

I CAN NEWSLETTER

Fighting cancer through science, healthy living, and prevention

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The Cancer Journey: A User's Guide

Nothing can prepare you for the news that you or a loved one has cancer. Cancer treatment is a journey that can last for weeks, months, or even years. Being informed is the best way to prepare for the road ahead. Learn more inside...

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Learning from Experience

Receiving a cancer diagnosis can be complicated and overwhelming, especially in the days following the news. Seeking guidance from others who have been through cancer treatment can be invaluable. In addition to the tips and resources in this newsletter, there are many cancer organizations, both locally and nationally, whose sole mission is to support cancer patients and their families. Your physician's office can point you to organizations that are a good fit for you and your family.

Finding the Right Resources

A cancer diagnosis requires learning a lot in a short period of time. Finding the right resources to help you become more familiar with your condition as well as what treatment entails is an important first step in the process.

You will need help on a variety of fronts, and whether you need financial counseling, emotional support, or practical assistance with daily chores, your Texas Oncology practice may provide these services or can refer you to other organizations who can help. If you go online to get educated about a particular type of cancer and treatment, it's important to seek reliable sources. Texas Oncology's website, TexasOncology.com, has an abundance of useful, clinically-reviewed information.

Nationally-known organizations, such as the **American Cancer Society** (cancer.org), the **National Cancer Institute** (cancer.gov), and the **American Society of Clinical Oncologists** (ASCO.org) can help you get started. All three sites provide information about cancer types and treatment options, and they have resources for patients, families, caregivers, and survivors. The **American Cancer Society** can also help connect you with chapters in your area. The **National Cancer Institute** also provides information on clinical trials.

Some national advocacy organizations for specific cancer types also have helpful websites. For example,

the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society** (lls.org), **Us TOO Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network** (ustoo.org), and the **Pediatric Cancer Foundation** (pcfweb.org) are authoritative sources.

Support on Your Terms

Before, during, and after cancer treatment, many people need comfort, advice, or encouragement, but don't want another appointment to keep or aren't ready to talk in-person. These online resources provide support that works around any schedule. Looking for an in-person group? A local Texas Oncology practice can provide referrals.

- **Look Good, Feel Better** offers online and in-person workshops on grooming and self-care for women, men, and teens. In-person workshops are available at many locations in Texas. lookgoodfeelbetter.org
- The **American Childhood Cancer Organization** offers email support groups and online forums for caregivers of children with cancer and survivors. acco.org/Information/Support/OnlineSupportGroups.aspx
- The **Cancer Survivors Network**, an American Cancer Society program, hosts discussion forums based on cancer type and lifestyle topics. csn.cancer.org/forum
- **Stupid Cancer** hosts online forums and Facebook groups, as well as meet-ups across the country, for young adults fighting cancer and their loved ones. stupidcancer.org/connect
- Geared toward working adults, **Cancer and Careers** shares insights, resources, and breaking news. cancerandcareers.org/en/community/google-group
- **Cancer Support Community** offers online discussion boards and support groups that meet regularly in chat rooms. In-person support groups are available in Austin and Dallas. cancersupportcommunity.org/MainMenu/Cancer-Support/Online-Support-Groups

Care Guide: A Personalized Roadmap

The journey cancer patients experience is unique to each individual, although some of the fundamental elements involved in treatment and recovery are similar. Texas Oncology's Care Guide provides a reference for every patient, including a wealth of guidance for steps along the way. Information includes overviews of medical treatments, cancer care team information, tips on everything from side effects to financial questions, and general information about your Texas Oncology practice. Each patient receives a Care Guide when treatment begins.

Hear from the Experts

We talked with patients, caregivers, and specialists around the Texas Oncology network to gather their best advice for patients at diagnosis, during treatment, following treatment, and beyond. Here's what they had to say:

	At Diagnosis	During Treatment	After Treatment
Medical Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find an oncologist you trust Learn about potential short and long-term side effects, and approaches to address them before treatment starts (i.e., fertility) Learn about your treatment options and ask lots of questions Read Texas Oncology's Care Guide Start a journal to keep important notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your doctor or nurse about ways to address side effects Bring someone with you to appointments to be an "extra set of ears" Bring your journal to take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get an overview of your cancer and treatment history from your physician for your records Get a personalized recommendation for cancer screenings and other health needs from your oncology team Talk with family members who may share your cancer risk Update your other physicians on your treatment Update journal after follow up appointments
Self Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take time to process the news and changes ahead Find and join a support group in your area Stock up on restful things you enjoy, like books you have wanted to read or favorite music, to help relax during treatment and recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge difficult feelings and deal with them in a healthy way Store supplies for long treatment days in one bag for easy access Meet with a clinical nutritionist if you have trouble eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and maintain a healthy diet and exercise routine Continue follow-up care and maintain a healthy lifestyle
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about your cancer type and stage; ask lots of questions to explore and evaluate all treatment options Decide who to tell and how, including coworkers Decide how much to tell the children in your life (age-appropriate honesty is best) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider starting a blog to efficiently update all friends and family at once as you have developments to report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider celebrating post-treatment anniversaries Request a written description of your treatment history to share with your other healthcare providers Let your loved ones know treatment is finished and how they can help you adapt to your "new normal"
Life Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss changes to your work schedule with your employer Update legal documents Try to keep life as normal as possible by continuing to do things that mean the most to you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a caregiver to help with transportation and other needs Say "yes" to meals, errands, childcare, and other offers of help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with your HR department on a realistic schedule for returning to work Ease your way back into activities
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine your insurance coverage for treatment and testing Meet with a financial counselor to review your insurance coverage and identify options Learn what deductibles, co-pays, and other out-of-pocket costs you may incur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As treatment plans change, meet with a financial counselor to reassess financial implications Keep track of all financial and insurance paperwork Reach out to community resources if you're having financial difficulties Contact your employer's HR department regarding Family/Medical Leave or disability time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap into community resources available to survivors Review all remaining EOBs and wrap up any outstanding balances

My Best Advice

What would Texas Oncology physicians, staff, patients, and caregivers suggest to someone going through treatment? Read their best tips:

“Try to stay active. Walking and running helped me feel stronger and lifted my spirits.”

– Molly Brown

Patient and Survivor, Texas Oncology–Bedford



“There’s no such thing as a dumb question. Patients should feel free to ask as many questions as it takes to feel comfortable with their treatment.”

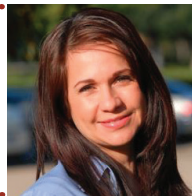
– Anand Shivnani, M.D.

Radiation Oncologist, Texas Oncology–Sherman

“It takes the whole family to recover from an unexpected burden like cancer. Work as a team.”

– Sandra Ramirez

Financial Counselor, Texas Oncology–Sugar Land



“Ask any and all questions. The doctors and the nurses know that cancer treatment is a long process, and they don’t mind answering the same question twice.”

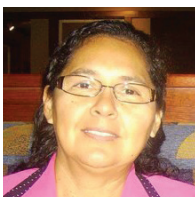
– Lauren Brandt

Social Worker, Texas Oncology–San Marcos and Texas Oncology–South Austin

“Accept that you’re entering a ‘new normal’ during and after treatment, and allow yourself to change.”

– Jennifer Campos

RN and Nurse Navigator, Texas Breast Specialists–Amarillo



“I’d tell other caregivers to be prepared to give their loved one lots of encouraging words. Cancer patients go through lots of changes that cause strong emotions.”

– Juanita Conteras

Caregiver, Texas Oncology–McAllen

Learning More

Other “I Can” newsletter editions take a deeper look at topics that can provide guidance for your cancer journey. Look for these issues at www.TexasOncology.com/newsletter.

Topic:

Survivorship:

Nutrition:

Side Effects:

Spiritual & Emotional Support:

Healthcare Providers:

Caregivers:

Treatment Options:

Research:

Newsletters:

More Than Medicine, Life After Cancer

More Than Medicine, Nutrition & Healthy Holidays

More Than Medicine

More Than Medicine

It Takes a Team

Caregivers

Moving Cancer Care Forward, Radiation Therapy

Moving Cancer Care Forward, Cancer Research

Inside Texas Oncology

- Find a Location
- Find a Physician
- Make a Referral
- Cancer Fact Sheets

Visit www.TexasOncology.com for more information and tips.

Fast Facts

- Nutrition to Lower Disease Risk
- Cancer Free at Any Age
- Caregiver Tips

For more information about cancer treatment and other topics, visit www.TexasOncology.com.

About Texas Oncology

As an independent oncology practice, Texas Oncology is comprised of more than 350 physicians and more than 120 sites of service throughout Texas and southeastern Oklahoma and is a pioneer in community-based cancer care. Patients are treated with today’s most advanced, effective cancer technologies and treatments, and have the opportunity to take part in some of the most promising clinical trials in the nation for new drugs and treatments for a broad range of cancers, near the support of family and friends. Texas Breast Specialists and Texas Urology Specialists are a part of Texas Oncology.

Learn more at 1-888-864-ICAN (4226) or www.TexasOncology.com.

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