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The Ironman

Mary I. Fisher

University of Dayton, mary.fisher@udayton.edu

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The Ironman

Mary Insana Fisher, PT, PhD

Board-certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopedic Physical Therapy and Certified Lymphedema Therapist; Editor-in-Chief, *Rehabilitation Oncology*; and Associate Professor, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH

Last year at this time I wrote about Training for a Marathon – Responding to a Pandemic. In that message, I highlighted that “finding solutions to reducing risk, preventing transmission, curing severely ill, managing the long-term sequelae..., and protecting vulnerable populations” from COVID-19 was similar to training for a marathon. One year later, we are still running – and cycling and swimming – we are training for an Ironman.

Given the continued presence of COVID-19 in our lives, and the insidiousness of this disease, it is safe to say that it will be with us for the long term. We are challenged to continue to provide care to those with cancer in the middle of this pandemic. Use this journal and the evidence database to learn about innovative and effective telehealth assessment and treatment strategies. Consider teaming up with researchers to investigate new, creative ways to deliver care to vulnerable populations. Reach out to find ways to meet unmet needs of those with cancer and be mindful of health disparities and how you can be part of the solution.

We are also challenged to care for ourselves to avoid burnout (see Academy President Laura Sheridan’s message). Be sure to take care of yourself so that you may take care of others. Part of caring for yourself and being part of the solution is becoming vaccinated against COVID-19 infection. The American Physical Therapy Association, in conjunction with the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Speech and Hearing Association, issued a [position statement](#) calling on our respective health professionals to obtain full vaccination. The statement stipulates that it is our *professional responsibility* [emphasis added] to protect the health, safety, and welfare of others. Given that we treat those with cancer, with compromised immune systems, it is ever more important to be vaccinated. We can embody this professionalism by getting vaccinated, universally masking, and engage in appropriate mitigation strategies during this pandemic. We use best evidence in our care, and we can use the best evidence to protect ourselves and others from COVID-19.

Let’s compete in this Ironman, with an iron-clad shield to protect ourselves and our patients.