



Not an actual patient.



COPING WITH BLOOD CANCER

A Guide to Supporting Your Mental and Emotional Well-being

YOU'VE RECEIVED A BLOOD CANCER DIAGNOSIS. NOW WHAT?

A BLOOD CANCER DIAGNOSIS CAN BE A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

Learning you have blood cancer can bring up a wide range of thoughts and emotions. These emotions can feel intense and can change unpredictably. It's important to remember that **any feelings you have are normal**.



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MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUR WELL-BEING

Mental health is an important part of your overall well-being. It's crucial to talk to your healthcare team about how you are feeling and express any concerns you have. Unaddressed mental health issues can make it challenging to follow your treatment plan.

Studies have shown that addressing mental health concerns **helps relieve depression and anxiety and improves quality of life.** Positive emotions have also been linked with **better adherence to treatment and overall survival** in people with cancer.

WHAT'S IN THIS BROCHURE?

This brochure provides information about managing your mental and emotional health. It includes:



**Advice on connecting
with counselors and
support groups**



**Suggestions for how
friends and family
can help**



Ideas for self-care

HOW CANCER MAY AFFECT YOUR EMOTIONS

Having cancer can bring up a lot of different emotions, some more challenging than others. **These feelings are normal.**

Treatment for blood cancer can sometimes be aggressive. Medicines you are given could affect the way you think and feel. Depending on your diagnosis, there is also a chance that you may have to spend long periods of time in the hospital. Fortunately, **there are strategies available to help you manage your emotions**, including anxiety and depression.

COMMON EMOTIONS YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE



Overwhelmed: Feeling like your life is out of control.

Fear and worry: Being afraid of pain, sickness, or the future.

Stress and anxiety: Feeling stressed about life changes and changes in your body, managing your daily routine, and insurance.

Hope: Feeling positive about your recovery.

Anger: Asking “Why me?” and feeling angry at your diagnosis or other people.

Sadness and depression: Feeling a sense of loss or sadness that doesn’t go away. Changes in your body can trigger feelings of depression.

Gratitude: Appreciating the little things in life.

Loneliness: Feeling isolated or distant from others.

Guilt: Blaming yourself for having cancer or feeling like a burden.

Once your treatment begins, managing costs and handling paperwork can add to the complexity of these feelings. This is also normal.

DO WHAT’S RIGHT FOR YOU

People with cancer manage their emotions in different ways. Some people prefer to cope with their feelings in private. Others feel more comfortable reaching out for support.

There is no one way to manage the emotions that come with a blood cancer diagnosis. **Choose an approach that aligns with your personal values and treatment goals.**



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Remember, you are not alone. Help is available to you.

CONSIDER COUNSELING SERVICES

Adjusting to life with blood cancer can be a challenge. If your emotions become hard to manage at any stage of your blood cancer journey, **counseling may help**.

People sometimes face financial or logistical barriers to receiving counseling. It can also be difficult at times to ask for help. Although it may feel daunting to start therapy, it's important to remember that **counseling can offer both emotional and physical benefits to people with blood cancer**.

Benefits from counseling include increased feelings of hopefulness and **lower levels of depression, anxiety, and cancer- and treatment-related symptoms**. Managing stress levels **can help your immune system stay healthy**.

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND SUPPORT COULD INCLUDE:



Psychotherapy (talk therapy)

Discussions with a trained therapist can help you understand your feelings and reframe your experiences. Psychotherapy can take place in one-on-one sessions as well as in group sessions.



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

CBT is a technique focused on understanding how you think and behave. It can help change your reaction to things that cause you to feel fear and anxiety.



Medicines to support therapy

If you are experiencing severe anxiety or major depression, counseling may be combined with antianxiety or antidepressant medicine. Medicines can help stabilize your emotions so you can better participate in your treatment.

FINDING THE RIGHT COUNSELOR TO SUPPORT YOUR NEEDS

Hospitals often have counselors on staff. Your oncologist might also have access to counselors. Telehealth is another way you can receive counseling services. **Telehealth may be a good option if you live in a remote or rural area, or if it is more convenient.** The organizations on our website can also help you find counseling services.

[Visit site >](#)

If you have thoughts of suicide, dial 911 in an emergency or call, text, or chat 988 to reach the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (www.988lifeline.org). Counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and offer services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

CONNECT WITH A SUPPORT GROUP

Cancer support groups offer a chance to **connect with others who understand what you're going through**. Group meetings are a place to find emotional support and share advice. They can be led by a professional counselor or a cancer survivor.



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TYPES OF SUPPORT GROUPS



In-Person

Meetings at hospitals, community centers, or other locations.



Online

Meetings through chat rooms, social media, or discussion groups. These can be a good option if you can't travel or live in a rural area.



Telephone

Conference calls where you can share and talk with others from all over the country.

FINDING A SUPPORT GROUP

Ask your doctor or hospital social worker where to find a support group. You can also find support at the organizations listed on our website.

[Visit site](#) >



REACH OUT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Family and friends can be a great source of support, but they may not know the best way to help. **Don't be afraid to ask for practical or emotional support in a direct way.** If someone says, "Let me know if there's anything I can do," tell them if you need help with a specific errand or a ride to the doctor's office.

WAYS FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN SUPPORT YOU



Keep you company, give you a hug, or hold your hand



Listen to you



Help with rides, meals, errands, or household chores



Go with you to doctor's visits or treatment sessions

Asking for and accepting help is not always easy. It's good to remember that family and friends want to help you.

RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS

Sometimes caregivers need support. Meet others who are also caring for loved ones and find information, advice, and resources through these organizations:



Family
Caregiver
Alliance®

Visit site >

**Blood Cancer
United**

Visit site >



MAKE TIME FOR SELF-CARE

It's important to prioritize self-care before, during, and after blood cancer treatment. **Maintaining self-care has both physical and emotional benefits.**

SOME SELF-CARE SUGGESTIONS



Follow your daily routine

Maintaining your routine can help you feel more in control. Ask yourself how you'd like to spend your time:

- Who do I like to be with?
- What are my passions?
- What activities do I enjoy?
- Is there something I want to do that I've never tried?



Return to work

Getting back to work can help provide a sense of routine. If you would like to return to work, talk to your doctor as well as your employer. Ask about any adjustments or accommodations that may be helpful or necessary.



Participate in exercise

Exercise can help relieve cancer-related fatigue as well as reduce stress and anxiety. Even 10 minutes a day can be a good start. Ask your doctor what exercises might be safe and beneficial for you.



Try to maintain healthy sleep

Getting enough sleep can help you get the most out of your treatment. Healthy sleep helps your body heal and strengthens your immune system. Aim for 8 hours a night, if possible.



Try relaxation or mindfulness techniques

Mindfulness is an increased awareness of the present. It can be practiced as a sitting meditation or incorporated into daily activities. Relaxation techniques include breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery. Both practices can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression.

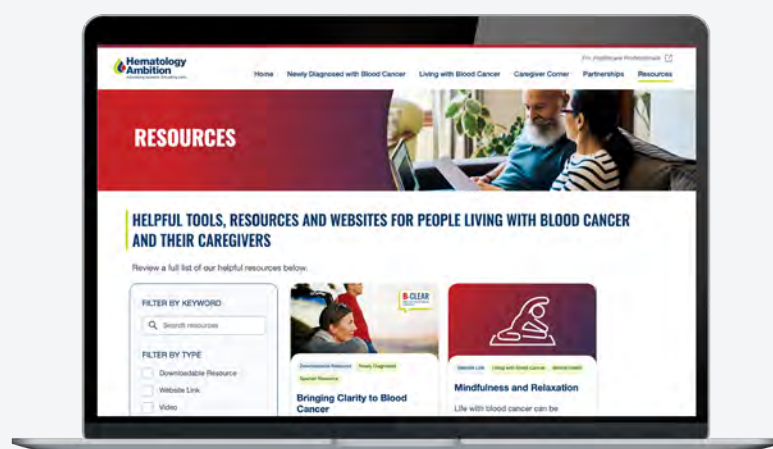


Keep a journal

A journal gives you a place to reflect, decompress, and process emotions in a healthy way. Consider starting a journal or diary if you don't already keep one.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A blood cancer diagnosis can feel overwhelming. One way to feel more in control is to learn all you can about your condition.



AstraZeneca has created educational and support resources to help people with blood cancer and their caregivers.

Visit site >

SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL HEALTH DURING TREATMENT

AstraZeneca has developed Affirmation Cards for Patients, available on our Resources page. Each card provides a daily intention designed to help patients stay focused and positive during their blood cancer journey.

Visit site >



I am strong and resilient.
My disease does not define me.



I am actively participating
in my wellness journey.



I can choose to embrace today
with hope and a positive mindset.



My body is strong,
fighting every day.



I am grateful
to have people in my life who care about me.



I release feelings of fear and I embrace feelings of courage.



I can draw strength from my support network.



I am grateful for the advancements in blood cancer care.



My body is resilient in the fight against cancer.



I am confident in my decisions.



I will process my emotions with self-compassion.



My mind has a positive attitude about my condition.