



## From One Question to a Global Mission

### *A Brief Overview of the International Thyroid Oncology Group (ITOG)*

Thyroid cancer is relatively uncommon, accounting for fewer than 1% of all cancers. Fortunately, most patients are successfully treated and live normal life spans. However, aggressive and metastatic forms of thyroid cancer remain life-threatening, and historically received limited research attention due to their rarity. Patients with anaplastic thyroid cancer, for example, often face a life expectancy of only months, while many patients with advanced medullary, Hürthle cell (oncocyctic), and poorly differentiated thyroid cancers continue to experience poor outcomes.

For decades, progress in treating metastatic thyroid cancer was slow. Between the 1950s and 2010, only one drug was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for advanced thyroid cancer — a treatment that was not curative and, in most cases, only slowed disease progression.

This was the landscape in 2003 when members of the thyroid cancer research community met with Jean and Dwight Vicks. Jean, a patient living with medullary thyroid cancer, asked a simple but powerful question:

***“In an age when new therapies exist for so many cancers, why are there no new therapies for metastatic thyroid cancer?”***

Those conversations led to the founding of the International Thyroid Oncology Group (ITOG). Although Jean later lost her battle with cancer, the organization she inspired has become a global leader in advancing research, collaboration, and new treatment options for patients with advanced thyroid cancer.

From the beginning, ITOG’s leadership recognized meaningful progress would require international collaboration. Because metastatic thyroid cancer is rare, advancing research depends on bringing together expertise, patients, and resources from around the world. Today, ITOG includes representation from leading cancer centers across five continents and unites endocrinologists, oncologists, surgeons, radiation oncologists, and scientists in a shared mission to improve patient outcomes.

Over the past two decades, ITOG has helped transform thyroid cancer research into a truly global collaborative effort focused on accelerating clinical trials, advancing new therapies, and bringing hope to patients and families facing advanced thyroid cancer.



***Jean Vicks, whose cancer journey inspired the founding of ITOG.***



### **Support Our Mission**

*Your support helps ITOG advance research, accelerate clinical trials, and expand treatment options for patients facing advanced thyroid cancer. Scan the QR code to learn more about our mission and how to get involved.*

