

Resources For Employees Facing Cancer Messages and Content for 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Caregiving: Caring for a Loved One with Cancer (and Yourself)	2
How to Use This Toolkit	2
Offering Support to Someone Who Has Cancer	3
Coping as a Caregiver	4
Coping Checklist for Caregivers	5
What Should I Say to the Person Who Has Cancer?	6
Promotional Messages for Email/Newsletter Inserts	7
Testimonial	8-9
Access to Information and the Latest Cancer News	10
Web-based Support Available 24 Hours a Day	10
Connect to Local Programs and Services	11

Disclaimer: The American Cancer Society is pleased to be working with your company to provide information and messages for employees who may be facing cancer. Please be sure that the American Cancer Society is cited as your source of information when offering content to employees. All of the content in this document reflects updated information for 2008. Please be aware that changes to the text or content of this toolkit may also change the meaning of certain medical content, and is not recommended. Thank you again for your commitment to fighting cancer in the workplace.

Caregiving: Caring for a Loved One with Cancer (and Yourself)

When someone is diagnosed with cancer, that person's life changes. But the person facing cancer is only one of the people affected by the diagnosis. Life also changes for those who help that person get through the cancer experience. The primary (main) caregiver plays a critical role in the care and well-being of the person facing cancer – and good, reliable caregiver support is important.

This toolkit provides you some idea of what to expect if you become a caregiver for a person with cancer. It also offers some suggestions for ways to take care of yourself during this time.

Who is a caregiver?

A caregiver is the person who consistently helps a person with cancer, without being paid to do so. Most often, the primary (main) caregiver is a spouse, partner, or an adult child. But close friends, coworkers, or neighbors may fill this role.

How to Use This Toolkit

This American Cancer Society Promotional Toolkit is designed to provide you with valuable information, including communication tools, to distribute to your employees who are caring for a person with cancer.

You can demonstrate your commitment to your employees and offer them support by reminding them of the services available through your relationship with the American Cancer Society.

Offering Support to Someone Who Has Cancer

How can I be supportive?

Finding out that someone you know has cancer can be difficult. You may have many questions; both about cancer itself and about how can support this person. Below are some tips to help you be supportive to your friend or loved one facing cancer.

Communication is the key. Continue to treat your friend or loved one as normally as possible. Don't feel that you always have to talk about cancer. Continue to include him or her in activities and social events. When you do ask your friend or loved one "How are you feeling?" also be sure to ask "What are you feeling?" When you think about it, "How are you?" is one of our most common questions, but the expected response is often "Fine" or "Good." It doesn't allow for much discussion. When you ask, "What are you feeling?" you are digging a little deeper and showing that you care.

Don't expect the person facing cancer to be strong all the time. When someone you know has been diagnosed with cancer, remember that he or she may find it hard to ask for help or may seem vulnerable. Telling that person, "You're so brave," or "You're so strong," can put pressure on him or her to be strong when they may not feel that way. Families can unintentionally put pressure on their loved ones by expecting or needing them to be strong all the time. Make sure your friend or loved one understands that it is ok to express all types of feelings and that you are here to support them emotionally every step of the way.

Ask the person facing cancer how you can help. Let your loved one tell you what would be most helpful. Offer to help in specific ways, such as running errands, making phone calls, helping with child care, etc.

Be honest. Your loved one with cancer may look to you for advice regarding financial worries, work issues, or other concerns. Help if you can, but if you feel uncomfortable, say so. There are many places a person can get help and support, and you might suggest seeking the advice of a professional who is best suited to give that kind of guidance. The American Cancer Society may be a good place for you to start to look for help.

For more information, call your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.

Coping as a Caregiver

You may not have thought much about it, but while you are helping your loved one with cancer, you must also take care of yourself. Caring for someone going through cancer treatment takes emotional, spiritual, and physical strength. There is a potential financial burden to caregiving as well. On top of your normal day-to-day tasks, such as planning meals, cleaning, and providing transportation, you will become an important part of the cancer treatment team. This busy schedule often does not leave time for caregivers to attend to their own needs.

All these changes can lead to anxiety, hostility, anger, resentment, frustration, and depression. These are normal feelings that must be recognized and managed. Research has shown that having the support of friends and family is critical to both the person with cancer and the caregiver. Caregivers often tend to feel isolated, depressed, or anxious, and are less likely to reach out for help. Physical problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep problems, increased risk of infections, and fatigue have been linked with caregiving.

Begin by setting limits on what you expect from yourself. Know that caring for someone with cancer can be an overwhelming job and ask for help before stress gets to be too much. Here are some ways to take care of your own needs and feelings:

- Plan things that you enjoy such as having lunch with a friend, exercising, or watching a funny movie. Set aside time during the day, like during a meal, when you do not talk about your loved one's illness.
- Think about joining a support group for caregivers or using counseling services. The American Cancer Society offers an online support community called the Cancer Survivors NetworkSM (www.cancer.org/csn) that connects people who have been touched by cancer to share stories, experiences, and to provide support. There are many cancer organizations that offer ways for caregivers to connect, either electronically or in-person, to education and support resources.
- If you need some time away from work, speak with your boss or human resources department. If your workplace has an Employee Assistance Program, look into what it offers. Some offer counseling services to help you cope with financial concerns, stress, and depression.
- Most important, don't try to do it all yourself. You can't spend all of your time taking care of another person all by yourself. Reach out to others. Involve them in your life and in the things you must do for your loved one.

For more information, call your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.

Coping Checklist for Caregivers

Caring for someone who is sick, taking on new responsibilities, and worrying about the future can be exhausting at the very least – and can quickly lead to "burnout." **When you are busy caring for a person with cancer, who is taking care of you?**

Take a moment to look at the following statements. Each offers a different strategy for coping with the cancer experience and might give you some ideas about where you could make a few changes to take better care of yourself. The more of these strategies you can use, the better.

- I have a supportive family around me.
- I pursue a hobby or project for work, church, or my community.
- I take part in a social or activity group more than once a month.
- I am within 10 pounds of my ideal body weight for my height and bone structure.
- I use relaxation methods such as meditation, yoga, or progressive muscle relaxation five times a week.
- During an average week, I exercise at least 5 times for 30 minutes or more.
- I eat a well-balanced, wholesome meal 2 or 3 times during an average day. A balanced meal is low in fat and high in vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain foods.
- I do something enjoyable "just for me" at least once during an average week.
- I have a place where I can go to relax or be by myself.
- I set priorities and manage my time every day by deciding what tasks are most important, how much I can and cannot do, and by getting help when needed.

Although it can be hard to find the time to do all these things, they can help keep some balance in your life during this very stressful time. If your schedule is too crowded, ask someone for help. If there is no one to help you, talk to your loved one's cancer care team to find out what resources may be available in your area, or call your American Cancer Society for help at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.

What Should I Say to the Person Who Has Cancer?

It is normal to feel that you don't know what to say to someone who has cancer. The most important thing you can do is to acknowledge the situation in some way. You can show interest and concern; you can express encouragement; or you can offer support. Sometimes the simplest expressions of concern are the most meaningful. And sometimes, just listening is the most helpful thing you can do. Below are some tips for things to do and things to avoid when talking with someone who has cancer.

Do

- Take your cues from the person with cancer. Some people are very private while others will openly talk about their illness. Respect the person's need to share or to remain quiet.
- Let the person know you care.
- Respect decisions about how the cancer will be treated, even if you disagree.
- Include the person in usual work projects or social events. Let him or her be the one to tell you if the commitment is too much to manage.
- Listen without always feeling that you have to respond. Sometimes a caring listener is what the person needs the most.
- Expect the person with cancer to have good days and bad days, emotionally and physically.
- Keep your relationship as normal and balanced as possible. While greater patience and compassion are called for during times like these, your friend or colleague should continue to respect your feelings, as you respect his or her feelings.
- Offer to help in concrete, specific ways.

Don't:

- Offer unsolicited advice or be judgmental.
- Feel you must put up with serious displays of temper or mood swings. You shouldn't accept disruptive behavior just because someone is ill.
- Take things too personally. It's normal for the person with cancer to be quieter than usual, to need time alone, and to be angry at times.
- Be afraid to talk about the illness.
- Always feel you have to talk about cancer. The person with cancer may enjoy conversations that don't involve the illness.
- Be afraid to hug or touch your friend if that was a part of your relationship before the illness.
- Be patronizing. (Try not to use a "How sick are you today?" tone when asking how the person is doing.)
- Tell the person with cancer, "I can imagine how you must feel," because you really can't.

For more information, call your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.

Promotional Messages for Email/Newsletter Inserts

These short messages can be used in newsletters, payroll stuffers, email communications, etc.

- Caring for a loved one with cancer? If you have a question, anytime day or night, the American Cancer Society is here to help you. Call 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.
- Many of us in the workplace serve as a caregiver to a family member, close friend, coworker, or neighbor. Taking care of a person with cancer is an important and sometimes difficult job. Find information and resources to make it easier. Call your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.
- What should you do if a coworker is diagnosed with cancer? Take your cues from him or her, and most important, offer support and encouragement. For more tips, call 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org.
- The American Cancer Society can provide answers to your questions about cancer and suggestions about how you can help someone facing the disease. Learn more about what to expect as a cancer caregiver, get practical advice, and get help finding professional agencies to assist with caregiving tasks. Visit www.cancer.org/caregivers to learn more.
- The American Cancer Society Cancer Survivors Network[®] connects survivors and caregivers across the country to share stories, experience, and to find emotional support. Join today at www.cancer.org/csn.
- If you or someone in your family is affected by cancer, the first thing you need to know is that you are not alone. Contact your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org for more information.
- Research conducted by the American Cancer Society shows that caring for someone with cancer is among the most stressful situations of all people caring for someone with a disease. The American Cancer Society is here to help. Call us at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers to learn more.
- One of the most important things caregivers can do is take care of themselves. A caregiver's physical and emotional health is vital to the well-being of the person who is ill. In fact, many cancer survivors say they always felt as though their family members and friends were having a much harder time than they were and would have felt better knowing that their caregivers were taking care of themselves. For more information on how you can stay strong while supporting your loved one and continue to make healthy lifestyle choices, call your American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or visit www.cancer.org/caregivers.
- Having cancer is hard. Finding help shouldn't be. The American Cancer Society can help. Call 1-877-227-5668 anytime, day or night, or visit www.cancer.org.

Testimonial: Hope Lodge® 'Truly a Gift' For Prostate Cancer Patient and Caregiver

When William Malloy of Midway, Georgia, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in November 2007, he and his wife and caregiver, Mary, began researching treatment options and cancer treatment facilities. He decided on Radiotherapy Clinics of Georgia (RCOG) in metro Atlanta, which meant that he would be receiving cancer treatment nearly 300 miles from his home. Fortunately, the Malloy's found a "home away from home" at the American Cancer Society Winn-Dixie Hope Lodge in Atlanta.

"I always call it "Hope Home" because that's what Hope Lodge was to us, a home," says Mary, 66, who stayed at Hope Lodge with her husband as his caregiver. "It's a warm, wonderful place, and it gives you such a feeling of being blessed to be able to stay there. I would recommend it to anyone and tell them to expect the best there because that's what you're going to get."

William, 69, began treatment at RCOG in February 2008 with seed implants, and he and Mary stayed in a nearby motel for a week. But when they came back for the next phase of treatment, which would take eight and a half weeks, a staff member at RCOG recommended that the couple look at the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge.

"She told us that Hope Lodge had an opening that very day if we want to go over there," Mary recalls. "I wasn't sure I wanted to be around people who were sick and suffering because I didn't know what I would be able to do to help them. But we went to the Hope Lodge, and it was obvious when we walked in that that's where we were supposed to be. It's truly a gift."

The Atlanta Hope Lodge opened in 1998 on the campus of Emory University. It has 34 guest suites for cancer patients and their caregivers. Dinners are provided to guests several nights a week by local volunteers and organizations, and volunteers help with everything from answering phones to decorating for holidays to planning activities for guests. Hope Lodge serves all Atlanta-area hospitals.

"We met so many nice people there, and we got so much support and love from the other patients and from the American Cancer Society staff and volunteers," William says.

William's prognosis is very good. His prostate cancer was detected early, and his first follow-up PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test was good. He was due for a second test in August 2008.

As her husband's caregiver, Mary was especially grateful for the caring, supportive environment that Hope Lodge provided. She wrote a note to the American Cancer Society staff after her stay there, thanking them for their kindness and support. It reads in part: "Hope Lodge is a home of hope for all who come through the door. The staff and volunteers make you feel like you're a part of a family when you're there. It is truly a gift from God."

The American Cancer Society Hope Lodge Network offers cancer patients and their caregivers a free, temporary “home away from home” when their best hope for quality care may be at a treatment center in another city. Not having to worry about where to stay or how to pay for lodging allows Hope Lodge guests to focus on getting well. Yet Hope Lodge offers much more than just free lodging. It provides a nurturing, home-like environment where patients and caregivers can retreat to private rooms or connect with others who are going through similar experiences. Hope Lodge is a place created to ease the burden of cancer and related treatment. There are currently 26 Hope Lodge locations across the country, with three more scheduled to open in 2008 and two in 2009.

To learn more about the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge, visit www.cancer.org/hopelodge.

Access to Information and the Latest Cancer News **www.cancer.org/caregivers**

If someone you love has been diagnosed with cancer, you may find yourself taking on new responsibilities as you help them through treatment and recovery. Taking care of a person with cancer is an important, sometimes difficult, job. At www.cancer.org/caregivers, you will find information and resources to make it easier.

Web-based Support Available 24 Hours a Day **The American Cancer Society Cancer Survivors Network**

When you are touched by cancer and need support, encouragement, or just an opportunity to connect with others, you can visit the American Cancer Society Cancer Survivors Network – an online community of cancer survivors, caregivers, family, and friends who connect to offer each other emotional support, words of encouragement, and advice from those who have “been there,” through real-time chatting 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a member of the Cancer Survivors Network, there are many tools and resources you can access with a simple click of your mouse. Below are some of the tools and support you will find through the American Cancer Society Cancer Resource Network at www.cancer.org/csn:

- A “Celebrate Life” gallery, featuring photos and information about Cancer Survivors Network members
- Personal Web pages that members can create to tell their stories and share photos, blogs, art, poems, videos, music, and other audio recordings
- Discussion boards
- Chat rooms
- Private, secure messaging within the Cancer Survivors Network
- A “friends list” of other members, which reveals if members are online and allows for user-friendly messaging
- The ability to search for other members using specific criteria, including cancer type, age, and gender
- The ability for members to create links to their favorite content on the Cancer Survivors Network to make finding it easier
- A free resource library
- A free monthly e-newsletter with information to help members cope
- Hundreds of hours of audio discussions and personal stories, with full-text versions available

Connect to Local Programs and Services

The American Cancer Society offers a vast array of free programs and services to help people touched by cancer and their loved ones through every step of their journey. Whether it is helping patients and caregivers understand their disease and make treatment decisions through information, helping them deal with the day-to-day challenges of living with cancer – such as financial and insurance issues – or connecting them with emotional support, the American Cancer Society meets needs that may arise throughout the cancer experience. The Society also maintains an extensive database that includes more than 75,000 local and national support resources. Here are just a few of the programs and services offered by the Society that might be helpful to you or your loved ones:

- Free lodging for cancer patients and a caregiver during outpatient cancer treatment
- Transportation assistance for cancer patients to and from treatment
- Workshops that teach women techniques to cope with appearance-related side effects of cancer
- Educational classes that provide answers and practical tips on how to deal with cancer treatment
- A one-on-one support program for newly diagnosed breast cancer patients
- Support program for men facing prostate cancer
- Free and confidential services that can help employees locate cancer clinical trials
- Help with financial and insurance questions
- Referral to prescription drug assistance

Information about these offerings is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Employees can contact the American Cancer Society at 1-877-227-5668 or online at www.cancer.org to find out what programs and services are available in their community.