



# New! "Ask Arthur" Answers Your Questions

For more in-depth info and resources: [www.pmppals.net](http://www.pmppals.net)

Email: [info@pmppals.net](mailto:info@pmppals.net)

## "Ask Arthur" Q & A



Arthur Rettig, retired surgeon,  
PMP patient, and your PMP Pal

Those faced with PMP—whether patients or caregivers—have many questions about this rare condition. We're sure you have a few of your own. And we know how difficult it can be to find answers. That's why we've created a new resource on the PMP Pals' website: **Ask Arthur**. It's an easy way for you to find out more about diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, after-surgery care, and more.

Arthur Rettig is a retired surgeon who has PMP. He's been through an ileo-colectomy, two rounds of HIPEC, and chemotherapy. He's been right there in the trenches with the rest of us.

When he was diagnosed, Arthur had plenty of questions; being a doctor did not mean that he was an expert in PMP. But he did have the training and knowledge to access medical journals, to dig deep and understand the medical jargon. And now,

he's offered to interpret the information he's found in layman's terms for others, to offer guidance, and answer your questions.

Simply go to [www.pmppals.net/ask-arthur](http://www.pmppals.net/ask-arthur) to "meet" Arthur and ask him questions. Your inquiries will go directly to Arthur, privately, and he will answer you directly. This is not a chat room. It's a direct line of communication to someone who has done the research and is more than happy to share his findings.

*Please note that although Arthur has medical training, he is not your doctor. He can give you guidance and share information, but decisions about your health and your care must be made exclusively with your treating physicians.*

**Ask Arthur!**

Go to [www.pmppals.net/ask-arthur](http://www.pmppals.net/ask-arthur)  
with your questions.

## Arthur's Recommended Articles

During Arthur's extensive research on PMP, he unearthed the most essential medical articles. They are posted on the PMP Pals website for everyone to access. From HIPEC therapy to tumor markers, from genetics to the grading of pathology, the articles in this collection address problems that PMP patients face and provide valuable information.

You can find Arthur's treasure trove of recommended articles at: [www.pmppals.net/recommended-articles](http://www.pmppals.net/recommended-articles). As an introduction to this collection, Arthur explains the best way to read a medical article for those of us with no medical training. If some of the medical jargon stumps you, and you still have questions about what you've read, just "Ask Arthur!"

## Connecting With You

By Charmaine Skillman

Since re-launching PMP Pals, we have been touched by your response in welcoming us back into your lives. It is heartening to connect with you and learn about your life with PMP. Here are just a few of the Pals who have been a part of our re-building process.

### Cards Give Hope

Reva, one of our volunteer card-writers, had surgery and chemo when in her 70s! The care from the medical staff and the resulting hope she felt was an "uplifting" experience. During her treatment, she recalls receiving dozens of cards from other Pals – expressions of hope at just the right time! Now Reva volunteers both as a mentor and card-writer to be a source of encouragement for others.

### Young Pals

We connect with very young Pals, too. The mother of a recent high school graduate contacted us shortly after re-launch. After hearing her son would need a



second surgery for PMP, she naturally was feeling discouraged around the time when she received a package of Pals cards and a Bare

Bottom Bear for her son. What a day brightener for both of them to feel the support of the Pals community. Her son recently started a fundraising effort to help other families dealing with cancer.

### 65+ Support

Another patient, Tom, was an avid runner and otherwise healthy but found himself facing surgery with HIPEC in 2009. To learn more about PMP, he contacted other Pals and connected with "interesting and encouraging" patients who helped him keep his morale up and answered his questions. This experience inspired him to volunteer to talk to others, especially men 65+, who seek out the insight of another patient. And, Tom reports his doctor now considers him cured.

### Old Friends

We also heard from some of the earliest members of PMP Pals, such as Bud who



went through surgery in 1999 and has dealt with many physical challenges. He and his wife are lay ministers who both have volunteered to help other Pals over the years. Bud notes that several aspects of treatment have changed since his surgery many years ago, but the need for peer support remains unchanged.

Another early supporter, Schatzi, grew up with PMP Pals founder Gabriella Graham. Schatzi recently volunteered to mentor a patient living near her. The patient had

moved to be closer to her family, but in the process ended up separated from her old friends; support from Pals has eased that difficult transition. Schatzi has been thrilled to see us continue Gabriella's work, and we are so glad to have early supporters like Schatzi with us.

### Connecting Live

Though we connect mainly via email and phone, sometimes we get the chance to meet in person.



Some new Pals, like Pratap, attended the informal Pals picnic in June to meet fellow patients. The picnic opened doors to information and support for him.

Similarly, Pals' mentor program volunteer Charmaine attended the University of California – San Diego PMP/Appendix Cancer symposium. There she met several of the new Pals mentor volunteers, and she re-connected with members like Dawn and Cyndee whom she had met at a Pals conference years ago. For those of us able to attend events like these, the personal interaction is energizing and uplifting.

There are dozens more interactions we could mention. Be assured that your support and involvement motivate us to work hard to make PMP Pals a meaningful part of your lives. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for connecting with us!



### SHARE YOUR STORY

We want to hear how PMP Pals' Network has helped you and your family. Write to us and share your story of hope with new patients as well as long-time PMP Pals. We look forward to hearing from you! [info@pmppals.com](mailto:info@pmppals.com)



## *Get Well Cards Make Everyone Feel Good!*

We all know that writing get well cards to Pals who could use a lift helps those who receive the cards. But did you know that Pals who write cards have also told us how good it makes them feel?

Pal Reva wrote, "Enclosed are the cards for the people whose names I received from you. I hope my messages will give them comfort and renewed hope. I'm amazed at what participating in this is doing for my feelings. Thank you for including me."

Thanks, Reva, for sending that along!

One of the best ways to feel good is to help someone else. And we, as PMP patients, know how important it is to stay positive. So if you have a few minutes to spare to write some cards, please drop a line to [getwellcards@pmppals.net](mailto:getwellcards@pmppals.net), and thanks.

## Donations Help Us Help Others

PMP Pals' Network is happy to offer free support for patients, their families, and caregivers. It's what we do! We...

...answer your questions through our newsletter, blog and "Ask Arthur" feature.

...provide mentors to help patients navigate the complex and often daunting treatment process.

...send get well cards and Bare Bottom Bears to patients to brighten their days.

...provide up-to-date information about PMP, its diagnosis, treatment, and recovery period.

...help you find a surgical oncologist who is specially qualified to advise and treat PMP patients.

...offer HOPE and SUPPORT.

We are a volunteer-run organization, and most of the work done behind the scenes is by volunteers—mostly PMP patients and their families and caregivers.

However, there are costs necessary to keep our organization going. Such as postage for Get Well cards, shipping for Bare Bottom Bears, and web site upkeep and hosting fees.

We do NOT want the patients or their families donating—they have more than enough on their plates and must concentrate on getting better. But we are open to donations from past patients and their families if they've found us to be helpful and would like to help us continue this work. Businesses or organizations are also welcome to donate to help us defray costs.

## Subscribe to PMP Pals' Informative Blog Posts!

Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for you to find helpful information.

- Looking for tips on returning to work after HIPEC surgery?
- Need a refresher on wound care?
- Are you wondering if appendix cancer is hereditary?

The answers to these questions are found in our most recent blog posts. Stay up-to-date with groundbreaking research, tips for pre- and post-operative patients, and more by visiting [www.pmppals.net/blog](http://www.pmppals.net/blog).

Don't miss a thing! You can receive new blog posts by visiting the blog page of our website and entering your email address in the "Subscribe" section.



To contribute to our ongoing efforts, please visit our donor page:

<http://pmppals.net/become-a-donor>





## Bare Bottom Bears Bring Joy to Patients

PMP Pals is proud to continue offering Bare Bottom Bears to patients having surgery. It's one of our longest running outreaches that help patients remember they're not alone, even with a rare cancer. In the past month we enjoyed sending bears to PMP Pals Cecilia and Colin.

Pal Cecilia was struggling with post-surgical complications and it meant a lot to her when she received her Bear. Cecilia has appreciated PMP Pals' support so much, she wants to become a mentor herself now.

Pal Colin, who is an athlete that recently graduated from high school, received his own personalized Sporty Bear. We hope you're back on the field soon Colin (don't forget to send pictures!).

If you or someone you know is having surgery soon, send a request today to [barebottombears@pmppals.net](mailto:barebottombears@pmppals.net)! They're free of charge and we're as happy to send them as you are to receive them.

### Upcoming Events

**"PMP/Appendiceal Cancer: What's New in 2015!"**

5<sup>th</sup> Annual UMass/PMPRF PMP/Appendix Cancer Patient-Practitioner Symposium

UMass Memorial Medical Center  
Worcester, MA

**November 11, 8:30 am - 1:00 pm (Free)**

For more info visit our [Events Page](#)

### THE MONTHLY YARDSTICK

PMP Pals strives to provide support for patients with a rare disease. We see our impact by measuring what we do.

- Information Requests Completed: 28
- Mentor Matches Made: 4
- Patients Receiving Get Well Cards: 5
- Bare Bottom Bears Sent: 4
- Answers by Arthur: 10



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### PMP Pals' Network

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PMP Pals is a global volunteer-run organization that gives hope to patients and caregivers fighting appendix cancer, also known as Pseudomyxoma Peritonei or PMP, and other cancers of the abdominal cavity. We provide information through our web site and personalized support through our programs.