

Survivor Steps

What to Do After a New Cancer Diagnosis

A cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming news to anyone, but cancer survivors shouldn't feel alone or helpless. Our focus is on patient-centered care which means that we want survivors (our patients) to be partners with us in their care. We want to empower newly diagnosed cancer survivors by encouraging them to become an active participant in their treatment and recovery. Below are some suggestions that may help you or someone you care about do just that.

Ten Things You Can Do Right Now

- ☐ Find doctors that you trust and reach out to them and other members of your healthcare team for medical advice.
- ☐ Reach out to friends for emotional support, not medical advice.
- ☐ Ask your healthcare team about cancer rehabilitation so that, as you go through treatment and afterward, you have access to the medical support you need to feel as well as possible.
- ☐ Keep a written log of every phone call and appointment – include the names and contact information of everyone you speak to.
- ☐ Gather your medical information including laboratory, imaging and biopsy reports. Also get copies of the actual films and pathology slides to bring to your initial appointments with oncologists.
- ☐ Cut back on alcohol. If you can eliminate alcohol, that's best.
- ☐ Exercise. Get a pedometer and try to take at least 10,000 steps each day.
- ☐ If you are having difficulty sleeping, contact your physician.
- ☐ Read excerpts from *What Helped Get Me Through: Cancer Survivors Share Wisdom and Hope* (published by the American Cancer Society, your local community library, bookstores or Amazon.com).
- ☐ Remember that there are more than 13 million cancer survivors in the United States and the vast majority of them were not diagnosed at the earliest possible. There are excellent cancer treatments available and many reasons to maintain hope.



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