

Cancer: When You First Find Out

Hearing those words, "You have cancer," is a shock.

You may feel numb or overwhelmed ...

like it's hard to take in everything your doctors are telling you.

You might feel like your whole world is out of control.

You're not alone ... many people feel this way at first.

You didn't choose to get cancer, but you do have some control over how you'll face it.

And you won't have to face it alone.

You'll have good support around you, like your doctors and your treatment team.

Family and friends can often be there to help too.

And if you need more support, talk to your doctor about seeing a social worker or counselor.

Your spiritual advisor, pastor, or a chaplain can also be a resource.

You'll meet people along the way too ... people you now share a bond with ...

cancer survivors ... others who are in treatment.

Of course, no one's experience is exactly like yours.

But connecting with others who've made a similar journey can be powerful.

Coping with your feelings ... getting good support ...

choosing how you'll face cancer ... It takes strength.

And your greatest source of strength comes from within you.

Think about what lifts you up when facing the toughest challenges.

What might help you feel more in control of your life right now?

For some people, it might be their spirituality or beliefs ...

or being a role model for their kids.

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You can draw strength from what's most important to you.

Taking care of yourself ... and your feelings ... is very important right now.

So be honest with yourself about how you're doing.

If you're overwhelmed, look to others for support.

Find someone you can talk to about your fears ... your hopes and concerns.

Think of the people around you ...

close friends or family, a partner, your doctor or counselor, members of your faith or a community group ... the people caring for you ...

They're the ones you can lean on.

Remember ... you can choose how you'll face this ... and you don't have to do it alone.