

Information for Young Adults with Cancer

As a young adult, life is different for you. Having cancer can give you other challenges. You might have felt that bad things could not happen to you. The truth is that most people your age are healthy. The problems other people your age have may seem less serious than your own. It can help to talk with people who understand what you are feeling.

Here are some things you can do to help yourself while you are being treated for cancer:

Be informed

Ask your health care team questions about your diagnosis and treatment. Having information can help you feel more in control.

Get the most out of your medical appointments

Bring a written list of your questions to your appointments. Bring someone with you to take notes. This can help you get the information you need.

Make room for life changes

Your work or school schedule might have to change because of your cancer treatments. You might have to go to school or work part-time. You might want to think about taking a leave from school or from work. Talk to your health care team. They can help support you as you make some of these decisions.

Seek support

It may help to meet other young adults with cancer. Joining a support group lets you talk about how cancer affects your life. Counseling gives you the chance to talk about your feelings. There are telephone or online supports as well as events that can connect you with other young people who have cancer.

Reach out to family and friends

Your family and friends are part of your support team. They may need information about cancer too. This can help them understand what you are feeling. The supports you find helpful may also help your family and friends. Others may have different ideas about cancer than you do. It is important to learn and talk about cancer so that you get the support you need.

Be aware of physical changes

Cancer or its treatment can cause you to have physical changes. Have your doctor tell you about these changes. Wear clothes that fit your current size. Think about wearing a wig or a comfortable hat. It is normal to have certain feelings about your body and physical changes. Talking to someone about how you feel can help.

Get information on sex and relationships

Dating and relationships are important. Cancer can affect how you see these areas of your life. Learn about sexuality and cancer by reading or talking to your health care team.

Learn about preserving your fertility

Cancer treatment can change your ability to have a baby. You may want to preserve your fertility by freezing your sperm or eggs. Talk with your health care team before treatment starts.

Care for yourself

It is important to find ways to care for yourself. It may help to listen to calming music, do yoga, or spend time with friends and family. Think about what made you happy before you had cancer. Find ways to bring those things into your new routine. Keeping things normal can be helpful.

Adapted from "Young Adults with Cancer Fact Sheet" with permission from *CancerCare*

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