

JUST RECEIVED A CANCER DIAGNOSIS? HERE'S WHAT TO DO



Understand the Diagnosis

Ask Questions: Understand the type, stage, and treatment options for the cancer. Write down questions to ask during medical appointments.
Educate Yourself: Use credible resources to learn about the condition. Avoid misinformation by sticking to trusted sources like cancer.gov or major cancer centers.
Second Opinions: Don't hesitate to seek a second opinion. It's common and often encouraged for clarity and confidence in your treatment plan.



Build a Strong Support System

Involve Loved Ones: Share your diagnosis with close family and friends. They can provide emotional and logistical support.
Support Groups: Join local or online cancer support groups. Connecting with others in similar situations can reduce feelings of isolation.
Professional Help: Consider therapy or counseling to help process emotions and manage stress.



Partner with Your Healthcare Team

Stay Involved: Attend all appointments, follow treatment plans, and discuss side effects with your care team promptly.
Designate a Care Coordinator: Have a trusted family member or friend attend appointments, take notes, and help manage communication with your healthcare team.
Explore Clinical Trials: Ask about clinical trial options that may provide access to new treatments.



Focus on Nutrition and Physical Wellness

Balanced Diet: Work with a registered dietitian specializing in oncology to develop a nutrient-rich diet that supports energy and healing.
Stay Active: Incorporate light to moderate physical activity, as approved by your doctor, to improve mood and overall well-being.
Manage Symptoms: Address side effects like nausea or fatigue with your care team to avoid compromising nutrition and activity.



Maintain Emotional and Mental Health

Acknowledge Emotions: It's normal to feel fear, anger, or sadness. Share these feelings with someone you trust or a counselor.
Practice Mindfulness: Techniques such as meditation, yoga, or journaling can help reduce stress and improve focus.
Celebrate Milestones: Find joy in small victories and moments of progress.



Plan for Practical Needs

Organize Finances: Work with a financial counselor to understand costs, insurance coverage, and available resources.
Prepare Legal Documents: Ensure your will, power of attorney, and advance directives are up to date.
Delegate Tasks: Accept help from friends and family with daily responsibilities like childcare, meals, or transportation to appointments.



Explore Complementary Therapies

Integrative Care: Treatments such as acupuncture, massage therapy, and aromatherapy may help manage symptoms like pain, fatigue, or stress.
Discuss with Your Doctor: Always inform your oncologist about complementary therapies to ensure they are safe and don't interfere with medical treatments.



Stay Informed and Hopeful

Track Progress: Keep a journal of symptoms, treatments, and questions for your care team.
Set Realistic Goals: Focus on what matters most to you, whether it's time with family, career, or personal hobbies.