

30 Tips for People Newly Diagnosed with Cancer

(Expanded version)



Take...

- a pause.
 - Hearing that you have cancer is overwhelming. Give yourself moments to just pause and be still.
- a breath.
 - Take a few deep breaths to remind yourself you are still here and the breath of life is still in you.
- the process, step by step, day by day.
 - Naturally you will want to know the future. Rewind, come back to the present and take one step at a time.
- someone to your appointments with you.
 - Doctor's appointments can be overwhelming with all the information coming your way. Have a family member or friend go with you to take notes so you can refer back to the notes at a later time if needed.



Be...

- your number one advocate, or know who is best to advocate for you.
 - Advocate for yourself and if you aren't good at that, invite someone beside you who will listen to you and advocate for you.
- wise about what you are reading online.
 - The internet has a lot of information. Read what is necessary regarding your diagnosis and remember, your story is not online. If reading overwhelms you too much, don't do it. Instead ask someone else to do the research for you.
- yourself and keep as much normalcy as will help you.
 - You know yourself best. Do what will nourish your heart, mind and soul, keeping as much normalcy as you'd like, while also honoring where you are on your healing journey.
- persistent with your insurance company.
 - Insurance companies may deny coverage, yet that doesn't mean you won't get it. Keep asking questions, persevering and even have your doctors advocate for your coverage, if needed.



Ask...

- questions.
 - Don't hesitate to ask your doctor and nurse questions. The more questions you get answered, the more at ease you may be within. And if they don't have the answers, remember God does. Rest in that truth.
- for a second or third opinion.
 - Be willing to get more information from other doctors before determining your treatment plan. The more information, knowledge and perspectives you get, the greater clarity you will have to know the wisest path for you to take.
- for help from family and friends.
 - People want to help. Be willing to ask for help when you need it, or simply because having someone help would lighten your load in some way.

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- about proton beam radiation, if radiation is part of your treatment plan.
 - If your tumor is near critical organs or structures, ask about proton beam radiation, which is a more localized radiation with less collateral damage than regular radiation.

♡ Set...

- your thoughts on God above all else.
 - Keeping your eyes, ears and thoughts on God can help bring strength and perspective.
- up your support system.
 - Know who the people are who will be there for you, and let them know how you will need them to walk beside you through this time.
- healthy boundaries for your time and space.
 - Give yourself permission to establish healthy boundaries for your time and space so that you have the margin you need to rest, heal and process what you are going through.

♡ Do...

- get fresh air as often as possible.
 - Go for a walk or simply sit and enjoy the fresh air.
- eat nutrient dense foods.
 - Eat what you can and consider foods that may help in the healing process such as tumeric with pepper, protein, bone broths, etc. Consult a nutritionist who works with cancer patients, and to let your doctor know.
- drink water.
 - Water helps your body absorb nutrients and get rid of toxins in the body.
- keep moving.
 - Movement is good for your mind, body and soul. Get some form of movement in daily, when you are able.
- make a plan to access your parasympathetic nervous system, also know as 'rest and digest,' and away from 'fight and flight,' your sympathetic nervous system response.
 - Choose practices that will help you move out of "fight and flight" response and into "rest and digest," such as prayer, breathing deeply, getting a massage, writing in a gratitude journal, taking a bath, etc. Many hospitals now have programs available to help you with this. Ask about the programs available to you.

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- read, listen to music and write.
 - What goes in our eyes and ears matters and can help increase our stress, or diffuse us. Read books, articles, magazine, scriptures, and listen to music that will nourish your mind and soul. Write in a gratitude and/or prayer journal to help you stay focused on what there is to be thankful for and to process your experience.

♡ Free...

- yourself from having to please the people around you.
 - At the end of the day, be right with God above all else. You will never be able to please every person around you.
- yourself from having to know the outcome.
 - Rather than gripping to a certain outcome, open your palms up to God and put your life in the hands of our faithful creator, trusting all will be well, in time, no matter the outcome.

♡ Pray...

- for your healing.
- for your family and friends.
- - for the doctors, medical staff, care team, and for the people you meet along your journey.
 - Choose verses to pray and meditate on to help keep your mind and eyes above the waves of your circumstances.

♡ Remember...

- it's okay not to be okay.
 - If you are having trouble processing what you are going through, know that is okay.
- hold on to hope.
 - Hope is an anchor for the soul. (Hebrews 6:19)
- reach out for help when you need it.
 - You don't have to do this alone. Be sure to reach out to family, friends, your doctors and care team to get the support you need, in every way.
- to live out love every day.
 - Yes, you may have cancer but cancer doesn't have to have you. You are still here, alive and breathing and you get to still live out love to those around you. Whether you smile at a stranger, call a friend to see how they are doing, draw with a child, write a thank you note to a family member, or ask another patient in the waiting room with you how they are doing, lifting your eyes up from your circumstances and choosing to live out love will bless someone else, and help you be well within as well.