

## Information for Members Who are Newly Diagnosed

Our members have expressed to us over the years how important it is to have information from a trusted source when their lives are touched by cancer. So, we have asked our current members to help us compile a list of the things that they “wished they knew” when they were first diagnosed with cancer. Their suggestions included providing general information about cancer; the treatments, side effects, and risks that one might experience; specific questions to ask the doctor; types of alternative medicine that could be useful; and help in balancing their work lives with their cancer experience. Below are sources of information that we at GCW have gathered for you based on those requests.

Please know that this information is not intended to replace information given to you by your doctor or other health care professionals. These sites are simply tools to assist you during this time in your life.

- **General Information About Cancer**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/cancer/DS01076>

This is an article by the Mayo Clinic that includes an overview of what you may want to know about cancer, its causes, and its treatment. It is written in a way that is easy to understand for those without a background in medicine. The Cancer site by the Mayo Clinic offers many types of additional information that may be of interest to you. The Mayo Clinic is the first and largest integrated, not-for-profit group practice in the world, and is a respected source for current research and medical information.

- **Treatments and Side Effects**

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/wyntk/overview>

The National Cancer Institute’s publication, “What You need to Know about Cancer” is an excellent starting point for information about cancer. Pages 29-37 include information about specific treatments, their side effects, and immediate risks that you may encounter. The National Cancer Institute has many publications, including information on current research on cancer and its treatment. They also have a toll-free help line if you need to talk to someone. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and is the Federal Government's principal agency for cancer research and training.

- **Long-Term Risks of Certain Treatments**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/cancer-survivor/CA00073>

The Mayo Clinic article on “Cancer Survivors: Managing late effects of cancer treatment” explains some of the long-term outcomes of cancer treatments. This is an area of ongoing research, as individuals with cancer are living longer than ever.

- **Making Treatment Decisions**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/cancer-treatment/CA00027>

The Mayo Clinic's article, "Cancer treatment decisions: 5 steps to help you decide," has helpful guidelines to assist you in making decisions that are right for **you** and your life.

- **Questions for the Doctor**

<http://www.canceradvocacy.org/resources/publications/>

The booklet "Teamwork: The Cancer Patient's Guide to Talking With your Doctor" by the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship contains suggestions for many types of questions that may help you during different stages of your cancer experience. The NCCS has many other resources, including audio programs for those who prefer to listen to information. The National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship is the oldest survivor-led cancer advocacy organization in the country, advocating for quality cancer care for all Americans and empowering cancer survivors.

- **Complementary and Alternative Medicine**

There is a wide variety of information available on the internet about different types of alternative and complementary therapies. It is important to discuss all treatment options with your doctor, including supplements and vitamins, as they may interact with your medical treatment. In order to help you to sort through the information that is available, we have adapted the "Integrative Oncology Practice Guidelines" from the Society for Integrative Oncology for your use. You can find their original publication, "Integrative Oncology Practice Guidelines," at <http://www.integrativeonc.org/clinicalresearch/35-clinical-studies/95-sio-2007-practice-guidelines.html>

- **Work**

Our members often discuss how difficult it has been for them to navigate their work lives during their cancer experience. There are four articles by "Caring 4 Cancer" that cover a few of the issues that come up most often for our members. Caring4Cancer is a website that combines cancer information with an online community.

"A 4-Step Guide to Working During Treatment"

<http://www.caring4cancer.com/go/cancer/wellbeing/working/a-4step-guide-for-working-during-treatment.htm>

This article includes tips for making a plan for work that will take into account your treatment.

"Know Your Legal Rights"

<http://www.caring4cancer.com/go/cancer/wellbeing/Working/know-your-legal-rights.htm>

This article will help you to know what policies apply to you if you need to take time off of work or need specific accommodations during your treatment.

“Sharing the News at Work”

<http://www.caring4cancer.com/go/cancer/wellbeing/working/sharing-the-news-at-work.htm>

Discussing your experience with others in your workplace and explaining your absences can be difficult, so this article has tips on how to handle those conversations.

“Tips for Making it Through the Workday”

<http://www.caring4cancer.com/go/cancer/wellbeing/working/tips-for-making-it-through-the-workday.htm>

These tips will help you if you continue to work during treatment, so that you will be able to face some of the physical and emotional challenges that come up at this time.