

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOU!

These simple tips are designed to improve your quality of life, help you stay organized and learn to care for your most important asset—YOU!

### Medical

- ❖ Learn about your type of cancer and the planned treatment.
- ❖ You have the right to a second opinion.
- ❖ Make a list of questions to take to appointments.
- ❖ If you check out books or use the internet, then be sure to look for current publication dates from reliable sources. Ask to use your care provider's library.
- ❖ Take someone with you to your first treatment. You will learn about side effects and how to deal with medications and diet.
- ❖ Having someone with you will make talking about what is happening in your life easier for both you and those who love and care about you.

### Creating Tranquility

- ❖ Music, leisure reading, or having someone come to your house to assist with the care of young children or an older adult for a few hours a week can help create a mood.
- ❖ A long bath offers the privacy to relax.
- ❖ Accept help with transportation, meals, childcare, etc.
- ❖ Prayer, positive thinking, and rearranging a sleeping area can be helpful.

### Everyday World

- ❖ Take time for yourself; keep a schedule close at hand, checking it often and avoiding over committing yourself. Give yourself permission to say NO.
- ❖ Sleep patterns may change during treatment so alter as needed. Retire earlier, eating natural yogurt before bed might help. Rest on the day before treatment and as needed for the days after.
- ❖ Exercise at a level comfortable for you..
- ❖ Family and friends are important and they need you but spreading out visits is helpful.

- ❖ Employers often provide flextime, if necessary arrange for temporary position reassignment or leave.
- ❖ When scheduling your first treatment, select a day and time that works well for you, as that will probably be the day and time for your following treatments. Those dates are not set in stone and your general health, holidays, doctor's schedules, etc. figure into the schedule.

### FRAGRANCE FREE ZONE

- ❖ Fragrance/smells and taste tolerances change. This note is for everyone who is a patient, has been on chemo or wants to be of help to someone on chemotherapy. Fragrances from soap, scents, candles, hair spray, smoke, and nail polish can upset your stomach.

### Special Events

- ❖ Check your calendar often and compare it to your circle of family and friends so that communication and expectations are clear and current. Remember the what, when, how and who can be rather daunting for you at this time and de-stressing is an important element for maintaining.
- ❖ Now is not the time to show off your "Super Woman" entertaining skills. Potlucks work well for entertaining, both at home and with others. You can select a food item to share that works well for your comfort and digestion.
- ❖ Getting out and about is good for the spirit and a feeling of normalcy.

### Controlling What You Can

- ❖ Changes in body temperature may require different clothing. For cold moments dress in layers. Keep a scarf, throw or small blanket handy for cold and cotton garments work well for hot moments.
- ❖ Drink more water than usual.
- ❖ Seek counselors for support; it is part of the care system in oncology
- ❖ Take extra care in selecting what you read as it can greatly influence attitude.
- ❖ Wash hands frequently.
- ❖ Avoid places where people with communicable diseases are likely to frequent.
- ❖ Wigs, hats and scarves are especially good for protection from the elements of cold, heat, rain, wind and sun.
- ❖ Check with medical staff about avoiding the sun during treatment, as some medications react to the sun's rays.