



# Dalin

**Never Give Up,  
Even with End-Stage Lung Cancer**

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Ms. Lee lives in Changhua, Taiwan. She was once yearning for the land of ultimate bliss, and thought that death is nothing to worry about. Therefore, even she was diagnosed with life threatening cancer, she gave up treatments. Fortunately, because of the kindness

of Vice Superintendent Dr. Lai Chun-Liang, who would not let his patient to suffer the life ending pain. Under Dr. Lai's persistence, Ms. Lee's quality of life was improved and her life extended. Here, Ms. Lee shares her experience of fighting with cancer and encourages other patients not to give up.

Ms. Lee is 73 years old. More than three years ago, she was coughing and discovered traces of blood in her phlegm. At the beginning, she thought it was a symptom of microvascular rupture. As the bleeding re-occurred, for some



**Vice Superintendent Dr. Lai Chun-Liang indicates that the improved tools and methods for diagnosis can identify the genes to fight cancer, and many of the cancer fighting drugs have mild side effects, therefore, improving the quality of life and extending the life of the patients.**

times, she decided to visit Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital.

After blood testing, CT Scans, biopsy and many other tests, Pulmonary Medicine specialist Dr. Lai explained to Ms. Lee: “This is lung cancer of stage four, according statistics, your chance of survival is ...” That was like a thunder strike in a bright sun light day. Even before Dr. Lai finished his opinion, Ms. Lee was in a stage of extremely frustration.

Luckily, Dr. Lai treated Ms. Lee with the second generation oral based target drug for one year. She responded well with the target medicine, and the condition stabilized. But to the surprise of Dr. Lai, Ms. Lee refused for return visit. She is a Buddhist. When she was younger, she was the sole provider of her family. Now, the children all have their family, she has no more worry of their well beings. She thinks that her illness is just the phenomenon of cause and effect across lifetimes. Therefore, as her condition getting better, she stopped visiting the hospital and her focus is just pursuing for the land of ultimate bliss.

Vice Supt. Lai’s office is extremely busy. Yet, the doctor remembers that Ms. Lee reacted to the treatment well but did not see her return for a long time. He worried that if the treatment stopped and the tumor started to grow again, her

condition would be very dangerous. So, Dr. Lai asked the nurse to call Ms. Lee and inquiring her situation.

Ms. Lee answered the phone and told the nurse that: “It doesn’t matter now. I am old and I have lived long enough.” Dr. Lai asked the nurse to keep calling and urging Ms. Lee to come back for a visit. But the return visit has never materialized. At the same time, COVID-19 hits. For a full year, Ms. Lee did not return to the hospital. Finally, during September of 2020, she visited Dr. Lai. At that time, the once under controlled tumor grew bigger, again.

As a matter of fact, Ms. Lee’s last visit to the hospital was not seeking for treatment. She was deeply moved by the enthusiasm of the doctors and the nurses. She brought in fruits and refreshments to the hospital to express her appreciation. Thereafter, she did not go back to the hospital for two full months.

In September of 2021, Ms. Lee was coughing intensely. She was very tired and burnout, even could not step out of her bed. Then, her legs were swollen day by day, experiencing nausea, vomiting and lost appetites. In a short period of time, she lost more than ten kilograms of weight. She had trouble walking and could not breathe enough air. She felt very uncomfortable.



**Dr. Lai studies the chest exam results of Ms. Lee and finds effective ways of cure.**

Ms. Lee rushed to the Emergency and Dr. Lai arranged for her to stay in the hospital. This time the doctor found that her system was resistant to the medicine. So, Dr. Lai prescribed the third generation target drug. Soon, the tumor shrank and the condition was again under control. The medical team hoped that she would not refuse treatment. For Ms. Lee, the last episode of suffering was very hard to stand. She would not let it happen again.

Dr. Lai Chun-Liang explained that for cancer patients, the attack would come in sequence. If the cancerous genes could be identified, with the use of target drug would improve the condition, then the patient would be more relaxed. Many seniors do not realize the consequences and stopped using the drug. To the doctors, this is a very dangerous

behavior. Because stopping medication would induce drug resistance, and the tumor would take a worse turn. For a patient, the pressure of recurrence always accompany with every return visit.

Dr. Lai told Ms. Lee: “You are not a very cooperating patient. The medicine you are taking now is much better than the previous ones. Earlier, patients with terminally lung cancer the chance of survival is only about six months. Now, with the improved tools and methods for diagnosis, the cancer fighting genes could be identified and new drugs were developed. The rate of survival can be extended to five to six years. Furthermore, the side effects of the medication have been much reduced. Also, the quality of life of the patients is much improved.”

Ms. Lee was very grateful for the care of Dr. Lai and the outpatient nurses. She would like to share her experience to the public with this message: “The period without treatment was a true disaster for me. For all my friends with illness, regardless of religious beliefs, I would like to tell them that, even though medical sciences could not truly extent our lives, they reduce our sufferings and improve our quality of life. Let’s treat ourselves better and listen to our doctors. Don’t give up.”