

Be an Advocate

Help to communicate the concerns of your loved one to the health care team. As new problems arise, record them in a notebook for your loved one. Also write down any questions that may come up between appointments so you can refer back to your notes when meeting with the doctor and make sure that you get answers to your questions.

Keep a list of all medications that your loved one is taking. Make sure to order and re-order prescriptions early so that you always have the medications that your loved one needs.

Keep Your Loved One as Healthy as Possible

Helping your loved one to eat well during treatment is very important. Consult the oncologist before changing his/her diet, taking vitamins or beginning dietary supplements to help avoid potential negative drug interactions. If your loved one is considering alternative treatments, consult with the healthcare team to investigate the scientific validity and safety of these treatments.

During the treatment of cancer, it is very important that patients eat enough calories to stay strong.

Take advantage of times when your loved one wants to eat, no matter when this is! Vary the texture of foods from soft to crunchy until you find the right one for your loved one. Serve lots of protein such as meat, eggs, tofu, and fish since protein is needed by the body to fight the cancer.

Serve many small meals during the day rather than three large meals. Check our website for recipe suggestions under Cookin' In The Kitchen.

Keeping hydrated can be hard when one is sick. Aim for the equivalent of 8 glasses of fluid a day which can help reduce bloating and stomach discomfort. To add calories to the fluid, serve

juice, milk, milkshakes, or broth soups instead of water.

Finally, help your loved one to take the medications and enzyme supplements that were prescribed by the oncologist. Together with a good diet, they can help to ensure a better quality of life. If you want more suggestions about a healthy diet for your loved one, talk to a dietician at the cancer clinic where your loved one receives treatment.

Take Care of Yourself

Caring for a loved one with pancreatic cancer can be demanding. If you are working, try sharing information with your immediate manager. You may be able to ask for reduced responsibilities at work and/or for a more flexible schedule. Also, try to make some time for what you love to do. A rest can make you a better caregiver.

Remain Vigilant

Regular follow-up with your oncologist is required to maximize the chance that returning disease is caught early. Follow-up can include body scans and blood tests to check for the presence of cancer.



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A Caregiver's Guide to Pancreatic Cancer

How You Can Help Your Loved One

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As a caregiver, you are going to play a major role in helping your loved one get the best possible care.

Understand the Basic Facts

Obtain the basic facts from your doctor about the specific type of pancreatic cancer that your loved one has. This will help you make future treatment decisions. Some basic questions to ask are:

- What type of pancreatic cancer does my loved one have?
- Where is the cancer located in the pancreas?
- What is the stage?
- Has it spread?

Write Information Down

You may be anxious and frightened right after diagnosis. This is common. Writing notes will help you to remember important information later. Keep a binder of all appointments, test results, clinical trial information, and consent forms that your loved one receives. Clarify your notes with the doctor before you leave the appointment. Get the information that you need!

Seek a Second Opinion

Try to get a referral to a Canadian Center that specializes in the treatment of pancreatic cancer.

Your current doctor may be an excellent resource, but it is also important to see a pancreatic cancer specialist who sees patients with this type of cancer regularly. Pancreatic cancer is rare and general oncologists do not see patients with this type of cancer often.

We have listed the Canadian Centers that specialize in the treatment of pancreatic cancer. There, you will find specialty teams who are dedicated to pancreatic cancer patients and their families.

Discuss the Options

Discuss treatment options with your oncologist. Treatment options may include surgery, radiation and/or various types of chemotherapy. These treatments could be standard protocols or clinical trials. Use our resource, 'You've just been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer – What's next?' to understand the basics of pancreatic cancer treatment and the different forms of treatment available.

Ask About Additional Resources Available

If available, ask to be referred to the medical

social worker at the hospital where your loved one plans to have treatment. He/she is an expert in supporting patients and their families, arranging for home care, understanding the healthcare system, and advocating for patients. They can help you make good decisions and make sure that plans are followed efficiently. Don't be afraid to ask the other clinic staff questions too. Treatment nurses can be a great source of support as well.

Patient and Family Library or Resource Centres are often located near the clinic that they serve. In this case they might be near the Pancreatic Centre or the Gastrointestinal Clinic. When you get to the clinic for treatment, ask if there is a Patient and Family Resource Centre on site and how you can access it.

ALBERTA	MANITOBA	Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre Toronto, ON	McGill University Hospital Centre (MUHC) (Affiliated - Montreal General Hospital & Royal Victoria Hospital) Montréal, QC
The Cross Cancer Institute/University of Alberta Hospital Edmonton, AB	Cancer Care Manitoba 675 McDermot Ave Winnipeg, MB	London Health Sciences Centre London, ON	Jewish General Hospital (sometimes affiliates with McGill) Montréal, QC
The Tom Baker Cancer Centre Calgary, AB	St. Boniface Site 409 Taché Ave Winnipeg, MB	The Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Centre Ottawa, ON	CHUQ Centre hospitalier universitaire de Québec Québec City, QC
ATLANTIC PROVINCES	ONTARIO	St. Joseph's Health Centre Toronto, ON	SASKATCHEWAN
Victoria General Hospital Halifax, N.S.	Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre Toronto, ON	Trillium Health Centre Mississauga, ON	Regina General Hospital - Allan Blair Cancer Centre Regina, SK
Saint John Regional Hospital Saint John, NB	Grand River Regional Cancer Centre Kitchener-Waterloo, ON	Kingston General Hospital Kingston, ON	Royal University Hospital Saskatoon, SK
BRITISH COLUMBIA	Juravinski Cancer Centre - Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, Hamilton, ON	Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Thunder Bay, ON	
Vancouver General Hospital Vancouver, BC	University Health Network - Princess Margaret Cancer Centre/Toronto General Hospital, Toronto, ON	QUÉBEC	
Kelowna General Hospital Kelowna, BC		CHUM Centre hospitalier de L'Université de Montréal Montréal, QC	
Victoria General Hospital Victoria, BC			
Royal Columbian Hospital New Westminster, BC			