



## LIVING WITH CANCER:

# Building a Community of Support

Hearing a doctor say, “You have cancer,” can feel as if your world has fallen off its axis. It is important to keep in mind that many cancers are highly treatable. During this time, it’s imperative that you establish a community of supportive family and friends. You may need to lean on this group through treatment and recovery.

Identify friends and family members (in advance) whom you can count on to assist with your medical appointments, be it scheduling or with transportation needs. Bear in mind, cancer also impacts your emotional and mental health. Therefore, it is critical to build a community of support that’s uplifting in all aspects of your life.

### MENTAL HEALTH

A cancer therapist can help you work through mental health challenges that began after your diagnosis. They’re a great option for people who are experiencing feelings of helplessness, depression, anxiety, or other emotions related to cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends a cancer therapist for anyone who needs help:

- Coping with their cancer diagnosis
- Working through strong feelings, like hopelessness or feelings of depression

- Dealing with changes in or ending treatment
- Managing cancer symptoms and treatment side effects
- Understanding or coping with family issues during or resulting from treatment
- Talking about sex and intimacy during cancer

You can meet with your cancer therapist one-on-one to discuss your feelings about your diagnosis and treatment. Depending on your individual circumstances, your therapist may also suggest couples’ or family counseling to further support your mental health during this time.

### EMOTIONAL HEALTH

While a cancer therapist can help you work through complicated feelings, they may not be able to empathize with you as well as other people who have cancer. This is where a support group may be a great option.



### FOLLOW THE MOUSE:

We’ve hyperlinked resources you may want to access. Just hover and click!

Continued on next page

Continued from page 1

Support groups convene a group of people who are working through the same experience. There are many types of cancer support groups available to choose from:

- People who have the same or similar cancer
- People who receive similar treatments
- People who have cancer, regardless of what kind
- People who have children or other loved ones with cancer
- People who are the same age and/or gender

The best way to find a group best-suited to your needs and personal preferences is to ask your doctor and other healthcare providers for recommendations. They have access to a rich network of cancer support groups and services to help you get what you need.



*A support group may be a great option for connecting with people who understand and empathize with you in the aftermath of a cancer diagnosis.*

### FINANCIAL HEALTH

Even with health insurance, cancer treatment can be very costly. Thankfully, there are non-profit organizations that provide financial resources to help with the various expenses related to your cancer diagnosis.

You don't have to do all the research yourself. Your healthcare providers are familiar with such programs as will be the people in your support groups. If you need financial assistance at any point in your cancer journey, please utilize all available resources. Your energy and focus needs to solely be on fighting cancer not dealing with financial stressors.



**COMPSYCH**  
GuidanceResources® Worldwide

ComPsych EAP has a wealth of resources to support your mental, emotional, and financial health for cancer or any other time. **Enter Web ID: BCBSILEAP** to access these resources and more!



**SOURCES:** [Cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org), [ClevelandClinic.org](https://www.clevelandclinic.org), [LLS.org](https://www.lls.org)



## myHealth Total Wellness

### Mark your calendars!

Join us for the annual Cook County Employee Health Fairs, from **June 4th to 13th**. This year's theme is **myHealth Total Wellness**. Speak with representatives from the Cook County benefits team along with community and vendor partners who will be onsite to offer valuable information and resources. We want to empower you to navigate your Total Wellness journey with confidence and support.

***We look forward to seeing you there!***