

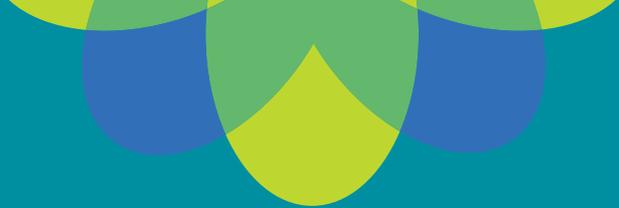
# MY TREATMENT JOURNAL

*Guidance, Support and Resources  
for the Road Ahead*



**ChristianaCare**<sup>™</sup>

*Helen F. Graham Cancer Center  
& Research Institute*



*“Courage doesn’t always roar.  
Sometimes courage is that little voice at the end of  
the day that says ‘I’ll try again tomorrow.’ ”*

*Mary Anne Radmacher*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .....	1
Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute .....	3
Names, Places and Numbers.....	7
Getting the Details Right .....	11
Your Insurance Coverage.....	12
Planning for the Future.....	14
Advance Directive .....	14
Appointments and Calendar .....	15
Preparing for Your Appointments .....	16
Appointments with Your Doctor or Care Team.....	16
My Treatment Plan .....	21
Surgery.....	22
Radiation Therapy .....	24
Chemotherapy/Targeted Therapy .....	26
Supportive and Palliative Care.....	28
Primary Care.....	30
Test Results.....	33
Prescriptions.....	39
Managing Your Prescriptions .....	40
Coping With Cancer .....	47
Can a Social Worker Help Me? .....	48
Can a Nurse Navigator Help Me?.....	49
Symptoms and Side Effects .....	49
Coping with the Emotional Impact of Cancer.....	50
Managing Your Support System.....	51
Nutrition.....	52
Activity: Before, During and After Treatment .....	53
Local and National Resources.....	57
Survivorship.....	61



# Welcome

This booklet provides valuable information regarding your treatment. Space has been provided for you to take notes and put on paper all questions for your care team.

We encourage you to bring this booklet with you to:

- **Office visits before treatment and during treatment** – This may include appointments with the oncologist, primary care doctor, nurse practitioner, dietician, physical therapist, case manager, social worker, or medical specialist.
- **The Multidisciplinary Care Team** – This is a meeting in which your care team meets with you as a group. Following this meeting, you will receive comprehensive recommendations designed just for you.
- **All visits after your treatment completes** – After you have completed treatment, feel free to continue to use this booklet.





# One Day at a Time

*“A journey of a thousand miles  
begins with but a single step.”*

*Chinese proverb*

*You're in good hands.*

## THE HELEN F. GRAHAM CANCER CENTER & RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### Nationally Recognized Cancer Care

As a patient of the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute, you can take comfort in knowing that you are in very good hands. The Graham Cancer Center is one of the nation's most advanced cancer centers, and it has helped to shape the way cancer care is delivered across the country.

### Advanced Medical Technology

The Graham Cancer Center is home to some of the most advanced cancer-fighting technology in the world, including the Cyberknife Robotic Radiosurgery System and the da Vinci Robotic Surgery System. Our Breast Center features a dedicated breast MRI scanner.

### Cancer Research and Clinical Trials

As a respected leader in clinical trials, the Graham Cancer Center provides patients with access to the most promising new cancer treatments available. In addition, we are pioneers in translational cancer research, which allows doctors and laboratory researchers to collaborate in developing new solutions to challenges that may arise in the course of treating individual patients.

### Easy Access to Care

Our patient-navigation system gives you quick access to a team of world-class cancer specialists. In most cases, you can see all the specialists you need in one visit. A vast array of cancer outpatient services under one roof makes accessing the care you need convenient, efficient and effective.

### Genetic Counseling

The Graham Cancer Center offers genetic risk assessments and genetic testing for people who may be at a higher risk of cancer due to their family history. Following the assessment and/or testing, our genetic counselor will go over the results with you so you can make informed decisions with your doctors about your health care options.

### Support Throughout the Experience

We will surround you with all the support you need as you go through treatment. Our staff includes oncology nurse navigators, cancer psychologists, dieticians, social workers, chaplains, cancer-rehabilitation therapists and a host of other professionals who are highly trained and experienced in caring for people with any type of cancer.



## Pastoral Care

In times of crisis or illness, spiritual care can bring comfort and a sense of well-being. ChristianaCare Pastoral Services provides interfaith support for patients, families and caregivers. Our chaplains work closely with your health care team and are available while you are



in the hospital. Your clergy or members of your faith community are also welcome to visit.

## Comfortable Surroundings

We want you to be as comfortable as possible during your treatment. The Graham Cancer Center includes rooftop gardens and lush surroundings, a library of books, video and audio materials, meditation room, labyrinth, soothing piano music in our lobby, and the Simply You Boutique, offering items for purchase to help make living with cancer easier.

## *Our chaplains can help you:*

- Maintain your spiritual well-being through prayer, sacraments and support.
- Deal with difficult issues.
- Make decisions about your care.
- Cope with loss.
- Renew strength and hope.
- Give thanks.

A chapel is located on the first floor of both Wilmington and Christiana hospitals. A meditation room is located in the West Pavilion of the Graham Cancer Center. All of these areas are open to you, your family and friends.



## Supportive and Palliative Care Center

The Supportive and Palliative Care Center at the Graham Cancer Center is an outpatient office that provides an extra layer of support to people living with cancer. We work to manage the symptoms, pain and stress caused by your cancer. Our goal is to improve your quality of life by focusing your care on your goals.

Care is given by a team of doctors, nurse practitioners, social workers, chaplains and nurse navigators who work together to meet your physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

No two people are alike, so we work closely with you, your family and your cancer team to offer a customized plan of care. We listen to your values and ask about the kind of treatment you would prefer. We help you and your family each step of the way. We make a plan that includes what matters most to you, and we direct your care to the services you need within our health system.

We work to make sure that your needs are met no matter where you are seen in the ChristianaCare system. If you are admitted to the hospital, you can be seen by our inpatient team. If you were first seen by our inpatient team in the hospital, we can see you in our office after you go home.

## Survivorship Program

At the Graham Cancer Center, we believe that cancer survivorship begins on the day of diagnosis. We also recognize that individuals may need time to adjust to daily life after treatment is finished. It's not unusual to experience physical, emotional, spiritual and/or social challenges once your treatment is complete. Our survivorship nurse navigator provides support and education and connects survivors with resources and services that can help with the transition into life after treatment.



# Reach Out

*“I get by with a little help  
from my friends.”*

*Ringo Starr*



 **CHRISTIANA CARE**  
Helen F. Graham Cancer Center



The Graham Cancer Center offers a wide range of services under one roof.

*Use the East entrance to access the following:*

**Cancer Care Management**

Suite 2200

302-623-4700

**Cancer Research**

Suite 2200

302-623-4450

**Genetics/Nutrition/Psychology**

Suite 2200

302-623-4593

**Multidisciplinary Center (MDC)**

Suite 1200

302-623-4509

**Radiation Oncology**

Suite 1109

302-623-4800

**Supportive and Palliative Care Center**

Suite 2100

302-623-4960

**Thoracic Surgeons & Interventional Pulmonology**

Suite 2100

302-623-4530

*Your safety is important to us. Greeters are located at both the East and West entrances. They can assist you with getting in and out of your vehicle and getting a wheelchair, if needed.*

*The greeters can also request shuttle service to the main hospital.*



*Use the West entrance to access the following:*

**2nd Floor Laboratory Services  
Suite 2340  
302-623-4640**

**3rd Floor Laboratory Services  
Suite 3100  
302-623-4660**

**Brandywine Urology  
Suite 4500  
302- 652-8990**

**Breast Center  
Suite 1400  
302-623-4200**

**Breast Surgeons at the  
Helen F. Graham Cancer Center  
& Research Institute  
Suite 1500  
302-623-4343**

**Breast Surgical Oncology  
Suite 1340  
302-733-0404**

**Cancer Outreach Program  
Suite 2360  
302-623-4661**

**Chapel/Meditation Room  
Suite 1330**

**ChristianaCare General & Surgical  
Oncology  
Suite 4000  
302-658-7533**

**ChristianaCare Infusion Suite  
Suite 2400  
302-623-4513**

**ChristianaCare Oncology  
Hematology  
Suite 2400  
302-623-6070**

**ChristianaCare Hematology  
Suite 4200  
302-623-3900**

**Radiology Imaging Department  
Suite 1300  
302-623-4560**

**Medical Oncology Hematology  
Consultants  
Suite 3400  
302-366-1200**

**Rehabilitation Services  
Suite 4100  
302-709-3411**



# Stay Ahead

*“Talk to yourself like a cherished friend.  
Treat yourself with love and care.”*

*Amy Leigh Mercree*

# *Helpful hints to* **KEEP UP WITH INSURANCE**

## **Your Insurance Coverage**

Whatever your insurance coverage, cancer treatment often requires a great deal of interaction with your insurance company. You will find it very helpful to keep track of all insurance company contacts and related paperwork. A separate binder or file for this purpose will be helpful for keeping everything in one place. Items you might want to organize include:

### ***Insurance Company Contacts.***

Some insurers will provide you with a case manager to help you navigate insurance issues as you go through treatment. Be sure to write down that person's contact information.

### ***Email/Fax/Address.***

Keep a record of email, fax and physical addresses you may need for contacting your insurer and submitting documentation.

### ***Telephone Call Records.***

Always ask for the name and contact information of each person you speak with when calling your insurer. Jot down the date of your call, your question and your understanding of the insurance representative's answer. This will be helpful if you need to follow up.

### ***Provider Network Information.***

Some insurers will require you to see only providers in your network.

### ***Pre-authorizations or Pre-certifications.***

Some insurers require pre-authorizations or pre-certifications for certain tests or treatments. You may need to appeal an insurer's decision if they deny an approval. If that happens, it will be important to keep a record of when you appealed a decision. If possible, find out who you can contact at the insurance company in order to follow up.

### ***Receipts and Documentation.***

You may want to keep receipts and documentation related to appointments, treatments, tests, and medications, so that you can accurately track deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses and other coverage and reimbursement details.

Some offices located in the Graham Cancer Center are privately owned and operated. In this instance, you will receive a bill directly from that provider, rather than Christiana Care Health Services.





## *Planning for the future*

As you begin your cancer experience, now may be a good time to be sure that you have planned for the future. If your illness makes it difficult for you to make decisions for yourself, it will be important to have legal documentation in place so that you can be sure that your wishes are followed, or that a person you designate will be authorized to make decisions on your behalf.

### **Advance Directive**

An advance directive, also called a living will, is a legal document in which you specify what actions should be taken on your behalf if you can no longer make decisions for yourself. Often your advance directive will include instructions about who should make decisions for you and whether you would like life-sustaining treatment in the event of a medical emergency. If you do not already have an advance directive, talk to your care team about it. They can direct you to resources for creating a legal document that states your wishes for your care.



# Be Ready

*“If you fell down yesterday,  
stand up today.”*

*H.G. Wells*

# Helpful hints to KEEP YOU ORGANIZED

## Preparing for Your Appointments

As you go through cancer treatment, you will have many appointments with physicians and members of your care team, as well as appointments for tests and treatments. The enclosed calendar pages will help you stay organized – and the tips below will help you make the most of each opportunity to meet with the Graham Cancer Center team.

## Appointments with Your Doctor or Care Team

- Medications – Bring a list of your current medications and dosages. Jot down notes about any side effects or issues you notice with certain medications. In the case of pain medication, let your doctor know if the medication is effective in relieving your pain.
- Symptoms – Keep notes about any symptoms you are experiencing so you can discuss these with your doctor.
- Questions – Write down questions you may have for the doctor and bring them with you. It's easy to forget to ask something that may be important to you. Bringing someone else to your appointments may help you remember important information.

The calendars provided in this section of My Treatment Journal provide space for writing in the above information.

## Keeping Track of Appointments

- Write your appointments on the calendar, and keep the appointment card in the pocket provided. This will put contact information at your fingertips if you need to make a change.
- Bring the calendar with you to appointments so that the Graham Cancer Center staff can help you avoid overlapping or conflicting appointment days or times.



<i>Month:</i>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

<i>Month:</i>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

<i>Month:</i>							
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	





# The Right Path

*“It’s about focusing on the fight  
and not the fright.”*

*Robin Roberts*

# *Achieving* THE BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOME



## My Treatment Plan

You and your care team will create your treatment plan with the goal of achieving the best possible outcome for you. Your plan may include radiation therapy, chemotherapy, medication therapy and/or surgery. General information about each of these forms of treatment is provided below.

## Surgery

Surgery is one way to remove cancer from your body. A doctor who specializes in treating cancer using surgery is called a surgical oncologist. Many people with cancer are treated with surgery. Surgery works best for solid tumors that are in one area. It is a local treatment, meaning that it treats only the part of your body with the cancer. It is not used for leukemia (a type of blood cancer) or for cancers that have spread.

Prior to surgery, your surgical oncologist will go over the details of your surgery. You might need pre-surgery testing, such as blood test(s), chest x-ray and electrocardiogram (EKG), and he or she will go over this with you. You should also talk with your doctor about how long you will need to recover from your surgery and what you may or may not be able to do after your surgery.

Once your surgery is planned, you will receive a call from the hospital to go over a brief medical history registration.

After you have your surgery, you will need to schedule a follow-up appointment with your surgeon so he or she can check on how you are healing. Your surgeon can answer any questions you have regarding your recovery.

*Source: National Cancer Institute [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)*



# Mapping THE BEST POSSIBLE PLAN

## Radiation Therapy

Radiation oncologists oversee radiation therapy, which, at high doses, kills cancer cells or slows their growth. Radiation is like a chest x-ray; you do not feel anything. Radiation can be used to cure cancer, to prevent it from returning, or to stop or slow its growth. It also may be used to shrink a tumor or help with pain and other problems caused by the tumor. Finally, it can relieve problems that may be caused by a growing tumor, such as trouble breathing or loss of bowel and bladder control.

Radiation therapy does not kill cancer cells right away. It takes days or weeks of treatment before cancer cells start to die. Then, cancer cells keep dying for weeks or months after radiation therapy ends.

Radiation therapy can be used by itself or with chemotherapy and/or special medicines. It can be used before or after surgery or without surgery at all.

Your team will help make decisions based on your cancer. Your radiation therapy will be given at the direction



of your radiation oncologist and his or her team. Your oncologist will have nurses and staff meet with you to make your treatment plan and discuss typical side effects from radiation and some of the best ways to treat those side effects. They will go over what to expect and when to call your doctor with specific problems. Radiation therapy takes time to plan. You will have a planning session to “map” your treatment to your needs. Once you have your planning session, you will be given a schedule of when your treatment will start.

During your treatment, you will be regularly seen by your radiation oncologist and nurses to review how you are doing and to see if any changes to your treatment plan are needed.

Source: National Cancer Institute [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

## My Radiation Plan

*Type of radiation:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Number of treatments:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*My treatment starting date:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*My daily treatment appointment time:*

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*Notes:* \_\_\_\_\_

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# Targeting

## THE BEST MEDICAL THERAPY



### Chemotherapy and Targeted Therapy

Chemotherapy or targeted therapy may be a part of your treatment plan. A medical oncologist will oversee this type of treatment. Chemotherapy works by stopping or slowing the growth of cancer cells. Targeted therapy uses special medicines that target cancer cells. These medicines are made to stop the cancer cells from growing, dividing and spreading.

Chemotherapy and targeted therapy can be given in many ways. This guide will focus on oral and intravenous delivery.

*Source: National Cancer Institute  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)*

**Oral** — Your medical oncologist will give you pills, capsules or liquids that you swallow. They will make sure you know how and when to take this medication.

**Intravenous (IV)** — This medicine goes directly into a vein. Chemotherapy is often given through a thin needle that is placed in a vein on your hand or lower arm. Your nurse will put the needle in at the start of each treatment and take it out when treatment is over. IV therapy may also be given through catheters or ports, sometimes with the help of a pump.

Your treatment will be ordered by your medical oncologist. This doctor will have nurses and staff meet with you to go over your treatment plan, which will include the names of the medications you will take, how they are taken and how often you will take them. Your medical oncologist and staff will discuss typical side effects and how to best manage those side effects. They will go over what to expect and when to call your doctor with specific problems.

During your treatment, you will be regularly seen by your medical oncologist to talk about how you are doing with your treatment and to see if any changes are needed. During these visits, you may also have blood work done.

# My Chemotherapy/Targeted Therapy Plan

*Name of chemotherapy/targeted therapy:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*How it is given:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*How frequently I will receive it:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Notes:* \_\_\_\_\_

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# *Seeking* THE BEST SUPPORTIVE THERAPY



## **Supportive and Palliative Care**

Your treatment plan may include talk therapy, sessions with a social worker and support by our palliative care team, which may include doctors, nurses, a chaplain or others who will help you deal with the toll cancer takes on your mind, body and spirit.

These dedicated professionals work with you to create a customized plan to help keep your symptoms in check. They will also be a resource for you for any other issues you may experience.



# *Giving* THE BEST TOTAL CARE



## **Primary Care**

In addition to your cancer treatment, you will need to keep up with your primary care doctor for any non-cancer health issues, such as high blood pressure or diabetes. If your primary care doctor changes any of

your care during your treatment (adds a new medicine, takes one away or asks you to do something differently), it is important to let your cancer care team know. We want to make sure we work together in your care and keep you well.







# Get Results

*“You gain strength, courage and confidence  
by every experience in which you really stop to  
look fear in the face. You must do the things  
you think you cannot do.”*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*



## **LAB RESULTS & TEST RECORDS**



**IMAGING &  
DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES**

*Test date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test performed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test location:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test performed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test location:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test performed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test location:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Test date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test performed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Test location:* \_\_\_\_\_



# Feel Better

*“I have seen what a laugh can do.  
It can transform almost unbearable tears  
into something bearable, even hopeful.”*

*Bob Hope*

# *The importance of* MANAGING YOUR MEDICINE

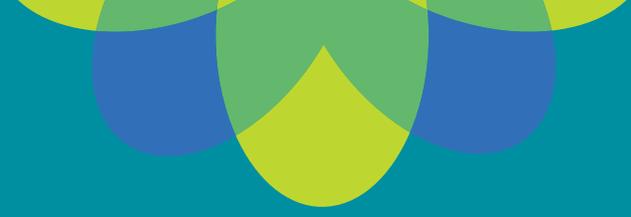


While you are having treatment, it is important to talk with your doctor about any other medicines you are taking, including dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs or fish oils). This helps avoid any side effects from your treatment that could potentially hamper your treatment.

Keep an up-to-date list of your medicines. You can list them on the “My Medication List” that is in your information packet. Please bring the list with you to your appointments. If you are having trouble paying for your medications, please talk to your social worker.

## **Managing Your Prescriptions**

Medications prescribed by your doctors may change frequently as your condition changes. While your care team will have a record of your medications, it’s a good idea to keep your own record as well. There may be times when you need to see a new doctor or go to an emergency room. Having a current list with you will help the doctor or ER staff better respond to your needs. The list will also be helpful to you in checking any invoices you receive from your insurance company. The following pages will make it easier to keep track of your medications.



# PRESCRIPTIONS

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Prescription drug brand name* \_\_\_\_\_

*Generic name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date prescribed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Dose/when given:*  *a.m.*  *p.m.* \_\_\_\_\_

*Prescriber:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Pharmacy:* \_\_\_\_\_





# Hang On

*“It gets hard with everybody  
calling you brave when you’ve  
never been so scared in your life.”*

*Melvina Young*



# *We will help you*

## COPE, MANAGE & THRIVE

### Can a Social Worker Help Me?

Living with cancer may mean that you will have to deal with added financial, practical and emotional concerns. Our social workers can give you guidance and support as you face these challenges. If you have questions, such as the ones listed below or others, please call the Graham Cancer Center social workers at 302-623-4700. This service is free.

---

**Following are some questions that our social workers may be able to help with:**

- How do I apply for Social Security disability benefits? If I am approved, when and how do I get Medicare? Do I need to have Medicare D?
- How do I apply for Medicaid?
- I'm having trouble paying for my medicine. Is there any help for this?
- What is the Delaware Cancer Treatment Program?
- I'm worried about getting or keeping health insurance.
- How do I find out if I have paid sick leave at work?
- What is COBRA?
- What is the Family Medical Leave Act?
- I'm having trouble keeping up at work. Can the Americans with Disabilities Act help me?
- Is there anywhere I can get help with paying for a wig?
- I'm having trouble paying my bills. Are there any programs in the community that may be able to help me?
- What kind of help is there if I need a ride to treatment?
- I need help talking to my kids and family about my cancer.
- I'm having trouble dealing with all of this. Where can I get help and support?
- My emotions are all over the place. Is that normal?
- I'm having trouble taking care of myself and my home. Is there any help?
- What is hospice?
- What is palliative care?
- What is an advance directive? Do I need one?



## Can a Nurse Navigator Help Me?

The diagnosis and treatment of cancer and living with the disease can be overwhelming. You may receive a great deal of information from many members of your care team. Our nurse navigators can work with you and your family to support you as you deal with your diagnosis of cancer, provide education about your specific diagnosis and treatment needs, as well as connect you to other experts on our team. Your nurse navigator acts as a team leader by providing support and coordination of care between you and your team members. A nurse navigator does not take the place of your doctor, but is someone you can call when you are not sure of where to turn. A nurse navigator can help you make sense of all the information that is being given to you. The nurse navigator wants to make it as easy as possible for you to be connected with help you may need. To be connected to a nurse navigator, please call 302-623-4700.

## Symptoms and Side Effects

Cancer treatments can cause side effects—problems that occur when treatment affects healthy tissues or organs. Side effects vary from person to person, even among those receiving the same treatment. Some people have very few side effects while others have many. The type of treatment(s) you receive, as well as the amount or frequency of the treatment, your age and other health conditions you have may also lead to side effects.

### *Some tips:*

- Before you start treatment, ask your health care team what side effects you are likely to have.
- Learn about steps you can take, as well as supportive care that you will receive, to lessen side effects during and after treatment.
- Speak up about any side effects that you have and changes you notice so your health care team can treat or help you manage them.

# *We help you with* **STRESS REDUCTION & SUPPORT**



## **Coping with the Emotional Impact of Cancer**

After you or a loved one has been diagnosed with cancer, you may find it helpful to seek emotional support. You can rely on our experienced, compassionate therapists to help lessen worry and stress, which goes a long way to healing and recovery.

Our psychologists and social workers specialize in helping people who have cancer, and they are available for consultations with individuals, couples and families. Consultations may be helpful in adjusting to a cancer diagnosis and treatment or changing health behaviors. Topics often include coping with diagnosis and treatment, how to talk with children and loved ones about cancer, caregiver concerns, return-to-work challenges, and changes in roles and responsibilities.

## **Coping and Emotions Tips**

- Talk to your doctor about changes in your mood, behavior, sleep, appetite or daily activities. Sometimes they can prescribe medicines that help with sleep, energy, appetite, worry and depressed or irritable mood, or give you tips on what to do to help.
- Join a support group or class for people dealing with similar worries.
- Talk to a supportive person (or pet!) about your mental, emotional or spiritual concerns.
- Keep doing the activities that bring you joy and relaxation.
- Take one day at a time.
- Accept help from those who offer.
- Schedule an appointment with Graham Cancer Psychology by calling 302-623-4593, ext. 2.

## Stress Reduction

There's no doubt about it: having cancer is a stressful experience. As you juggle your many appointments for treatment, your work and home life, your fears, intrusive comments by well-meaning people and more, you may find that you have more stress than you can handle. If that's the case, it may help you to work one or more of the following into your routine to help you cope with and reduce stress:

- Training in relaxation, meditation, or stress management.
- Counseling or talk therapy.
- Cancer education sessions.
- Social support in a group setting.
- Medications for depression or anxiety.
- Exercise.



## Managing Your Support System

A diagnosis of cancer often comes with many offers of help from your support system. Friends, family members, coworkers, and/or neighbors who care about your well-being and want to help in some way, may ask repeatedly how you are feeling and how they can help. While you may appreciate these offers, it can be draining to continually answer the same questions. It is important to conserve your energy. Consider using the methods below to streamline communication, ask for help and coordinate offers of assistance:

- Delegate communication about your condition or needs to an organized, reliable and trustworthy individual.
- Use electronic communication, such as group emails or texts, to communicate information.
- Use a reliable website serving individuals with illnesses.
- Place a cooler on your porch if meals are being provided. This way, you don't have to entertain visitors when meals are delivered.
- Use CanSurround and Smart Patients, two new ChristianaCare partnerships that offer resources to help you cope. See page 59 for more information.
- Identify and establish boundaries around what you are comfortable sharing versus what should remain private. This is especially important when using social media.

# *We will help you with*

## NUTRITIONAL & PHYSICAL WELLNESS

### Nutrition

When you are being treated for cancer, nutrition is an important part of your care. Even if you are eating less than usual, regular meals can help you feel stronger and give you more energy.

### Nutrition Tips

Use the tips below and talk to your registered dietitian (RD) about other ways you can feel better.

- Try to eat six to eight small meals and snacks during the day. Choose foods that are easy to fix and eat.
- If you find that meats are hard to eat or you don't like how they taste, try chopped or ground meats mixed with a sauce or in a casserole.
- Fruits and juices are usually easy to eat and may perk up your taste for other foods. Include them with your meals.
- Allow friends and family to make meals or shop for you. Don't hesitate to accept their offers of help. Be sure to tell them if there are certain foods that you can't eat or don't like.
- For many people, breakfast is the best meal of the day. Try eating a bigger breakfast to keep your energy up during the day.

- Keep commercially made liquid medical nutritional supplements, such as Boost, on hand for those days when you just don't feel like eating.
- Constipation can give you a poor appetite. For relief, try adding one or two tablespoons of wheat bran to your food, or drinking warm prune juice three to four times a day.

### Concerns to Share with Your Doctor

- Tell your doctor if you have pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting.
- If you have constipation, ask your doctor whether you should start a daily bowel care program, which may include the use of stool softeners or laxatives.

*Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.*

### Our Nutrition Center offers:

- Individual consultations.
- Ways to help manage side effects of treatment.
- Expert staff of registered dietitians.

For more information, please call 302-623-4593, ext. 2, or visit suite 2200.



## Activity: Before, During and After Treatment

Taking part in physical activity during your cancer care may seem daunting, however, research shows that regular physical exercise may:

- Maintain and/or build muscle and bone strength.
- Ease tiredness.
- Lessen the risk of osteoporosis and heart disease.
- Improve mood and lessen the risk of depression.
- Improve brain function.

Depending on your treatment, you may find it hard at times to keep up with your typical daily activities at home and/or work. Your treatment may cause increased tiredness, increased pain with certain movements, decreased focus, or cause difficulty with strength and balance.

To decrease the risk of falling due to changes in strength and balance related to treatments, you have access to wheelchairs for appointments at both entrances of the building.

Physical therapists (PTs) are therapists focusing on mobility. PTs can give you exercises or movements to lessen pain, muscle tightness, scar adhesions and edema. PTs will give you an exercise program based on your level of fitness, current goals and specific cancer treatments in order to allow you to stay healthy during your treatment.

Occupational therapists (OTs) focus on improving your ability to do everyday tasks and helping with changes you may feel during cancer treatment, including post-surgery and lymphedema care. OTs will work with you to improve your well-being and your ability to take part in your normal daily activities.

# Ask questions BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER



## Questions to Ask Your Physical or Occupational Therapist:

### *Before cancer treatment:*

- What should I expect with my treatment (side effects, changes in how I get around)?
- How can I best get myself physically and mentally ready for my treatments (changes at home, assistive device use, etc.)?
- What type of exercise can I take part in now to get ready for therapy?

### *During cancer treatment:*

- What types and levels of activity are safe for me during treatment?
- How do I save my energy to be

able to do things I need and want to do?

- How can my family and support network help me with my healing?
- What type of things can I do to help with my tiredness?
- What type of things can I do to lessen pain during treatment?

### *After cancer treatment:*

- Are there community programs available in the area?
- How can I maintain and progress my exercise program safely?
- Are there any long-term side effects I should be aware of and if so, how can I stop or treat them?

Talk to your doctor or care team to get connected to a physical or occupational therapist.







# Ask for Help

*“I can do things you cannot,  
you can do things I cannot;  
together we can do great things.”*

*Mother Teresa*

# *Help is available through* **RESOURCES & SUPPORT GROUPS**

## **Support Resources**

In addition to the support provided by your team at the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute, there are many organizations that can provide you and your family with information, assistance and emotional support. Your health care team can help you identify the organizations that may best meet your needs. Some groups may require your doctor's approval in order for you to participate.

### **American Cancer Society**

Since 1913, the American Cancer Society has been on a mission to save and celebrate lives touched by cancer.  
800-227-2345

### **American Institute for Cancer Research**

This research-based organization provides funding for research and interprets cancer data as a critical first step in developing guidelines for the public.  
800-843-8114

### **CancerCare**

CancerCare offers counseling, support groups, education and resources for financial assistance.  
800-813-HOPE (4673)

### **Cancer and Careers**

This organization empowers and educates people with cancer to thrive in the workplace.  
[www.cancerandcareers.org](http://www.cancerandcareers.org)

### **Cancer Care Connection**

Provides coaches who can connect people with cancer to resources that will help them make informed decisions and cope with cancer.  
866-266-7008

### **Cancer Information Services/ National Cancer Institute (NCI)**

Established by the federal government, NCI is a national leader in cancer research and offers a wealth of information about treatment, causes, screenings and more.  
800-422-6237

### **Cancer Insurance Checklist**

This checklist helps people with cancer or those who are at risk find the best insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace ([healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov)).  
[www.cancerinsurancechecklist.org](http://www.cancerinsurancechecklist.org)

### **Cancer Support Community**

This global network provides services, such as support groups, wellness programs and educational sessions, as well as research and advocacy.  
302-995-2850

### **CanSurround**

This Wilmington-based organization offers digital tools designed to improve the emotional well-being of people living with cancer.  
HFGCC.cansurround.com

### **National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship**

This is an advocacy organization that promotes quality cancer care.  
877-NCCS-YES (622-7937)

### **National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization**

This organization promotes using hospice to improve end-of-life care and palliative care to improve quality of life for people living with long-term illness.  
703-837-1500

### **NeedyMeds**

NeedyMeds educates and empowers people seeking affordable healthcare by offering free information for people who can't afford medications and healthcare costs.  
www.needymeds.org

### **Patient Advocate Foundation**

This organization provides patients with arbitration, mediation and negotiation to settle issues regarding access to care, medical debt and job retention.  
800-532-5274

### **QuitLine**

Using coaches and other tools and techniques, QuitLine helps people quit smoking.

Delaware 866-409-1858

Maryland 800-784-8669

New Jersey 866-657-8677

Pennsylvania 877-724-1090

### **Smart Patients**

An online community where patients and their families learn from each other.  
smartpatients.com/christianacare

### **Triage Cancer**

This organization works to address cancer-related gaps in care through education, particularly information related to accessing care.  
triagecancer.org





# Beyond

*“It can seem like the finish line keeps moving ten feet ahead of where you just crossed. And even though you’ve got no choice but to tighten your laces and try again, you are admired for it.”*

*Melvina Young*

# *Living life*

## AFTER CANCER TREATMENT

Congratulations on completing your cancer treatment! This truly is a milestone, and we wish you a healthy future. While this is a happy occasion, please understand that the transition from cancer patient to survivor can be a tricky one.

After finishing treatment, it's not unusual to experience a range of strong feelings that stick with you for a while. It is an adjustment to slow down after being so busy with appointments. This change can bring forth anxious thoughts and feelings as you think about what you have been through. You may experience:

- Tiredness.
- Menopause symptoms.
- Pain.
- Fear of recurrence – “Will my cancer come back?”
- Poor appetite or difficulty eating.
- Depression.
- Nerve pain (neuropathy).
- Anger.
- Trouble with memory or focus.
- Confusion.
- Bladder or bowel control problems.

Listed below are some tips and resources to help you with these challenges.

- Always talk over any health care concerns and symptoms with your treatment team.
- Follow-up with your treatment team at the suggested times after your treatment is done.
- Remember that your body needs time to heal and adjust. It is normal for some effects to last up to a year.
- It is important to find ways to cope with stress that work best for you and your lifestyle. Some suggestions are individual counseling, connecting with other survivors in a support group, journaling and meditation/yoga.
- Download a copy of *Facing Forward: Life After Treatment*, a booklet from [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov) that offers practical ways of dealing with the challenges described above.
- Visit our library in the main lobby for books, magazines, CDs and videos that may help answer questions and provide guidance.
- For general questions about life after treatment, please speak to a nurse navigator – 302-623-4700.





**Insert Business Card Holders Here**

**Insert Business Card Holders Here**



*“The moment in between what you once were,  
and who you are now becoming,  
is where the dance of life really takes place.”*

*Barbara De Angelis*



**ChristianaCare**<sup>™</sup>

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*[christianacare.org/cancer](http://christianacare.org/cancer)*

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