



Dr. Leila Kutteh
Medical Oncologist
Hall-Perrine Cancer Center

A dose of humor

Two heads (or more) are always better than one, especially during a critical illness.

Mike Hoyt had some of the best medical heads, including medical oncologist Leila Kutteh, MD, at Mercy caring for him.

And, he had Mr. Potato Head.

Before his first inpatient chemotherapy treatment to fight mantle cell lymphoma, Mike's daughter gave him a Mr. Potato Head. "Staff would ask me questions or talk to me about what they were going to do, and I'd say, 'Talk to him', he says."

Mr. Potato Head not only helped deflect some of Mike's discomfort, he also buoyed the spirits of his caregivers. During one particularly painful time,

Mike put a sign on Mr.

Potato Head that said 'ouch'. That sense of

humor kept him going through what would be a long road to recovery.

From the time he was diagnosed in March 2012 with mantle cell lymphoma, a series of

setbacks kept him fighting for his life through the winter of 2013. In one year, Mike received care in more areas of the hospital and Hall-Perrine Cancer Center than most people see in their lifetime.

His journey began in the office of his family physician after he had noticed some unusual bumps under his armpit and in the fold of his legs. They grew from pea- to golf-ball size in two weeks. "I'm 57 and that was the first time in my life I made a doctor's appointment on my own," says Mike. "I knew something wasn't right."

By the end of the week he and his wife, Nancy, had an appointment with Dr. Kutteh. "I'm convinced they can fix just about anything, but it's all about early detection,"

says Mike, whose cancer is not curable, but is in remission now. His type of lymphoma advances so quickly that he was within weeks of not being able to beat it.

Mike raves about the care he received at Hall-Perrine Cancer Center. "Everyone is top-

"Everyone is top-notch. We weren't just a number."

*Mike Hoyt
Cancer patient*



Mr. Potato Head was Mike Hoyt's close companion during his cancer treatment journey, adding some levity in a difficult time.