



A GUIDE THROUGH
DIAGNOSIS
AND
TREATMENT

Welcome to City of Hope.

Your cancer care team is here to support you.
We made this guide to help you through your
diagnosis and treatment.

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Who Is on Your Care Team?

Your Doctor



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Your Clinic Team Nurses



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Your Clinical Social Worker



Clinical social workers are available to guide you with ways of coping with distress and can connect you with the most helpful resources to address mental, emotional and practical needs.

Name: _____

Phone: (626) 218-2282

Other team members may be:



Psychologist/Psychiatrist

Psychologists and psychiatrists are available to help you as you manage your mental health and well-being throughout your treatment. Ask your doctor or clinical social worker for a referral.

Name: _____

Phone: _____



Chaplain

A chaplain can help you with your cancer journey from a spiritual or religious perspective.

Name: _____

Phone: (626) 218-3898



Child Life Specialist

Child life specialists can help you communicate with your children (ages 4 to 17) about cancer and your treatment. They can also communicate with your children at their developmental level to help them understand. Ask your doctor or clinical social worker for a referral.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Communicating With Your Health Care Team

Talking With Your Doctor

It can be hard to talk to your doctor. Just thinking about cancer can be overwhelming and scary. Here are some ways to improve communication with your health care team:

- 1. Remember that you are part of the team.** As a patient, it is important to keep in mind that you are the expert on your body and wishes. The best way to be part of the team is to ask questions if you don't understand something and share what is important to you with your doctor and team.
- 2. Bring someone with you to your appointment** or have them join on speaker phone. It helps to have someone else listening and there to ask questions.

3. **Have a list of questions ready** before your appointment. Keep them short and to the point. Be sure to ask the most important questions first, in case you can't get to them all.
4. **Write down your doctor's answers.** Taking notes will help you remember your doctor's responses and instructions. It also allows you to go over the information later when you have more time to review quietly.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- "What are my treatment options, and which one do you recommend?"
- "How often will I receive treatment?"
- "What are the possible side effects?"
- "What can I do to help make my treatment the most effective?"
- "What are the possible benefits and risks of this treatment?"

List any other questions that are important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Communicating With Loved Ones

Since your cancer diagnosis, have you noticed changes in the way you talk with your loved ones? It is important for both you and your loved ones to communicate your needs.

Key things to know:

- Lack of communication can lead to isolation, frustration and unmet needs.
- Talking about and sharing feelings and needs lets couples, families and friends work together to cope with cancer.
- Talking about feelings and problems with honesty and openness can reduce the stress that cancer places on relationships.
- Often, you and your loved ones will have the same fears — talking about these fears may even bring you closer.

What you can do:



- **Take the lead in talking.** Some friends and family members may avoid talking with you because they just don't know what to say. Let them know how you feel about talking about your cancer.
- **Reassure family and friends** that you do not expect them to have answers; you just want someone who will listen and understand your feelings.

- **It is also OK to tell people when you don't want to talk** about your cancer — sometimes you might just want to talk about day-to-day things or just laugh with your friends.

- **Don't assume** that your loved ones know what you need.



- **Your loved ones may need extra reassurance** that they are still needed and loved. You may think they know how much you love them, but they may need to hear it more often.



- **Keep in mind the ages of your kids and grandkids** and give them truthful and correct information they can understand (we have team members to help guide you with this).



- **Encourage your kids or grandkids** to ask questions and talk about their feelings and fears.
- **Ask your family and friends** what they need. This is new for all of you.

Key things to know:

Keep in mind that everyone is different. It's important to know what is helpful and unhelpful to you. Write a list to share with your family.

Helpful	Unhelpful

If you like, you can take a photo of your list and share it with your loved ones to let them know how they can help. Most people want to help but aren't sure how.

Coping With Stress: *10 Ways to Recharge*

Check off what you try and mark if it was helpful for your future reference.

Breathe, Really Breathe

- Deep breathing brings fresh oxygen to your blood, helps to calm down your nervous system and clears your mind.
- For an easy three to five-minute relaxation exercise, sit up in your chair with your feet flat on the floor and hands on top of your knees. Breathe in through your nose and out of your mouth. Focus on expanding your belly when breathing in and squeezing your belly to your spine as you exhale all that air out. Repeat three to five times.



Was this helpful? Yes No

Take a Walk! Change Your Environment

Studies show that walking has stress-relieving benefits, including:

- Boosts endorphins (feel-good chemicals)
- Puts your brain in a meditative state
- Reduces stress
- Boosts energy and reduces fatigue

Walking in nature or a park is even better!



Was this helpful? Yes No

Don't Pause — Take a Break!

- Take breaks — to truly stop and relax instead of only “pausing.”
- Try taking a short walk or sit quietly, taking deep breaths.

Was this helpful? Yes No



Do a Self-Massage

Studies show that massage has stress busting benefits.

- Close your eyes and relax your face, neck, upper chest and back muscles.
- Massage or apply pressure to your temples and jaw.
- Use a tennis ball to massage away tension. Place the ball between your back and the wall. Lean into the ball and hold gentle pressure for up to 15 seconds. Then move the ball to another spot and apply pressure.

Was this helpful? Yes No



Take a Five-Minute Shower

- Enjoy the water on your skin.
- Hope Village has showers you can use.
 - Call (626) 218-2380. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday through Sunday, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Take a long bath, if possible.
- Practice good hygiene; keeping clean is important.

Was this helpful? Yes No



Hold Your Pet

- Animals offer unconditional love and acceptance.
- Hold and pet a cat for a few minutes or enjoy time with your dog.
- Ask your health care team about pet therapy for patients.



Was this helpful? Yes No

Spend Time With Family and Friends

- Humans are social beings and we need support.
- Reaching out can feel hard or even awkward, but take a chance: call, text or email.
- Chances are people want to be there for you.
- Reach out to Imerman Angels (imermanangels.org) for one-on-one peer support.



Was this helpful? Yes No

Laughter and Humor

- Get your funny bone working.
- Give yourself permission to laugh and smile.
- Watch a funny movie or a comedy show.



Was this helpful? Yes No

Escape

- Books, magazines, audio books and movies offer escape for the mind.
- Find a private space and take a deep breath to release tension.

Was this helpful? Yes No



Sing! Listen to Music!

- Turn up your favorite song and sing along!
- As you listen to music, try journaling or stretching, or just dance to burn off stress and become recharged.
- Dance like nobody is watching!

Was this helpful? Yes No



Now list other things you have found to be helpful for yourself!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

What Is Important to You at This Time?

When you find out you have cancer, you may feel that who you are and what is important to you change. This is a time when patients may want to redefine themselves and look at what their priorities are in life.

What does this mean?

It is a time to identify and clarify what is important to you as you experience a life-threatening illness such as cancer.

You may choose to change your goals, and that's OK!

How to talk about priorities in life:

- What changes have occurred since your cancer diagnosis?
- When you look at your life now, what is important to you?
- What is important in relation to your family/friends?
- Do you have any relationships that need adjusting?

Keep these tips in mind to help you through this process:

1

Notice your fears, hopes and feelings and share them with loved ones and your care team.

2

Be flexible and patient.

3

Do not compare yourself to how you were in the past.

4

Know your limits for today or the moment.



5

Find ways to live a fulfilling and meaningful life within these limits.

6

Talk to your family/friends about what you can and cannot do.

7

Keep a journal to write down what your priorities are and to express your feelings and thoughts.

8

Stay connected with friends, family members, spiritual counselors and/or mental health professionals.

9

Use spiritual methods such as prayer or reading spiritual writings that may have helped you in the past.

10

If available, accept help from your community.



Note other tips that are helpful to you:

11

12

13

14

15



Making an Advance Directive

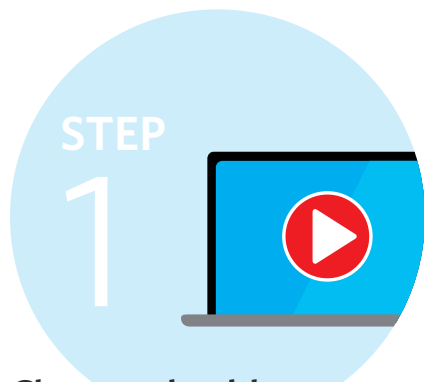
If you are not able to speak for yourself, there are a few things your loved ones and health care team need to know: Who should speak for you, how you want to live, what quality of life means to you, and the type of medical care that you would or would not want.

When should I complete my advance directive?

All adults, regardless of age or health status, should have an advance directive. Even though it may be unlikely that you will need to use it, completing an advance directive is strongly recommended early in your care.

If you already have an advance directive, work with your health care team to have it added to your medical records at City of Hope. Review it regularly to be sure it reflects your current wishes. You may want to change your advance directive based on any new treatment plans or major life changes.

What are the steps to complete an advance directive?



Choose a health care proxy (medical decision maker). You can learn more about how to choose the right person by watching this video: [CityofHope.org/health-care-proxy](https://www.cityofhope.org/health-care-proxy)



Think about what matters most to you and share it with your health care proxy. At [gowish.org](https://www.gowish.org), you can use an online deck of cards to help you prioritize what is most important to you.



Complete your advance directive form. The form and a step-by-step guide to fill it out can be found at [prepareforyourcare.org/welcome](https://www.prepareforyourcare.org/welcome).



Bring your advance directive to City of Hope and share it with your medical team.

If you have any questions or need help:

Please visit City of Hope's Sheri & Les Biller Patient and Family Resource Center (located in Main Medical on City of Hope's Duarte campus).

The team at the center can:

- Answer your questions about advance directives.
- Help you complete your advance directive.
- Make an appointment for free notary services at City of Hope (Monday through Friday).
- File a copy of your advance directive in your medical record.



Once your advance directive is complete:

1. Make copies and give one each to:
 - Your medical decision maker(s)
 - Your doctor
 - Each family member who would know if you were hospitalized
 - Your lawyer, if you have one (remember, your lawyer is not likely to be called if you are in a hospital)
2. Provide a copy to the medical records team, located next to the lobby of the Main Medical building, so it can be scanned into your medical record. Your advance directive stays valid until you revoke or replace it.
3. Keep the original and put it in a safe place where you can get it easily — not in a safe deposit box.



What if I change my mind or want to add something?

If you want to change and/or add something, you should complete a new form. Let your medical decision maker(s), your family and your health care team know that you have a new form. Give copies of the new form to all the people who have copies of your original form and discuss the change.

Resources at City of Hope

City of Hope — Main Line:

626-256-HOPE (626-256-4673)



Supportive Care Medicine

The supportive care medicine team can assist you with pain and symptom management, increasing your quality of life and engaging in conversations about your values and goals in treatment. Ask your doctor to see if a referral would be helpful for you.

Sheri & Les Biller Patient and Family Resource Center

You may also find helpful information, education and support in the Sheri & Les Biller Patient and Family Resource Center. It is located on the Duarte campus in the Main Medical building behind the Guest Services desk or call **626-218-CARE (2273)**. Call them to find out more about programs such as support groups, education classes, music therapy, art therapy and more. These may help you to deal with stress.

Patient Resources Website

patientresources.CityofHope.org

This website can provide you with resources available at City of Hope and in the broader community. You can filter by topic or search for specific topics you are looking for.

Nursing Triage Call Center

626-218-7133 (24 hours)

A registered nurse is available 24 hours to answer questions for non-life-threatening health problems. Please have your medical record number when you call. The nurse will ask you to verify this number each time you call.



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