1970s

1970: University of Alabama at Birmingham Cancer Program, with Dr. John Durant as the first director, was established with the dedicated support of the Lurleen Wallace Courage Crusade, a group formed after Governor Lurleen B. Wallace lost her battle with cancer. Her diagnosis brought the inadequacies of cancer care in Alabama to the spotlight.

1973: UAB Cancer Center named one of the first eight comprehensive cancer centers in the nation by the National Cancer Institute.

1974: Groundbreaking for the Wallace Tumor Institute. Alabama Breast Cancer Project is initiated and conducted by Dr. William Maddox to evaluate statewide the results of radical vs. modified radical mastectomy. Statewide program, directed by Dr. John Carpenter, is instituted to evaluate adjuvant chemotherapy for breast cancer.

1975: The Southeastern Cancer Study Group, one of the four major cooperative cancer study groups in the country, is based at the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center with Dr. Durant as chairman.

1977: Dr. Richard Whitley and Dr. Charles Alford are recognized for their breakthrough research demonstrating for the first time anywhere in the world that a virus infection can be successfully treated using intravenous drugs.

1980s

1981: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is recognized as one of the leaders in the field of

antiviral chemotherapy through Dr. Whitley's investigation of the pharmacology of the first viral antibiotic and its efficacy in herpes zoster.

1983: Dr. Albert LoBuglio is recruited to direct the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center and Division of Hematology-Oncology.

1985: Dr. George Shaw and Beatrice Hahn are recruited to initiate human retrovirus research efforts (AIDS).

1986: UAB is cited in *The Best in Medicine* as the third "best" medical facility in the country, with emphasis on the quality of cancer diagnosis and treatment programs. The Cancer Center carries out the first clinical trial of a human monoclonal antibody in patients.

1987: The center carries out the first clinical trial of a genetically engineered mouse/human monoclonal antibody leading to the successful use of this treatment modality (genetically engineered monoclonals) for multiple diseases (breast cancer, colon cancer, and lymphoma) in subsequent decades.

1990s

1990: Drs. Robert Castleberry and Peter Emanuel develop promising treatment for children with Juvenile Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia using a compound derived from Vitamin A.

1991: Using X-ray crystallography and computer graphics, the Center's crystallography group identifies for the first time the structure of the important protein gamma interferon (an immune system regulator).

1991: Dr. Larry DeLucas is selected as the nation's first civilian scientist-astronaut. In June 1992 he carried out UAB crystal growth experiments in space on the Shuttle Columbia with tailor-made drug design as the ultimate goal.

1992: Dr. Ed Partridge initiates Cancer Control Program in the underserved Black Belt counties of Alabama.

1995: Researchers determined the structure of IFN-gamma bound to its cell surface receptor. This discovery resulted in a U.S. Presidential Medal in 1996.

1997: Joined the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), a not-for-profit alliance of 21 of the world's leading cancer centers dedicated to improving the quality and effectiveness of care provided to patients with cancer.

1999: Designed first clinical trial to combine Rituxan (monoclonal antibody) with chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma which is now the standard of care in lymphoma.

1999: Conducted the first phase I vaccine trial of r-vaccinia virus expressing cancer antigen in humans as a vaccine therapy in colon cancer.

1999: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center awarded a NCI Ovarian Cancer SPORE grant for 11.8 million to conduct translational (bench to bedside) research in ovarian cancer.

1999: Developed first gene therapy treatment for ovarian cancer with initial therapy protocol showing lack of toxicity.

2000s

2000: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center awarded a NCI Breast Cancer SPORE grant for 13.8 million to conduct translational (bench to bedside) research in breast cancer.

2000: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center awarded a NCI Pancreatic Cancer SPORE grant to conduct translational (bench to bedside) research in pancreatic cancer.

2000: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center partners with the University of Southern Mississippi to establish Deep South Network for Cancer Control. By teaching prevention, early detection and methods to better access medical care, the program aims to impact the disparate cancer mortality trends that divide the region.

2001: First characterization of the combination of (monoclonal antibody) anti-EGFR (Cetuximab) and radiation in patients with head and neck cancer which led to pivotal phase III trial coordinated by the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center. This study resulted in FDA approval (2006) and use of this treatment world-wide.

2002: UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center awarded a NCI Brain Cancer SPORE grant to conduct translational (bench to bedside) research in brain cancer.

2003: Developed novel approach of monoclonal antibodies carrying radioactive isotopes in treatment of recurrent ovarian cancer.

2004: Renewed as a “comprehensive” cancer center by the NCI after undergoing a rigorous external review process, placing the Cancer Center among the top research and treatment institutions in the nation. The Cancer Center has held the comprehensive designation since 1973.

2004: Became the first facility in Alabama, and only the 10th nationwide, to offer TomoTherapy,

a highly advanced 3-D radiation system, for patients.

2004: Food and Drug Administration approved the use of Erbitux and Avastin for specific cancers. The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center was credited as a major patient registration site for the pivotal phase three clinical trials that helped both drugs win approval.

2005: Researchers found that patients with JMML (Juvenile Myelomonocytic Leukemia) who received Zarnestra® experienced an “astounding” 60% response rate after only two months.

2006: Scientists play an active role in the development of the first-ever vaccine proven to prevent cervical cancer.

2006: Established the Lynne Cohen Preventive Care Program for Women’s Cancers, which offers research, screening and clinical care for women at increased risk for ovarian and breast cancer.

2007: Edward Partridge, M.D., a lifelong Alabama resident and UAB faculty member of more than 30 years, is named director of the Cancer Center.

2007: One of only 11 institutions in the United States to receive renewal of the Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) grant in breast cancer. Three out of the four projects funded by the grant involve therapies and anti-cancer compounds developed at UAB.

2008: Implemented the Integrated Multidisciplinary Cancer Care Program, which brings together the various aspects of cancer treatment to provide a streamlined and more efficient process for patients and their families.

2008: Became the first in Alabama and the Southeast to offer da Vinci® robotic surgery for head and neck cancer patients. The Cancer Center was also the first in Alabama to offer robotic surgery for some cases of cervical cancer.

2008: The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center became the first U.S. medical center to offer a speedier cancer radiation therapy. The new technique can turn a 20-minute radiotherapy session into a 90-second session for selected patients and saves healthy human tissue from unwanted radiation exposure at rates that are the same or better than other radiotherapy techniques,

2008: Boris Pasche, MD, PhD, Director of Division of Hematology/Oncology, discovers the first-ever genetic link between obesity and colon cancer risk, a finding that could lead to greater accuracy in testing for the disease.

2008: Patented a monoclonal antibody to death receptor 5 and carried out the first clinical trial with this reagent in patients with metastatic cancer.

2009: Leads study that finds a screening regimen that combines ultrasound and a blood test to detect the ovarian cancer marker CA125 fails to discover the disease in its early stages and often results in unnecessary surgery.

2009: UAB researchers find that a potent drug made from cottonseeds stopped the most lethal form of brain cancer for months in many patients enrolled.

2009: The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is awarded a prestigious $11.5-million SPORE (Specialized Program of Research Excellence) grant from the National Cancer Institute to study cervical cancer. The award is shared with Johns Hopkins University and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

2010: Researchers at the UAB Department of Pathology discover a set of four biomarkers that help predict which patients are more likely to develop aggressive colorectal cancer and which are not. The findings also shed light on the genetics that result in worse colorectal cancer-treatment outcomes for African-Americans, compared with Caucasians.