



TAKING CARE OF YOUR CANCER

POCKET GUIDE

TAKING CARE OF YOUR CANCER

USE THIS GUIDE

for info on cancer care, to organize your data and as a quick resource.

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DISCLAIMER. This book provides general information about cancer care and related issues. The information does not constitute medical advice and is not intended to be used for the diagnosis or treatment of a health problem or as a substitute for consulting with a licensed health professional. Consult with a qualified physician or health care practitioner to discuss specific individual issues or health needs and to professionally address personal medical concerns.

DEALING WITH THE DIAGNOSIS

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

There's no doubt that receiving a diagnosis of cancer is life altering. Many things are about to change in a big way. But millions of people battle the disease each day, leading productive lives and winning the fight.

HOPE IS ON YOUR SIDE

Cancer is a struggle and a challenge unlike any you've probably ever faced. But you've got hope on your side. Experts continue to understand cancer's causes and cures. New treatments are developed that enable patients to live better for longer.

Depend on your support team resources during this time:

- Your doctors, specialists and health care team
- Family
- Friends
- Caregivers
- Church groups
- Fellow patients

These people will support and guide you through the process and make your personal road to recovery a lot less bumpy.

CANCER FACTS

There are more than 100 types of cancer. Any part of the human body can be affected.

YOUR ROAD TO RECOVERY

ONE IN THREE

One out of every three adults in the U.S. will receive a cancer diagnosis in his or her life. Each year, more than a million people get the scary news and have to deal with its effects. Survival rates keep getting better as new treatments and medication improve.

NOW IT'S PERSONAL

The journey you're about to set out on is as unique as you are. Cancer is a complex condition, and how you and your health care team deal with it could be just as unique. The road you take from diagnosis to recovery may be swift and straightforward. It also may have a few detours and take a while to get there. The healthcare team working to get you cancer-free may use a number of different methods. New therapies and medicines are helping people beat cancer, or live longer with less pain while dealing with the disease.

YOUR ROAD, YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Think of your cancer cycle in four parts:

DIAGNOSIS

Your health team runs tests to confirm the cancer and find out where it is, its type, how widespread it is and its traits.

Your doctors will work closely with you to decide the best options for treating your cancer: surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and other therapies.

TREATMENT

RECOVERY

This return to normal includes a plan for preventing your cancer's progress or return, making healthy lifestyle decisions and attending follow-up visits.

Making your quality of life better by working with caregivers and managing any long-term side effects of the treatment.

AFTERCARE

The milestones on this cycle are different for everyone. You may spend more time at one while others speed by. Each journey is different for different people.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

ORGANIZATION IS KEY

BATTLE ONE

Conquering cancer is a full-scale campaign with many battles to win. Your first defensive strategy is to **get informed and stay informed**. Fear of the unknown is often one of our greatest enemies. Learn as much as you can about your type of cancer. This will help put your mind at ease and help you figure out your options for treatment. Find info online or through your treatment center.

Your second strategy is to **get organized**. Gather your health care team and empower your family and friends to come to your aid. Keep contact info, appointment dates and times, medication schedules, exercise logs and other vital info written down and easy to access. There are places in this guide to keep track of some of these items.

ONLINE INFO OVERLOAD

The Internet is a great source for info on cancer and caring for the disease. Message boards, chat rooms, support groups and resources on specialists, health care coverage and medications are useful online tools. Because of the wealth of info there, the Internet can be overwhelming. The Internet can't take the place of your doctors, pharmacist or insurance provider. But you can use your research there in conversations with your health care team. Knowledge is indeed power. Arm yourself well and you'll be better prepared for the battle.

CANCER FACTS

The word "cancer" is related to the Greek word "crab" because its finger-like projections were similar to the shape of the crab.

MY CONTACTS

Emergency Contacts

Emergency response: 911

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Cell Phone: () _____

Home Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Cell Phone: () _____

Home Phone: () _____

Medical

My General or Family Doctor: _____

Phone: () _____

Cancer Specialist: _____

Phone: () _____

Hospital: _____

Phone: () _____

Social Worker: _____

Phone: () _____

MY CONTACTS

Health Insurance Provider: _____

Phone: () _____

Website: _____

Case Manager: _____

Phone: () _____

Other Professional Contacts

Name: _____

Service/ function: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Service/ function: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Service/ function: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Service/ function: _____

Phone: () _____

MY CONTACTS continued

Family Members

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____



TEAM UP

BUILD YOUR CANCER CARE DREAM TEAM AND SCORE WINNING RESULTS

FIGHTING FOR YOU

Did you know that before you enlist the help of doctors, nurses, specialists, family members and friends, you already have a strong ally fighting to keep cancer away from you? It's your own body. It has built-in fighters that routinely kill off cancerous and pre-cancerous cells on its own each day. You can help this amazing warrior by feeding it healthy foods and keeping it physically and mentally active.

Next up: Your doctor and health plan will refer specialists and health care providers to care for you during your entire treatment. If you don't have these important people in your life yet, ask your insurance provider or talk to those you know who've dealt with cancer and see who they recommend.

STAFFING YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

Now that you know your star player is already on the case, it's time to gather the rest of your team. Your network of family, friends and support groups can be a key source of info, encouragement and help during your therapy. Depend on these people for their love and support. They will want to help, from emotional support to aiding in daily responsibilities.

CANCER FACTS

Researchers believe that more than half of all cancers and cancer deaths are preventable.



KNOW YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS

CONVENTIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

Your doctors will help you decide on the treatment plans best for you and the type of cancer you're dealing with. **Conventional therapies** are the basis of most cancer treatment plans. These are science-based medical practices that have been proven to be effective. **Alternative therapies** can also add healing benefits. These methods aren't always scientific in nature but they aim to work alongside conventional therapies to help the body's immune system heal naturally.

CONVENTIONAL THERAPIES

SURGERY	Removing part or all of a tumor through operation
CHEMOTHERAPY	Powerful prescription drugs that can damage or destroy cancer cells
RADIATION	Targeted energy that can damage or destroy cancer cells
IMMUNOTHERAPY	Stimulating the body's immune system so it can better fight cancer
HORMONE THERAPY	Adding, blocking or removing hormones from the body to stop the growth of cancer cells, used mostly on breast and prostate cancer

CANCER DEFINED

Oncology (*ahn-kol-uh-jee*); noun: The study and treatment of tumors

Oncologist (*ahn-kol-uh-jist*); noun: A doctor who specializes in treating people with cancer

KNOW YOUR CANCER CARE SPECIALISTS

Medical oncologist: Specializes in treating cancer with chemotherapy (drugs that kill cancer cells) or other medications, such as targeted therapy and oral (pill form) chemotherapy.

Radiation oncologist: Specializes in treating cancer with radiation therapy (the use of high-energy x-rays or other particles to kill cancer cells).

Surgical oncologist: Specializes in removing tumors and surrounding tissue during an operation.

Hematologist: Specializes in blood disorders and blood cancers.

FAST STATS

About 70 percent of people with cancer use a type of alternative medicine such as diet supplements and nutrition therapy along with conventional treatment.

Supporting the mind, body and spirit with natural therapies is being used by more people than ever. These complementary methods promote the body's natural healing process. They treat the causes of illness rather than just the symptoms. For cancer patients, these treatments have been known to ease the pain and discomfort of side effects. They've also been shown to make conventional therapies work better for a more successful overall treatment.

ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Using the power of nature to help heal the body

NUTRITION THERAPY

Using wholesome foods for their healing power

DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

Using nutrients, herbs and other natural food supplements as effective medicine

ACTIVITY

Staying active in order to boost the immune system

MIND-BODY MEDICINE

Using the power of the mind as a source of healing the body

SPIRITUALITY

Finding comfort from nurturing your spiritual side

ACUPUNCTURE

Using small needles inserted into the skin to ease pain and treat various conditions

Ask your doctor if these treatments are right for you.

These complementary and alternative cancer treatments aren't usually strong enough to do the work of conventional cancer meds. Talk to your doctor about a balance of them to help with other conditions and side effects.

IF YOU HAVE	TRY
PAIN	Acupuncture, aromatherapy, hypnosis, massage, music therapy
ANXIETY	Hypnosis, massage, meditation, relaxation techniques
TIREDFNESS	Exercise, massage, relaxation techniques, yoga
NAUSEA AND VOMITING	Acupuncture, aromatherapy, hypnosis, music therapy
TROUBLE SLEEPING	Exercise, relaxation techniques, yoga
STRESS	Aromatherapy, exercise, hypnosis, massage, meditation, tai chi, yoga



Ask your doctor what to expect after chemotherapy, radiation or any type of cancer treatment.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM ABOUT CONVENTIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES:

FIND OUT MORE

National Cancer Institute:

Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Cancer Treatment
cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/cam/patient

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR TREATMENT

GETTING PERSONAL

Treatment paths and strategies are different for different patients. Thankfully, there's no assembly line care. You're a unique person. Your treatment should be too. Your doctor will assess...

- Your diagnosis
- Your medical history
- Your age
- Your current health

...to develop a treatment plan that's **best** for you.

CANCER FACTS

Worldwide there are **28 million** cancer survivors.

You have options when choosing a treatment strategy. In the past, some conventional treatments were very harsh on the system. Advancements in medicine have made these easier to take. Side effects have been greatly eased with the advent of new drugs, relieving the pain and nausea and promoting quicker healing.

Good food and fitness, as you'll see later in this guide, go hand-in-hand with treatment and recovery. Keep them at the front of your mind as you take control of your treatment.

MANAGING YOUR MEDS

RULE #1

During your treatment you may have many different medications to take at home, to treat the cancer and to ease the side effects of treatment.

Always follow your doctor's or pharmacist's instructions on when and how to take your medications. They're more likely to work well by doing so.

MEDICATION MISTAKES

- Not following the exact instructions of doctors
- Deciding to stop taking prescription meds because you're feeling better
- Not staying on schedule and taking meds at the prescribed time
- Not taking meds because you don't think they're working
- Missing or skipping a scheduled med and not knowing what to do
- Skipping doses or limiting them as a way to save money

TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR MEDS

Use these tips for getting the most benefit from your prescribed treatment:

- 1 Read the entire label of the medication container to make sure you are taking the right dose. Double-check with your doctor, health team or pharmacist if you're not sure about how much to take.
- 2 Take your pills at the same time each day, such as first thing in the morning or with lunch.
- 3 Use a weekly pill case so you know if you've taken that day's meds. Keep the original container for reference.
- 4 Use a chart or schedule to keep track of when you take your medication. Some drug manufacturers make apps that can be downloaded to your smartphone. These allow you to keep track of when you take your medications, as well as reminding you of doctor appointments.
- 5 Keep daily reminders around—such as on a bulletin board, the refrigerator or in a day planner—to help you remember to take your medication.
- 6 Ask family members or friends to help remind you.
- 7 Use technology to remind you. Set up an automated reminder on your computer or phone.

HOW CANCER IS TREATED

Chemotherapy treatment is usually given in **cycles**. The cancer cells are attacked when they're at their weakest. Cycles allow the body's normal cells to heal and repair from the damage. Cycle time is made up of:

- **Duration of the cycle:** Chemotherapy drugs may be given on a single day, for many days in a row or ongoing on an outpatient or inpatient basis. Treatments could last minutes, hours or days.
- **Frequency of the cycle:** Chemotherapy may repeat weekly, every two weeks or once a month. Cycles are most often defined by months. So two biweekly sessions are considered as one cycle.
- **The number of cycles:** The length of chemotherapy from start to finish is determined by research and lab tests, as well as how the cancer responds to the treatment.

A WORD ON DRUG INTERACTIONS

Before you start treatment, talk with your doctor about all of the meds you're taking. This will help prevent drug interactions. A drug interaction occurs when two or more drugs conflict with each other in your system, causing side effects. A sleep aid may mix badly with an allergy drug. The results can produce an adverse reaction, such as slowing down your reflexes, making driving a car dangerous. Drug interactions can be more likely for cancer patients who may be on many medications. Follow the instructions of your doctor and pharmacist.

Q: For how long do I have to take my medications?

A: Because there are so many factors involved, you'll work with your doctors to determine the length of your treatment.

IMPORTANT!

Even though you may be focusing on treating cancer, you must manage all health-related issues and care for maintaining your general health. This means you can't forget regular mammograms, dentist appointments and blood pressure or diabetes medications or treatments.

CHANGES AHEAD

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM TREATMENT

Very few battles are won without some changes along the way. Cancer is one that will throw more than its fair share of changes at you. How you deal with these changes can mean the difference between winning the battle and heading for a setback.

Cancer patients have a better chance of a positive outcome when they're able to stay on their chemotherapy plan and work through the many treatment cycles and high doses of radiation therapy. If a patient is not strong enough to continue with treatment, the physician usually stops the patient's therapy until they get stronger.

CHEMOTHERAPY

You'll meet with a medical oncologist before treatment starts. He or she will review your records and do a physical exam. The doctor will come up with a specific schedule based on your age, your overall health and where the cancer is. This treatment schedule may consist of a number of cycles given over a certain time period. Treatments may go on for as long as your cancer responds to the chemo. The doctor will also talk to you about the risks and benefits of chemotherapy. You'll learn what you should and shouldn't eat or drink on the day of your treatment so the chemotherapy will work best. Tell the doctor about all medications and dietary or herbal supplements you're taking.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR: Your doctor might want to plan for the most common side effects of chemotherapy.

Nausea and vomiting: The best way to manage nausea and vomiting is to prevent it. Talk with your health care team about your risk of this side effect before treatment begins. There are many medications that can prevent nausea and vomiting in most patients.

Dental health: Chemotherapy can cause mouth sores and dry mouth. It can also make the body's ability to fight infection weaker. It's best to have a complete dental checkup and cleaning before starting chemotherapy.

Heart health: Some types of chemotherapy affect the heart. It may help to measure your heart health before treatment. An **echocardiogram** uses ultrasound waves to create a moving picture of the heart.



WHAT TO WATCH FOR: CONTINUED

Reproductive health: Some types of chemotherapy can affect fertility (a woman's ability to conceive a child or keep a pregnancy going and a man's ability to father a child). Both men and women should discuss their options for maintaining fertility before treatment.

Hair: Hair loss affects many people on chemotherapy. Ask your medical oncologist whether your treatment is likely to cause this side effect. If it will, you may want to think about whether you'd rather keep your head covered during treatment and whether you'd like to buy a wig or hat before treatment begins.

HELPFUL TIP

Most communities offer resources for wigs, when losing hair due to chemotherapy, as well as bras following breast surgery. You can also find resources online.

DURING TREATMENT:

You may want to bring a friend or family member on the day of the treatment. This person can support you and help you remember the info given you by the oncology team. You can also bring items like music players, DVDs, books or a blanket to make your treatment time comfortable.

If you're getting chemotherapy by IV injection, you will:

- Meet the nurse or other health team member giving you the chemotherapy
- Have a quick physical exam to check your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, respiration rate and temperature)
- Have your height and weight measured to figure the right doses of chemotherapy
- Have an IV catheter inserted into a vein in your arm
- Have a blood sample drawn
- Meet with your oncologist who will review the results of your blood tests, consider your condition before each treatment and order the chemotherapy

After treatment:

After your session is finished, the IV catheter will be taken out and your vital signs checked. Your oncologist or nurse will review what side effects to expect throughout the cycles of chemotherapy and give you medication and tips to manage them. Instructions may include:

- ■ ■ ■ ■ Not being around crowds of people or with children (especially those with illnesses or infections) while your immune system is temporarily weakened.
- ■ ■ ■ ■ Drinking lots of fluids over the next 48 hours to help flush the drugs through your system.
- ■ ■ ■ ■ Making sure to properly dispose of urine, stool, vomit, semen and vaginal secretions because chemotherapy typically remains in your system for 48 hours after treatment. Flushing the toilet twice after use will help protect family members from waste or other body fluids that may contain chemotherapy particles.

Your medical team can tell you what type and level of activities they recommend on treatment days. Make sure you have the phone number of the oncologist's office so you can contact the doctor with any questions or concerns.

SIDE EFFECTS: After chemotherapy, side effects may include:

- ////// Nausea and vomiting
- ////// Hair loss
- ////// Bone marrow changes
- ////// Mouth and skin changes
- ////// Changes in sex drive
- ////// Fertility problems
- ////// Memory changes
- ////// Emotional changes

The good news is that there are things you can do to keep from having these side effects, or at least lessen them. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you have any side effects.

SIDE EFFECTS: CONTINUED

Keep in mind that not everyone gets the same chemo drugs. Chemo given for some cancers may cause more side effects than chemo for other cancers. Your general health and fitness will also affect how your body reacts to chemo. Some people are able to go on with what they always do while getting chemo.

But some people need to be in the hospital so doctors can watch them closely and treat certain side effects.

Most people have to change their work schedules to get chemo. Ask your doctor and nurse what you'll be able to do while you're being treated, on chemo days and in between treatments.

HELPFUL TIP

Check with your case manager or community or care coordinator as they may be able to provide transportation for chemotherapy, radiation or surgery.

FATIGUE Extreme fatigue and tiredness following cancer surgery, chemotherapy or radiation is common. It's the most common side effect of treatment. Fatigue is described as feeling:

- Tired
- Worn out
- Slow
- Weak
- Heavy
- Without energy

It's important to know that fatigue felt from cancer treatment is different from fatigue felt by healthy people. Cancer patients get tired after less activity than people without cancer. Cancer-related fatigue is often caused by anemia and is not wholly eased by sleep and rest. It may last for a long time. The fatigue gets better after cancer treatment ends, but patients may still feel some fatigue for months or years.

Some people with cancer are not able to get enough sleep. These problems related to sleep may cause fatigue:

- Waking up during the night
- Not going to sleep at the same time every night
- Sleeping during the day and less at night
- Not being active during the day

Getting help with fatigue may prevent some of these problems and improve quality of life.

WEIGHT LOSS

Along with cancer fatigue come changes in weight and loss of muscle tone. These symptoms can be treated, making you feel better and letting you carry on with your usual activities and keeping up your strength to finish treatment.

The cancer itself can cause weight loss. In fighting the cancer, your body creates a substance that can lead to weight loss, muscle loss and loss of appetite. Because radiation and chemotherapy can cause a loss of appetite, nausea and mouth sores, weight loss is likely with these treatments.

Your **nutrition counselor** should address with you the issues affecting your therapy, especially if you've had side effects from chemotherapy and high doses of radiation. These issues are:

- **Fatigue**
- **Changes in tasting foods**
- **Metallic taste in the mouth**
- **Mucositis (low levels grade 1 and 2, and severe levels of grade 3 and 4)**
- **Nausea and vomiting, how to eat when you don't want to**
- **Severe weight loss**

MAINTAINING YOUR WEIGHT AND BUILDING STRENGTH

Along with taking your cancer medicines, there are many things you can do to help your body stay strong. Good, balanced nutrition and proper hydration are very important. So try these:

- ■ **Eat a balanced diet. Include protein to protect lean body mass.** Beef, pork, tofu and soy nuts are great sources of protein. So are dairy products. Try Greek yogurt, which is higher in protein than regular yogurt.
- ■ **Eat more calories.** Choose nutritious foods you like. If you have little or no appetite, try eating smaller, more frequent meals. Make milkshakes, smoothies, and purees, and add milk or protein powder to your foods.
- ■ **Drink plenty of liquids throughout the day.** Water is best. You can also get fluids from soups, Popsicles, sports drinks and Pedialyte®. Physical exercise helps in building new muscle and decreasing fatigue.
- ■ **Start off slowly.** If you're really tired or weak, start with just a few minutes of walking at a time and build up from there. Some upper body exercises while sitting in a chair can also help you regain strength.
- ■ **Keep a journal.** Note the type of exercises or other physical activities you do and how they affect your mood and energy level. Seeing the positive benefits may encourage you to keep moving.

THE BENEFITS OF NUTRITION THERAPY WHOLESOME = HEALING

FOOD AS MEDICINE

As mentioned earlier, one of the easiest and most powerful ways to better your chances in the fight against cancer is to eat a wholesome and varied diet.

Cancer-fighting compounds are found in vegetables like cabbage and broccoli, and in fruits like berries. These can fight the spread of cancer cells.

CANCER FACTS

The National Cancer Institute recommends eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

Conventional therapies have been shown to be more effective when working with the nutrients in unprocessed foods. Fruits and veggies that are bright in color and cold water fish have compounds that can make chemotherapy and radiation treatment more powerful, while protecting healthy cells from the toxic effects.

Adversely, eating an excess of foods such as sweets, refined carbohydrates and alcohol can promote the spread of cancer. These foods can get in the way of your immune system's ability to fight cancer cells.

FOOD ALERT!

Steer clear of foods with trans fats. You can find these in many processed foods and margarines. Look for trans fats and other saturated fats on labels. They're so unhealthy, food makers must list their amounts on packaging.

MY NUTRITION

Healthy eating is a must, no matter your condition. Here are some healthy eating tips from ChooseMyPlate.gov:



TIP MAKE HALF YOUR GRAINS WHOLE

Foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or other cereal grains are thought of as grain products. These foods are bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas and grits. Eating whole grains as part of a healthy diet has shown a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

TIP VARY YOUR VEGGIES

Vegetables supply vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. Make one-fourth of your plate veggies. Veggies bright in color are vitamin and mineral-rich, as well as tasting great and being great for you.

TIP FOCUS ON FRUIT

Like vegetables, fruits lessen the chances of disease as they supply nutrients vital for health. Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium and calories and don't have cholesterol.

TIP GET YOUR CALCIUM-RICH FOODS

Milk, yogurt and cheese make up the dairy group. They have calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein and other nutrients needed for good health all through life. Soy milk is a good dairy substitute for people who are lactose intolerant.

TIP GO LEAN WITH PROTEIN

We all need protein, and most people ages 9 and up should eat 5 to 7 ounces of protein foods each day. Protein foods come from both animals (meat, poultry, seafood and eggs) and plants (beans, peas, soy products, nuts and seeds).

FAST STATS

30 percent of cancers could be prevented by staying away from alcohol and tobacco, eating healthy foods and getting physical activity.

WHEN NUTRITION MATTERS MOST

Cancer releases chemicals into your body that can wreck your appetite. At the same time, they raise the calories and nutrition levels you need. Some conventional cancer treatments can hinder your appetite, make you nauseous and tired and get in the way of digesting food and absorbing the nutrients.

More bad news: If you're malnourished, you may get less benefit from chemotherapy and have more side effects, generally feeling worse overall. So it's critical that you make sure the foods you're eating are as nutritional as possible. Talk to a dietitian or nutritionist if you're concerned about your nutrition. They will work with you on a plan for healthy eating.

FOUR TIPS FOR A HEALTHY, ANTI-CANCER DIET

Use these tips for getting the most benefit from your prescribed treatment:

- 1 Eat lots of fruits and veggies:** Eating five to 10 servings of fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits is best. Juices and smoothies count and are a great way of getting the needed nutrients.
- 2 Switch to unsaturated fats:** Essential fatty acids in olive oil, canola oil and flaxseed oil is crucial for good health. They also make cancer treatment more effective. Saturated fat from animal products, fatty meats and processed hydrogenated fats have been linked to cancer. Other good forms of essential fatty acids:
 - Fish and shellfish
 - Soy
 - Pumpkin
 - Sunflower seeds
 - Walnuts
- 3 Get enough lean protein:** Extra protein during treatment boosts your immunity and protects lean muscle mass. Limit your amount of red meat and choose these forms of lean protein:
 - Eggs
 - Yogurt
 - Fish
 - Soy
 - Beans
 - Lean meats
- 4 Focus on the whole grains:** Essential nutrients can be found in whole-grain cereals, breads and rice. These help regulate blood sugar, eliminate waste and boost immunity.

HEALTHY FOODS

SHOPPING LIST

MILK & DAIRY

- Fat free or low-fat milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Low-fat cheese
- Cottage cheese

BREADS & GRAINS

- Whole wheat bread
- Whole wheat English muffins
- Corn tortillas
- Whole wheat tortillas
- Multigrain cereal
- Brown rice
- Enriched pasta

MEATS & BEANS

- White meat chicken (no skin)
- White meat turkey
- Lean beef
- Pinto beans
- Navy beans
- Black beans
- Fish
- Eggs

FRUITS

- Bananas
- Grapes
- Oranges
- Pears
- Peaches
- Strawberries
- Apples
- Canned fruit in light syrup
- Watermelon
- Cherries

VEGETABLES

- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Green beans
- Canned or frozen vegetables (no salt)
- Collard greens
- Celery
- Peppers
- Onions
- Mushrooms
- Cucumbers

FATS, OILS & SAUCES

- Salsa
- Low or nonfat salad dressing
- Mustard
- Vegetable oil
- Vinegar

MY HEALTHY SHOPPING LIST

GRAINS

VEGETABLES

FRUITS

MY HEALTHY SHOPPING LIST CONTINUED

DAIRY

PROTEIN

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

NOTE: Nutritional supplements may be covered under your insurance plan. Depending on the type of cancer, plans often cover vitamins and nutritional supplements.

FIND OUT MORE

National Cancer Institute: Nutrition in Cancer Care
[cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/appetite-loss/nutrition-pdq#section/all](https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/appetite-loss/nutrition-pdq#section/all)

STAYING ACTIVE FAST STATS



Exercise such as walking can lessen the risk of breast cancer. Any exercise that raises your heart rate to the “break a sweat” level is good for you and helps fight off cancer.

Q

WHAT'S THE BEST BOOST FOR YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM?

A

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

THE BOOST

During treatment and recovery, any physical activity is helpful. From a full gym workout to light resistance exercises, it's important to stay active and give your immune system the boost it needs. When your body is strong, it can better stand the rigors of conventional treatment and heal quicker.

Health care providers now know that...

- An immune system strengthened by exercise may respond better to conventional therapies.
- Exercise may ease pain and nausea, while improving endurance and mood.
- Exercise produces needed red blood cells.
- Staying active can help you stay mobile, keeping you as independent as possible during and after treatment.

CAUTION

Check with your oncologist before starting a new exercise program. A physical therapist can suggest appropriate exercises if your treatments limit what you can do.

THE BENEFITS OF FITNESS THERAPY

PHYSICAL THERAPY	Improves flexibility and coordination, rebuilds strength, eases pain. Can include aerobic exercise such as walking, swimming or jogging to training with resistance bands and light weights.
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	Returns you to normal daily functions and activities, restoring your independence.
SPEECH PATHOLOGY	Helps you regain speech and communication skills that may have been affected by cancer. It can also help with eating and swallowing.
MANUAL THERAPIES	Massage can ease pain and anxiety, as well as some side effects such as swelling.

Three parts of a complete fitness program:



CARDIOVASCULAR: Aerobic exercise that raises your heart rate, such as walking, cycling, climbing stairs and jogging.

BENEFITS: Increases stamina; may protect the heart and lungs from the toxic effects of chemotherapy.



STRENGTH TRAINING: Building muscle strength and tone. Resistance bands can be used anywhere and come in a variety of lengths and tensions.

BENEFITS: Can help protect against the loss of muscle mass during treatment; fights osteoporosis or bone loss that can be brought on by chemotherapy.



STRETCHING: Flexibility exercises that target muscle groups.

BENEFITS: Improves flexibility; eases soreness; helps prevent injury; makes blood flow and oxygen flow to the brain better.

SET YOUR GOALS

Setting goals that you can work to achieve is a crucial part of your fitness program. Your goal may be to compete in the Olympics or simply to be able to walk again. Focus on a single activity at a time and your recovery will get a little easier.

PAIN MANAGEMENT

FAST STATS

According to the American Cancer Society, 90 percent of people with cancer pain are able to find relief.

CONQUER PAIN AND WIN THE BATTLE

Many people connect cancer with pain. It doesn't have to be that way. Early stage tumors produce little if any pain. If you do feel pain, there are ways of beating it and improving your quality of life. There are pain clinics set up in large hospitals and specialized treatment centers that help people cope with cancer pain and feel better. Your doctors can also arrange many pain management strategies. Pain specialists are trained to help ease pain and discomfort and should be available to you as well.

ACUTE PAIN:

Brief and sharp

Cancer patients may feel both types of pain at different times. Both can be treated.

CHRONIC PAIN:

Long-lasting and dull, aching



**DOES PAIN MEAN
THE CANCER IS
GETTING WORSE?**



Not necessarily. Cancer-related pain could be caused by the tumor pressing upon nerves or organs. It could be a side effect of treatment.

IF YOU FEEL PAIN...

Don't sit and suffer. Talk about it with your doctors. Speak up. You won't be wasting his or her time. Conquer pain and you're more likely to finish your therapy and improve your quality of life.

COMMUNICATING

TIPS FOR TELLING FAMILY AND FRIENDS

IN YOUR OWN TIME

It's hard enough coming to terms with a cancer diagnosis. Now you've got to tell your family and friends. Don't feel pressured to share your news. You can wait until you're ready. The best time will be when you feel comfortable talking about it. Here are a few tips to make telling others go easier.



Think about your own feelings first.

Before you talk to others about your cancer, consider your own feelings and your reasons for telling others. Also think about what you expect of them. Be ready for a range of reactions. Your family and friends will have many different feelings when you share your news.



Think about telling those closest to you first.

This may help you start accepting the reality of your condition. By talking it out, you may be able to solve problems and get a valued opinion, as well as bringing up other issues you hadn't yet thought of.



Make a list of people you want to tell.

This helps you get organized and keep track of who you've talked to. Make another list of less close friends that can be told by others.



Decide how much you want to share.

The type of cancer you have, your treatment options and the outlook are subjects you might choose to tell others. You may also decide to let them know you're going to do whatever it takes to fight the cancer and that you'll need their help and support.

Don't be afraid to say,

**“I really get tired of talking about cancer.
Let's talk about something else.”**

ANXIETY AND STRESS

It's natural to feel a good deal of anxiety when coping with a cancer diagnosis. Fear of the unknown is a powerful force. If not lessened, this stress can build and lead to fatigue and depression. Even if for short periods of time, it's important to find ways to ease the stress.

JUST BREATHE

Try this simple breathing technique to calm you:

- Sit down and put one hand on your chest and the other over your midsection.
- Take three breaths and notice your breathing. Your chest area should raise more than your abdomen.
- Next, take in a deep breath and lengthen your abdomen. Think of your lungs as long, skinny balloons, filling up from the bottom to the top.
- Hold the breath and silently count to five, then breathe out loudly.
- Do this for three breaths.
- Sit quietly for a moment. If you feel lightheaded, hold the next breath for a shorter time. Most people notice a calming feeling that follows.

You can do this exercise anywhere, anytime. Returning to your natural breathing state eases the stress. And that's the goal here.

If you have anxiety, talk with your doctor or case manager. They may refer you to a mental health specialist for help.

FIND OUT MORE

National Cancer Institute: Anxiety and Distress

cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/feelings/anxiety-distress-pdq

DEALING WITH DEPRESSION

WHAT'S UP WITH FEELING DOWN?

Depression is a disorder described as feeling down or deeply sad. One may feel hopeless and have little interest in doing things. These feelings often linger for a few weeks and negatively affect daily activities and relationships. The signs of depression may show up shortly after diagnosis or anytime during or after treatment.

FAST FACTS

About 15 percent of people experience depression. That number is at least two to three times more common in cancer patients.

THE MANY MOODS

Those with cancer may find themselves battling depression. It's important to know that depression is treatable and not a typical part of living with cancer. Share your moods and concerns with your doctor during and after treatment. He or she will want to check if you have any signs of depression.

TIPS:

- ▶ Talk with your health care team if you feel any signs of depression in between your appointments.
- ▶ Depression can be managed with therapy, meds or a combination of the two.
- ▶ Know that depression lowers your quality of life, and can get in the way of your treatment's effectiveness. Identify and deal with depression as a part of coping with cancer.

FIND OUT MORE

National Institute of Mental Health: [Depression and Cancer](https://depression-and-cancer/index.shtml)
[nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression-and-cancer/index.shtml](https://depression-and-cancer/index.shtml)

WORK CONCERNS

Cancer can do a number on your bank account and cause problems with one's job. There are some protections in place to help with work situations.

FMLA On the job, you may need to take time off of work during your recovery. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides for eligible workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave every 12 months, and sometimes more, in addition to paid sick time for a serious health condition, including most cancers. This act makes sure you'll have a job to go back to, as long as you're able to do it. If you were covered by insurance before the leave, you'll have it again upon your return to work.

CONDITIONS:

- You must work for an employer with at least 50 employees
- You must have been on the job at least 12 months

DISABILITY

If you are disabled from cancer but can still do your job with some modifications, you could be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). You must tell your employer what changes you need in order to do your job but you can't be fired, have your pay cut or be denied a promotion.

YOUR OPTIONS

Working full time after cancer recovery may be too much for you. This is a personal decision to discuss with your loved ones and health care team. Some options:

- ⊙ Ask your work about part time work or flextime, adopting a flexible schedule for you so you can work when you feel best
- ⊙ Ask about working from home
- ⊙ Explore other possibilities with your employer that will benefit both sides

LIFE GOES ON

WHAT TO EXPECT AS A CANCER SURVIVOR

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FOLLOW-UP

Beating cancer means a new devotion to making sure you stay cancer-free for the coming years. And that means follow-up visits with your doctors and care team. They will review your medical history and perform routine physical exams. Some exams may include:

- Imaging (taking pictures of the inside of the body)
- Endoscopy (using a thin tube to look into the inside of the body)
- Blood work
- Other lab tests

Follow-up care can help find changes in your health. It can check for a recurrence or return of your cancer or see if it has spread to other areas. Early detection can also find and stop other forms of cancer. Simply put, **all cancer survivors should have regular follow-up care.**

Follow-up is crucial for your health. Schedule regular checkups for good general health and prevention. Get regular mammograms and flu shots and keep all of your dental appointments.

During each visit, tell your doctor about:

- ➔ Any symptoms you think may be a sign your cancer has returned
- ➔ Any pain you're having
- ➔ Any physical problems getting in the way of daily life (fatigue; bladder, bowel or sexual problems; difficulty concentrating; memory changes; trouble sleeping; and weight gain or loss)
- ➔ Any medicines, vitamins or supplements you're taking and any other treatments you're using
- ➔ Any anxiety or depression or emotional problems you're having
- ➔ Any changes in your family medical history, such as any new cancers

CANCER FACTS

Cancer recurrences aren't always found during follow-up exams. Recurrences are often found by the patients themselves between doctor visits. Be aware of changes in your health and let your health care team know right away. Your doctor can decide if these problems are due to cancer or the treatment or are an unrelated issue.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR AFTER YOUR CANCER TREATMENT ENDS

Ask your doctor for a follow-up plan once your treatment has ended. Ask these questions and gather the answers. These will help you understand what to expect next.

What treatments and drugs have I been given?

How often should I have a routine visit?

Which doctor should I see for my follow-up care?

What are the chances my cancer will come back or that I'll get another kind of cancer?

Will I need follow-up tests? If so, which ones? How often?

What symptoms should I watch for?

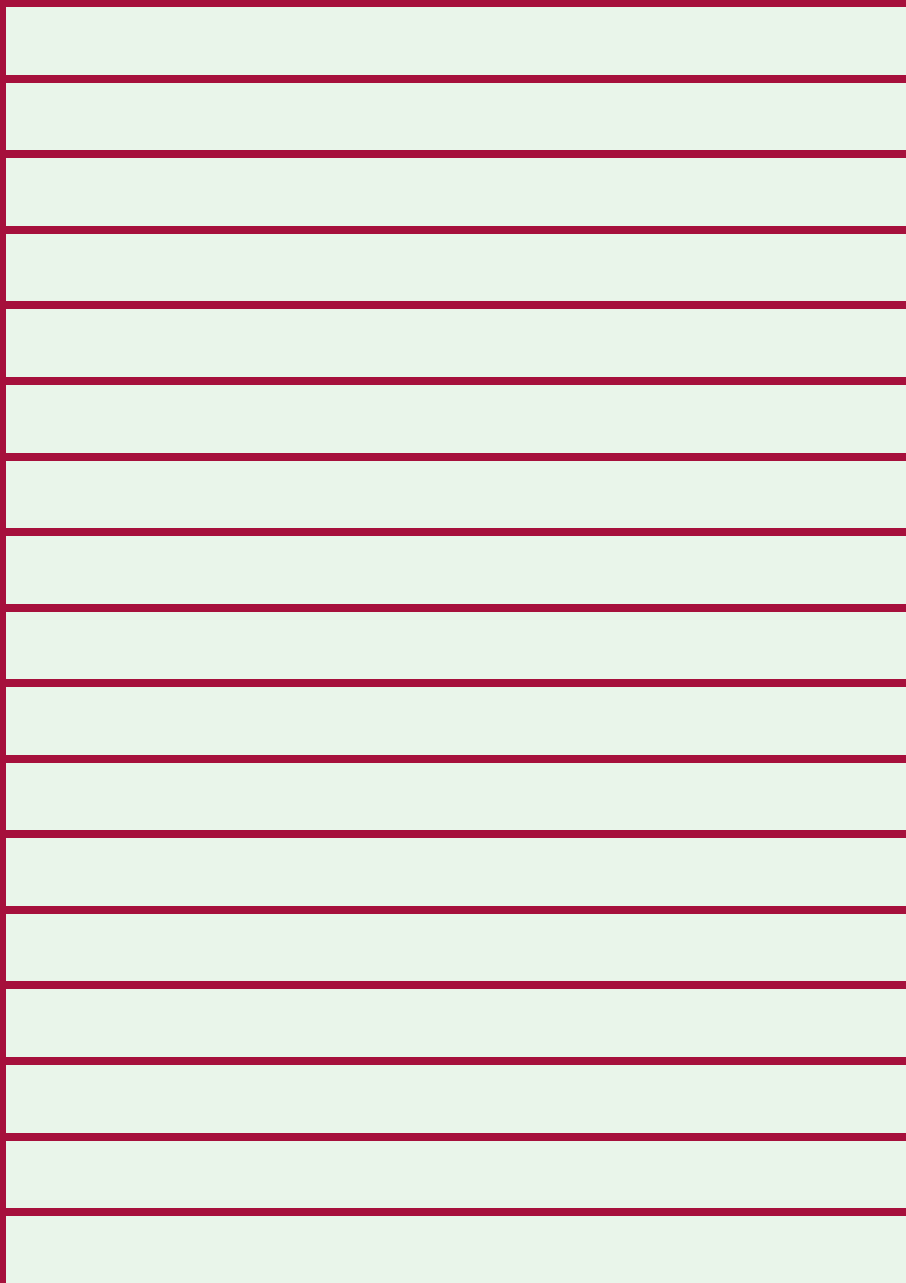
Who should I call if I have any of these symptoms?

What are the long-term effects of the treatment I received?

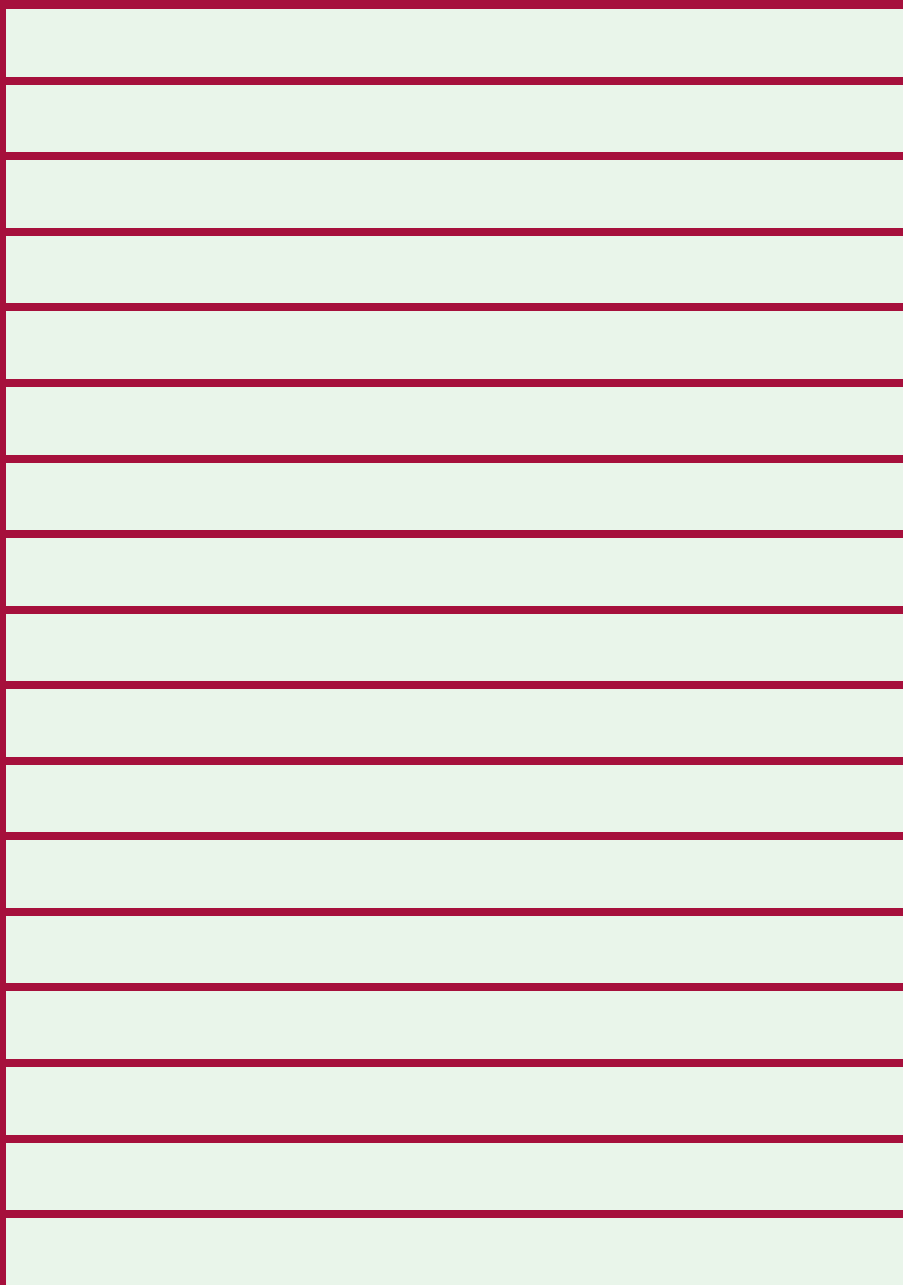
What should I do to keep up my health and well-being?



NOTES



NOTES

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RESOURCES

National Cancer Institute
cancer.gov

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

Medicare
medicare.gov
800-633-4227

Medicaid
medicaid.gov

**Centers for Medicare &
Medicaid Services**
cms.hhs.gov

**Social Security:
Benefits for People
with Disabilities**
ssa.gov/disability

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MCARE15-00026E

TAKING CARE OF YOUR CANCER

CENTENE[®]
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There's a lot to know when dealing with the demands of a cancer diagnosis. Step one is to get organized and create a game plan. This pocket guide will set you up with a quick overview of some basic things to know to get you on the road to recovery.



CONTACTS



**MANAGING
MEDICATIONS**



FITNESS TIPS



**TREATMENT
OPTIONS**



**HEALTHY FOODS
AS THERAPY**



**DEALING WITH
STRESS, ANXIETY
AND DEPRESSION**



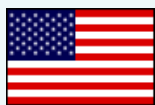
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AND MORE



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