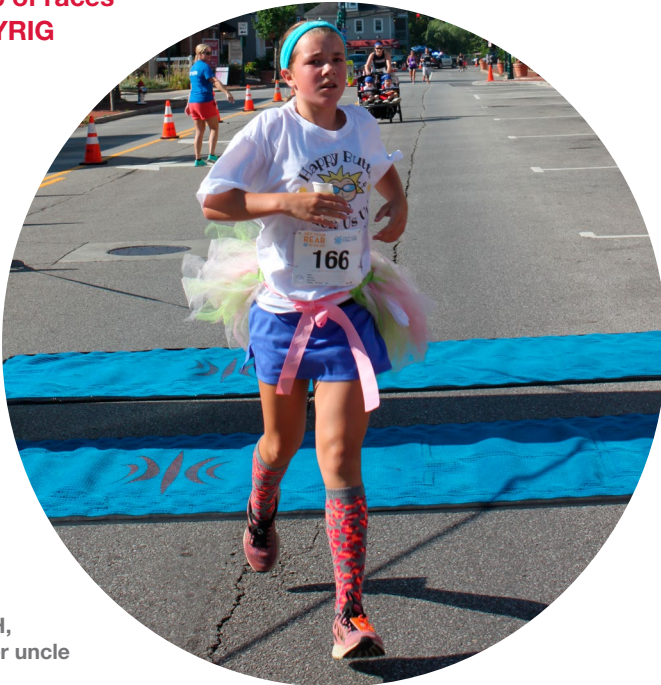
Find an event in your community or create your own. Go to coloncancercoalition.org for more information.

Useful Links:

[Registration](#)

[View a map of races](#)

[Video of GYRIG](#)



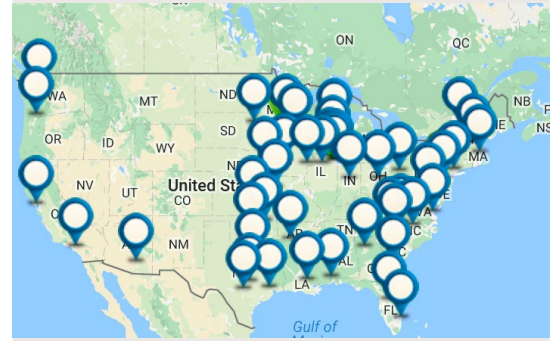
Olive, 11, in Columbus, OH, running for her uncle



Tour de Tush, Allentown, PA



GYRIG, San Francisco, CA



2017 GYRIG Events

- Austin, TX – February 25
- Charlotte, NC – March 4
- Raleigh, NC – March 4
- San Antonio, TX – March 5
- Fort Worth, TX – March 25
- Tucson, AZ – March 25
- Hampton Roads, VA – March 25
- Tulsa, OK – March 25
- Philadelphia, PA – March 26
- Baton Rouge, LA – April 1
- Mobile, AL – April 8
- Oklahoma City, OK – April 22
- Winston-Salem, NC – April 29
- Orlando, FL – May 14
- Denver, CO – May 15
- Wichita, KS – May 28
- Tinley Park, IL – July 23
- Portland, OR – August 5
- Victoria, MN – August 16
- Des Moines, IA – August 26
- Milwaukee, WI – October 14
- West Palm Beach, FL – October 21
- New York City, NY – October 22

- Allentown, PA – TBD
- Atlanta, GA – TBD
- Beaver, PA – TBD
- Boston, MA – TBD
- Chicago, IL – TBD
- Colchester, VT – TBD
- Columbus, OH – TBD
- Elgin, IL – TBD
- Green Bay, WI – TBD
- Indianapolis, IN – TBD
- Hickory, NC – TBD
- Hot Springs, AR – TBD
- Houston, TX – TBD
- Kansas City, MO – TBD
- Ladd, IL – TBD
- Muscatine, IA – TBD
- New Hampshire – TBD
- Orange County, CA – TBD
- Rochester, MN – TBD
- San Francisco, CA – TBD
- Savannah, GA – TBD
- Seattle, WA – TBD

NEWS FROM HOLLISTER

Welcome to Secure Start Services

As a member of Secure Start services, you're not alone. You may have questions about your ostomy, how to care for your stoma, and how to keep on living the life you want to live – but you don't have to figure it out on your own. At Secure Start services, we are proud to offer complimentary dedicated support for as long as you need it, regardless of the brand of products you use.

Here are a few ways we can help:

- Finding the right product fit
- Helping you sort out your insurance coverage
- Identifying supplier options
- Accessing an ostomy nurse over the phone to find answers to your clinical product questions
- Providing product information and condition-specific education
- Finding local resources



Secure Start Services

Providing a lifetime of personalized support at no cost to patients, so you can live your life your way.

If you haven't already enrolled, call us today at 1.888.808.7456 or visit our website at securestartservices.com/ostomyenroll to get started. We're here to help!

Tender Loving Care



Hollister Supports Even the Littlest People with Ostomies

As a parent of a child with an ostomy, you may have many questions about ostomy care. How do I manage the pouching system? How do I explain to my child what is happening? Where can I find support? Hollister Secure Start services is here to help with educational pediatric materials and support for your pediatric ostomy questions. Pediatric offerings include:

- **Caring for Your Child with an Ostomy**— An educational booklet filled with facts, tips, advice and resources (also available in Spanish).
- **The Day I Got My Stoma**— Personal stories about what it's like to grow up with an ostomy. Sections include one for parents of young children and another for tweens and teens with ostomies.

- **Ostomy Shadow Buddies**— Available through Hollister in partnership with the Shadow Buddies Foundation. These dolls are designed to be a friend and educational tool for kids with an ostomy. Each doll has an ostomy and helps provide emotional support.
- **Pouchkins Pediatric Products**— Specially sized ostomy products for premature babies, infants and children, designed to meet the sensitive needs of little ones with ostomies.
- **Pouchkins Pediatric Product Care Tips**— Product information sheets with care tips for using Pouchkins ostomy products with preemies and newborns.
- **1-piece and 2-piece Pediatric Care Tips**— Product information sheets with care tips for using 1-piece and 2-piece ostomy products with your child.
- **Pediatric Coloring Book**— “Can They Still Wiggle and Giggle?”

For more information, please contact a member of the Secure Start team at 1.888.808.7456, or visit: securestartservices.com/pediatrics

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

Another Year, Oh Dear!

Brenda Looks Back on Her 2016 Resolutions with a Chuckle and a Smile

I had to laugh the other day when I listened to my girlfriend's message on her answering machine. At the very end of her message she said, "And I wish you a happy 2016." I started my message back to her with, "Happy 2016 to you, too" even though it's almost the end of the year. I remember the older people in my family talking about how fast time flies and now that I'm the older one in the family, I sure get it. Life flies by faster than a bullet train in Japan!

So looking over my 2016 New Year's resolutions... What did I accomplish?

1. **Lose 25 pounds.** Uh...nope. However, I did lose 5 pounds of clutter mysteriously from my closet last month.
2. **Be on time or five minutes early.** I was late for my dental, gynecology, and colonoscopy appointments, but always on time for lunches with the girlfriends (an annual resolution I have kept).
3. **Clean my whole house.** ...Yeah, right. What was I thinking when I wrote that one?
4. **Become an Auctioneer.** I will, I will, I will, I have to make that call. I am sold on that idea. 2017.
5. **Exercise 5 times a week.** I signed up for the Run for Resilience for UOAA. It's a virtual 5K race. It was so easy. I just imagined running and dang was I good! Finished it in record time.
6. **Become a CHP, Certified Humor Professional.** I did last April! Accomplished. You be the judge.



Peace on Earth from Budapest to Pennsylvania!

7. **Live, Love and Laugh more.** Visited with people from Budapest to the Amish in Pennsylvania, sharing laughs and stories along the way. Peace on earth, one person at a time.
8. **Sleep more.** I had five days when I slept for eight hours this year. I am now well rested.
9. **Tell my loved ones they are loved.** Often, frequently, and I am loved in return.
10. **Pick two resolutions for 2017.**

As you look over your year, I hope you find it was filled with good health and much happiness. May 2017 fill you to the brim with goals achieved or serenity in the quietness. May you laugh so deeply— it hurts, and may you love and feel love in return. What else really matters?



Brenda Elsagher

Brenda is a loud and proud member of the ostomy community and a good friend of Hollister Incorporated. She is an international keynote speaker, author and comedian.

Her books include: *If the Battle is Over, Why am I Still in Uniform?*; *I'd Like to Buy a Bowel Please!*; *Bedpan Banter*; *It's in the Bag and Under the Covers*; and *Your Glasses Are on Top of Your Head*.

You can find out more about her at livingandlaughing.com.



Happy Holidays and a Healthy, Happy New Year!

We hope your 2016 was filled with good memories, valuable life lessons, fun and health.

May this New Year bring you happiness, joy and cheer!

The Secure Start Team
at Hollister Incorporated



Secure Start eNewsletter Resources

Secure Start Services

1.888.808.7456

www.securestartservices.com

Secure Start Facebook Page 

United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. (UOAA)

1.800.826.0826

info@uoaa.org

www.ostomy.org

Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, Inc. (CCFA)

1.800.932.2423

www.ccfa.org

Inspire.com

www.inspire.com

Colon Cancer Coalition (CCC)

952.378.1237

info@coloncancercoalition.org

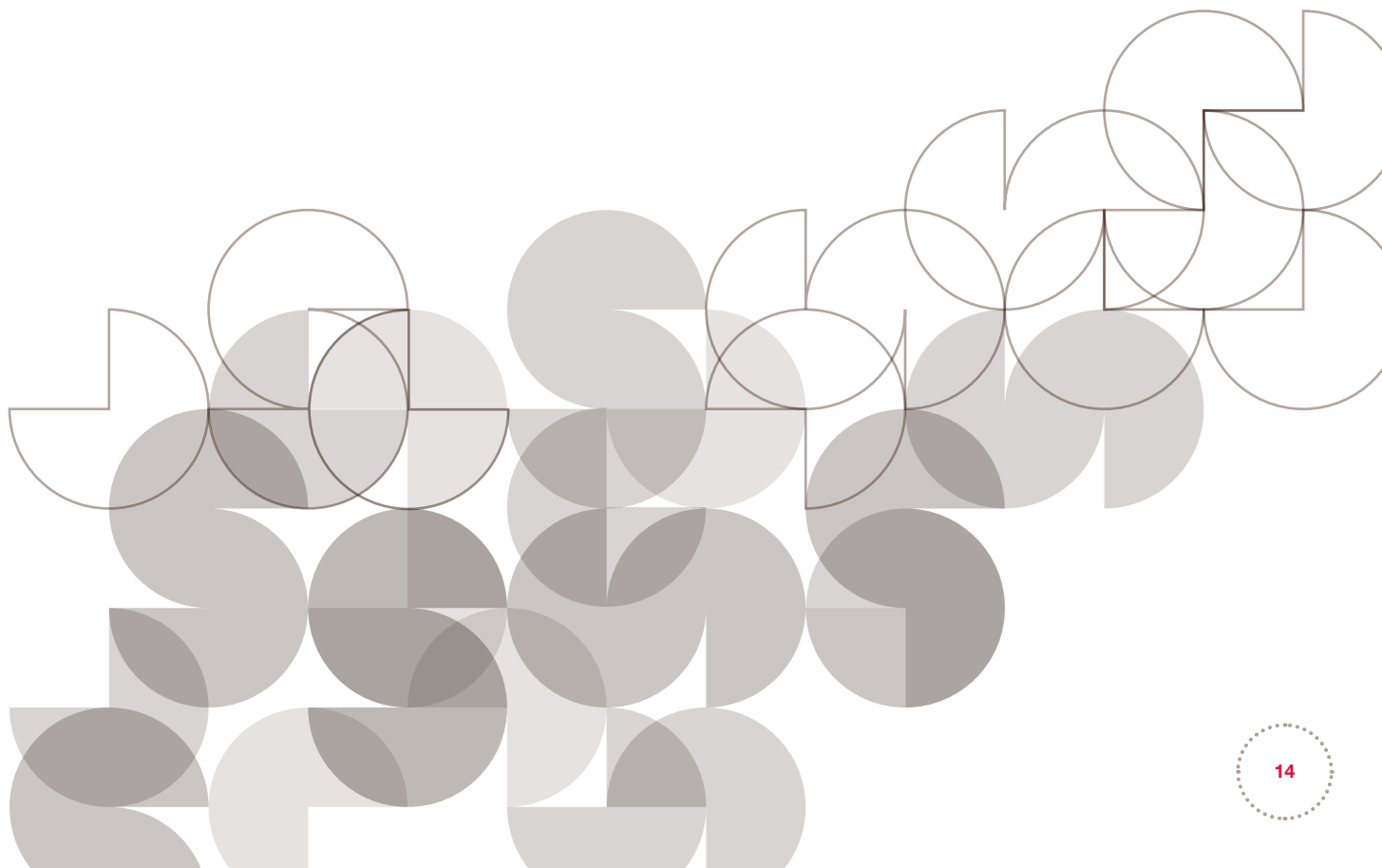
www.coloncancercoalition.org

To download past issues of Secure Start eNewsletter, [click here.](#)

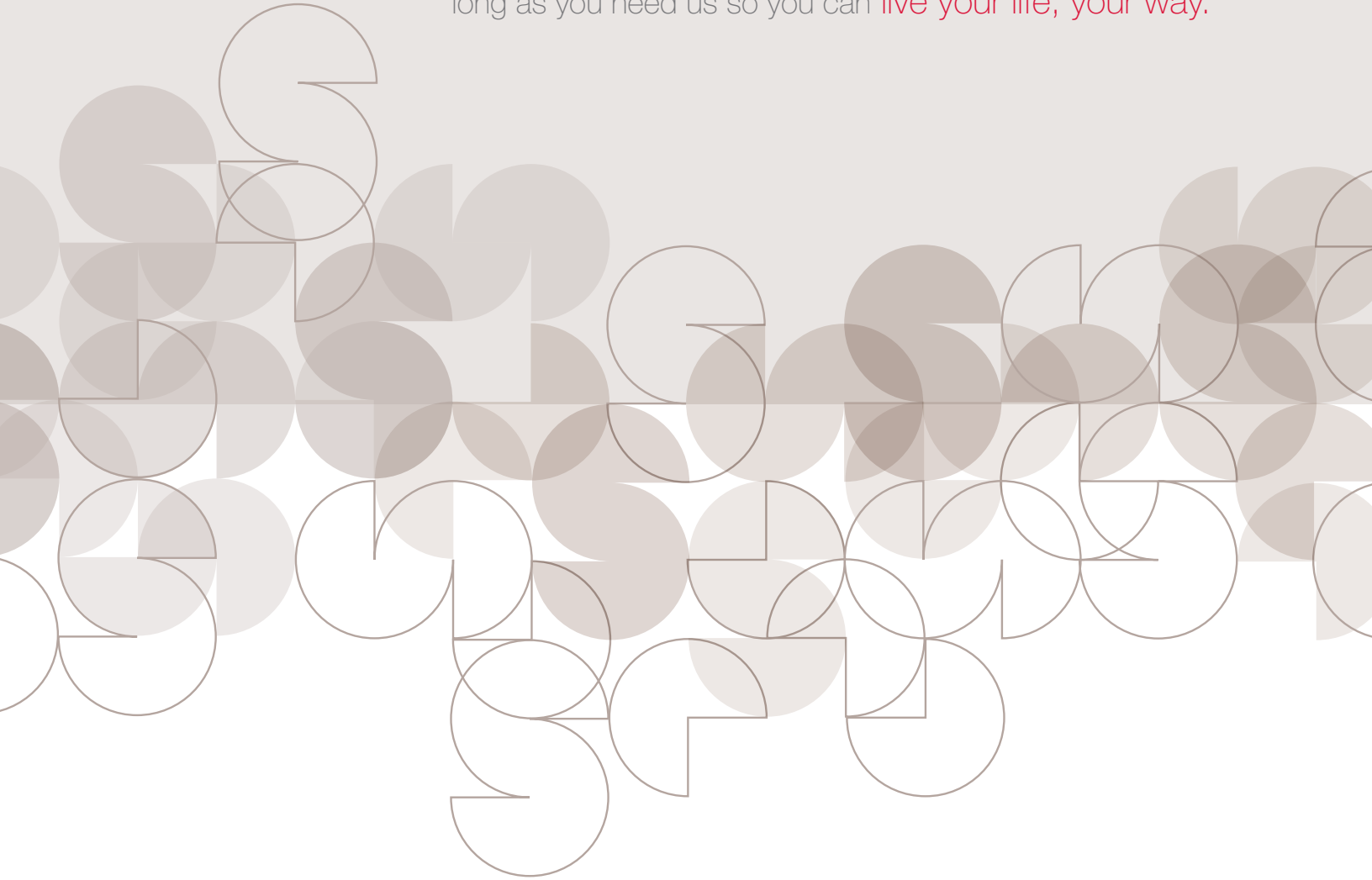
Share Your Story

Are you interested in having your story potentially featured in the Secure Start eNewsletter?

Email us at securestartnewsletter@hollister.com



We are proud to offer a lifetime of personalized support for as long as you need us so you can **live your life, your way.**



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