



# Empowering Cancer Survivors: Crafting a Transformative Wellness Program for Lifelong Well-being

Presented by: Ilka Hoffins, Program Director for Aurora Cancer Care's Team Phoenix

- Overview of the Team Phoenix Training Program
- How Team Phoenix changes the lives of female cancer survivors
- Tips for crafting a transformative wellness program for cancer survivors



Aurora Health Care®

Now part of  ADVOCATEHEALTH

# Team Phoenix Leadership Team

Aurora Cancer Services:

Ellen Feinstein and Dr. James Weis: Cancer Service Line VPs

Dr Jamie Cairo, Director of Clinical Program Development-System  
Cancer Services

Medical Advisors:

Dr Leslie Waltke, Cancer Rehabilitation Coordinator

Dr. Michael Mullane, Medical Director, Hereditary Cancer Prevention  
and Management Center

Program Director: Ilka Hoffins

Certified Triathlon Coach: Kim Kelley

**Contact: [Teamphoenix@aah.org](mailto:Teamphoenix@aah.org)**



# Team Phoenix Triathlon Training Program

## Survivorship Redefined

Since 2011 Team Phoenix has helped over **375** women gain back their mojo!

**Over 70%** of survivors would have liked more support from treatment to survivorship

Mission: To help cancer survivors improve their quality of life and longevity by establishing life-long habits of exercise, healthy eating, and camaraderie



# Team Phoenix Triathlon Training

Working Toward a Common Challenging Goal Over an Extended Period Time

*Surgery – Chemo – Radiation: Not By Choice*

*Swim – Bike – Run: By Choice*

- **Common (Challenging) Goal:** Safe and successful training and completion of Sprint distance Triathlon. (Swim  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile, bike 15+ miles, run/walk 3.1 miles) *Less than 2% of the general population have completed a triathlon!*
- **Extend Time:** 14-week training plan from Mid April – End of July (Learn to Swim Mid March – Mid April)
- **Education:** Nutrition, Mindfulness, Yoga sessions
- **Graduation:** Crossing the finish line of the Triathlon. Athletes become “triathletes” and “alumnae” gain access year round support



# Removing Common Barriers to Exercise

## No Judgement Zone

- **Any type of invasive cancer** (DCIS included) of all stages
- **All ages and fitness levels** (see minimal requirements below)
- **Cancer treatment completion** – no limit on when treatment was completed
- **Treatment from any Cancer Center** – not limited to Advocate/Aurora patients

## Basic Ability + Desire for Change

- **“Can Do” Attitude** – trust the process
- **Availability** for 14 week group training and triathlon
- **Commitment** to follow the training plan
- **Medical Clearance** – oncologist or PCP
- **Swim** any stroke or style for a length of the pool, including deep water (If an athlete cannot swim we offer access to swimming lessons prior to the season)
- **Walk** 100 yards unassisted
- **Bike** 100 yards unassisted

**Over 50%**

**of Team Phoenix athletes have NEVER been a part of an exercise class or athletic team**



# Individualized Training

*“Because of Team Phoenix I Will No Longer Allow My Fears to Hold Me Hostage”*

## Learn To Swim Session

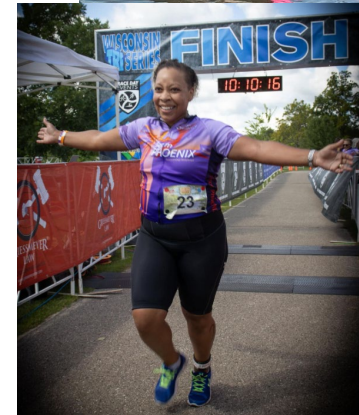
- 5 Weeks of Group Training – one on one
- Overcome Fear of the Water
- Swim Angels for Open Water Swims/Triathlon Day

## Prescribed Leveled 14 week training plan

- 3 levels for each of the 4 disciplines
  - Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
  - Swim, Strength, Bike, Run
- Group Training twice a week
- Individual training three times a week
  - Encouraged to involve family, co-workers, friends
  - Individual training three times a week

## Fitness Tracker/Online Training Plan

- Connects fitness activity to online App
- Track heart rate, distance, duration
- Benchmarks to assure proper progress
- Communication with Coach



# Team Phoenix Comprehensive Infrastructure

*“Team Phoenix has helped re-ignite my SPARK to make positive life-long changes through kindness, encouragement, nutrition and friendship.”*

 Aurora Health Care® | Now part of  ADVOCATEHEALTH



AHC Medical Leadership & Clinicians

Program Director Coaches

Alumnae/Mentors



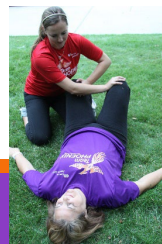
Community Volunteers

Swim Angels

Medical Volunteers

Family/Friend Supporters!

Community Partners



# Clinicians, Coaches, Medical & Alumnae Volunteers

*“I’m in AWE of all of the alumnae and clinicians who volunteered to support us throughout the season”*



- Tri Certified Coaches
- Physicians/Nurses
- Physical Therapists
- Athletic Trainers
- Alumnae Mentors
- Swim Angels
- Lifeguard
- Bike/Run/Swim Experts





# Community, Friends and Family Support

“So many friends, family and even co-workers offered to train with me!”



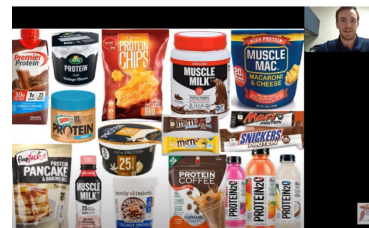
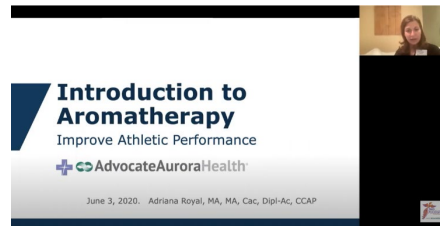
# Healthy Eating and Wellness Education

Interactive Sessions With Maureen Cline, Registered Dietician and Team Phoenix Alumnae 2015



*TP alumnae: “Saw my PCP today! I’m very happy to report that my A1C is 1/10 of a point above normal range. Last August it was 1/10 of a point from the diabetes diagnosis. So thankful for Team Phoenix and the healthier lifestyle I’ve been working at. Kudos to Maureen for teaching me what I know in the nutrition realm. Making your famous spinach dip for New Years! 😊”*

## AHC Health News Articles and Guest Speakers



# Team Phoenix Year-Round Programs

*I found incredible strength, determination and resources to keep myself healthy and give cancer a kick in the behind!*



*“Team Phoenix literally changed my life. Not only did I complete a triathlon sprint, which I never thought I could do, I made lifetime friends with my TP sisters and found incredible strength, determination and resources to keep myself healthy and give cancer a kick in the behind!”*

# Team Phoenix Private Facebook Group

*Because of Team Phoenix, the Impossible Became Possible*



# A Testament to Life Changing Behaviors

*I needed to meet with my financial planner again because I realized I'm going to live longer than I thought!*

*"I saw my Primary Care Physician for the first time since Team Phoenix. Had seen her just prior to beginning training.*

*She said it made her week to see all the TP has done in my life!*

*Blood pressure down, no more nerve pain....we were both almost giddy with excitement!*

*I needed to meet with my financial planner again because I realized I'm going to live longer than I thought!"*





Invites You To Join Our Upcoming

# H.E.A.L SURVIVORSHIP SESSIONS

Healthy Eating, Active Living & Camaraderie for Female Cancer Survivors



**HELD AT THE PETTIT ICE CENTER**

**Space is Limited -- Register Today!**

**ONLY \$5/SESSION**

Register for individual sessions or all 4!

*Financial Need Scholarships available*

**Enjoy a Night of Fitness, Food & Friendship!**

Also includes complimentary admission to the Pettit Track,  
food samples & take home items.

**Wed. Nov. 8, Dec 6, Jan 10, Feb 7**

**6pm-8pm**

- 6pm-7pm Run/Walk and Strength with Coach Kim Kelley
- 7pm-8pm Health Eating & Cooking Tips with Registered Dietician Maureen Cline + Social Time

*\*Come to one or both parts of the evening*



**KOHL'S**

These sessions are hosted by Aurora Cancer Care's Team Phoenix and supported by a generous HEAL grant from ACS/Kohls and a community partnership with the Pettit Ice Center

Questions? Contact us at [Teamphoenix@aah.org](mailto:Teamphoenix@aah.org)



# Team Phoenix Training Program

**100%** Of Team Phoenix athletes would recommend the program to other survivors

- **DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR FEMALE CANCER SURVIVORS** of any type of invasive cancer (DCIS included), created for all stages, ages and ALL fitness levels.
- **FOCUSED ON RE-CONDITIONING:** No experience needed. Basic walking, biking and swimming ability (Learn to Swim available) Re-building trust, confidence and strength
- **MEDICALLY OVERSEEN** Participants provide a medical clearance, professionally coached, prescribed training plans with individualized support from medical professionals focusing on the individual needs and abilities
- **CONSISTENT** Athletes train for 14 weeks to prepare for a sprint distance triathlon (1/4 mile swim, 15 mile bike, 3.1 mile run/walk) Training begins in mid-April and goes through the end of July. Group training is twice a week, with prescribed training plans for training at home the other 3 days. Pre-season Learn to Swim and Post-season training year-round for alumnae are also offered
- **MODIFIED** There are 3 levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced) of training plans for each of the 4 disciplines (swim, bike, run/walk, strength). Plans are selected for each individual based on their ability, strength, stamina and medical conditions.
- **COMMUNITY SUPPORTED** Subsidized by donor and community support, medical and community volunteers, and alumnae. “Alumnae Mentor Groups” help athletes bond with those who live in close proximity
- **POPULAR!** There is a max capacity of 50 athletes per season and spots fill up quickly! Registration is open for next summer’s training! Word of Mouth recommendations from Clinicians and Alumnae.
- **A GREAT VALUE** The cost of the program is subsidized by the generosity of Aurora Foundation donors and program grants which reduces the participation fee for athletes. Fee includes coaching, training plans, a training shirt, competition jersey, facility fees, race registration, and other training support provided by community partners.

# Team Phoenix Cancer Survivor Training Program

- Sports Illustrated
- Triathlete Magazine
- USA Triathlon Magazine
- Silent Sports Magazine





# Contact Team Phoenix

If you know female cancer survivors that would benefit from being a part of a survivorship program or if you'd like to get involved

Email: [teamphoenix@aah.org](mailto:teamphoenix@aah.org) or [ilka.hoffins@aah.org](mailto:ilka.hoffins@aah.org)





<https://youtu.be/AvvCLfGg9E>

## Team Phoenix Video

- ▶ Cancer Survivorship Program offered by Aurora Health Care
- ▶ For women whose physical, social and emotional wellness has been affected by cancer treatment
- ▶ 14 week triathlon training program April – July culminating in Sprint distance triathlon
- ▶ Survivor athletes become "alumnae" - year round training, education, and camaraderie
- ▶ Ultimate goal of improving quality the quality of life and longevity of cancer survivors

