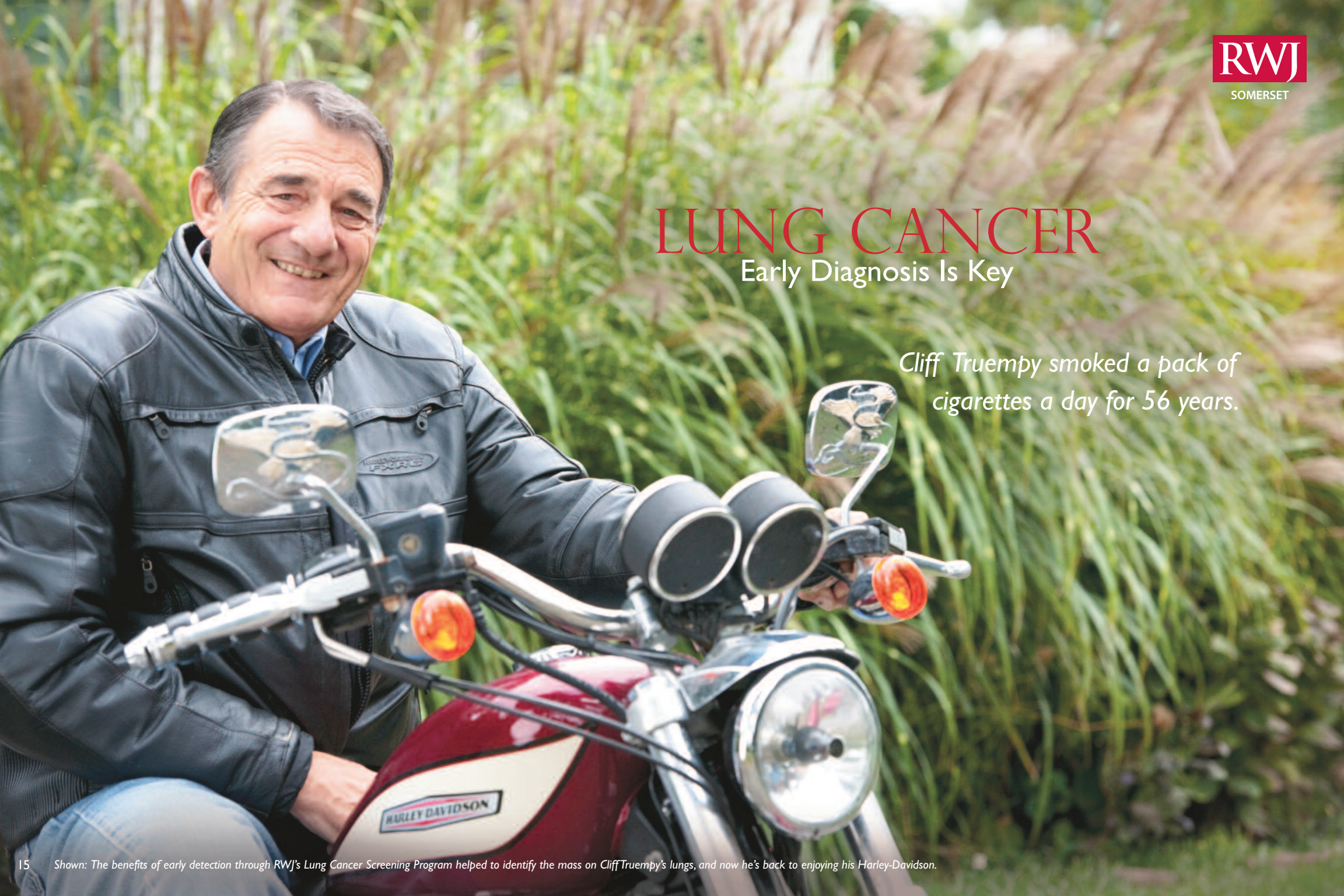


LUNG CANCER

Early Diagnosis Is Key

Cliff Truempy smoked a pack of cigarettes a day for 56 years.



He knew he was at risk for developing lung cancer, but was feeling fine. Just to be sure, he followed his wife's advice and got a lung cancer screening in March at the Steeplechase Cancer Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset (RWJ Somerset).

"It was a painless process and as far as I am concerned, it saved my life," says Mr. Truempy, 69, of Bridgewater.

The CT scan showed a mass on his lung, which was later diagnosed as stage I lung cancer. In July, Mr. Truempy underwent surgery at RWJ Somerset to have the cancer removed and now is cancer free.

"Patients with lung cancer normally don't begin experiencing symptoms until the cancer is advanced and often too late for treatment – that's why lung cancer has a high mortality rate," says Robin Lucas, MD, a pulmonologist with the Lung Cancer Screening Program at RWJ Somerset. "The five-year survival rate for lung cancer is less than or equal to 15 percent and that is relatively unchanged since 1974. However, early detection will make a difference. Low-dose CT scans have been shown to help identify lung cancer early in people who are at high risk for the disease."

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that people with a high risk for lung cancer receive a low-dose CT scan every year. People who are considered high-risk include adults ages 50 to 74 with a

smoking history of 30 pack -years or more. That's equal to smoking about a pack a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years. This lung cancer screening recommendation applies even to those who have kicked the habit within the past 15 years because they still have a higher risk of developing the disease.

"If all of those who are at high risk for lung cancer were screened, it is possible that 20 percent fewer people would die of lung cancer," says Dr. Lucas.

Mr. Truempy's screening CT scan was reviewed by a multidisciplinary team at the Steeplechase Cancer Center who determined he was a candidate for surgical removal of this lung mass.

Thoracic surgeon Robert Caccavale, MD, and his partner, Jean-Philippe Bocage, MD, performed a minimally invasive procedure known as video-assisted thoracic surgery (VATS) at RWJ Somerset.

Through four small incisions, which are each less than one inch, the surgeons use specialized instruments with a high resolution view of the entire thoracic cavity to perform all major surgical procedures in the chest. Most patients are able to go home from the hospital within two days and return to their normal activities within two weeks.

"It is extremely rewarding to be part of the Lung Screening Program and begin the process of identifying patients at an earlier

stage with lung cancer, when the likelihood of a cure is far greater," says Dr. Caccavale.

Robert Wood Johnson Health System offers Lung Cancer Screening Programs at its Somerset, New Brunswick and Hamilton campuses for a discounted rate of \$99. The screening includes a low-dose CT scan, spirometry testing and a follow-up consultation with a pulmonologist.

"In addition to screening for any underlying disease, I carefully go through the test with patients so they better understand what's happening within the anatomy of their lungs and how well their lungs are functioning," says Dr. Lucas.

Included in the Lung Cancer Screening is an initial consult for smoking cessation with a Tobacco Quitcenter specialist, if needed. The Tobacco Quitcenter at the Steeplechase Cancer Center offers individual and group counseling services and discounted medication to help deal with nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

"I highly encourage other smokers to have a lung cancer screening," Mr. Truempy says. "If it wasn't for that scan, who knows how long I would have gone on until I found the cancer:"

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/lung or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.



Shown from left: Robert Caccavale, MD, thoracic surgeon, and Robin Lucas, MD a pulmonologist, both treated Mr. Truempy during his bout with lung cancer at RWJ Somerset.

Find out if you're a candidate for our state-of-the-art **Lung Cancer Screening.**

This screening is recommended for:

- Smokers or former smokers age 50-74
- 30 (or more) pack years of cigarette smoking
(A pack year equals the number of packs smoked per day times the number of years smoked)

The screenings are not covered by insurance and will be initially offered at a low cost of \$99.

For more information or to schedule an appointment call:

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