

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge us to find new ways to interact as a society and within our communities. As someone affected by cancer—in treatment, after treatment, or as a caregiver—you may have questions or concerns about how to keep yourself and your loved ones as healthy as possible during this unprecedented time. While the GW Cancer Center does not endorse any particular product or services, below are resources that may help you and those you love while practicing Social Distancing and Sheltering in Place.

Recommendation

Resources



Support your general health through physical activity and healthful eating.

Remember to MOVE! The American Cancer Society provides [guidance](#) on exercises you can do at home and ideas for healthy meals.

Join the [Joyful Movement App](#), practice [yoga at home](#) or learn basic yoga skills with the [Down Dog App](#) (free through May 1, 2020).

Get groceries delivered to you. [Instacart](#) offers home delivery, as does Whole Foods through Amazon.com and [Peapod by Giant](#). Food delivery from local restaurants is also available through [Door Dash](#) and [GrubHub](#).



If possible, use tele-health rather than in-clinic visits until the pandemic is over.

Ask your doctor about tele-health options for visits that may not need to be in-person. The American Cancer Society (ACS) has [suggested questions](#) to ask your doctor about follow-up appointments, going to work and other concerns.



Side effects of cancer may put you at greater risk for infection. Protect yourself from COVID-19.

Cancer treatment can cause a decrease in white blood cells, which is your body's main way of defending against diseases and infection. The best way to [prevent getting sick](#) is to avoid being exposed to COVID-19. The [CDC](#) recommends that you stay at home, wash your hands often, avoid close contact with others, and cover your mouth and nose when around others.

ACS also has [answers](#) to commonly asked questions about COVID-19 and other important information for cancer survivors.

The National Alliance for Hispanic Health also offers information from the CDC about COVID-19 in [English and Spanish](#).



Communicate about sexual changes with your intimate partner if you have one.

Cancer may have side effects that make [sexual health](#) challenging for some people. The stress of a pandemic can compound these effects. Communicate with your partner about any changes you are experiencing. The [Australian Cancer Council](#) offers a practical [guide](#) on Sexuality, Intimacy and Cancer.



Do things you enjoy.

Listening to [music](#) is a great way to relax and reduce stress and anxiety. This is a good time to read [books](#) you have on your list. [HBO is streaming its most popular shows for free in the month of April](#). This NY Times [article](#) has other creative ideas.



Accept your emotions and cultivate mindfulness.

An article in the NYTimes called "[This is a Good Time to Stop Fighting Anxiety](#)" provides a reminder that it can be helpful to sit with negative feelings, accept them, and move naturally to the next feeling rather than reject how we feel.

There are resources available to help you stay [calm](#): meditate with the [Headspace app](#), sleep better with the [Insight Timer](#), and cultivate your own [self-compassion](#).



Be intentional in your outlook on life by limiting information and getting the support you need.

A positive attitude might be hard to maintain under a pandemic, and it is okay to not always be positive. Limiting the information you take in to once a day from a credible source, such as your health department, can help.

[Here are other suggestions](#) to help lift your mood. CancerCare has [online support groups](#), too.



Strengthen your relationship with your partner.

Get support if you feel unsafe while Sheltering in Place.

Sharing the same space for an extended time can be extremely challenging on couples. Here are some tips on how to [keep the relationship strong](#) with your significant other and support each other. For example, ask for what you need directly and avoid criticizing your partner.

On the other hand, if you feel unsafe in your living situation, call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233). National Domestic Violence Hotline trained advocates collectively speak more than 200 languages.



Stay connected to and support your loved ones.

Remember to stay connected to your support network, including your friends and family. You can host a virtual dinner party or celebrate art from all over the world through [The Social Distancing Festival](#).

[Sesame Street](#) offers resources on how to talk to young children about COVID-19, tips for handwashing, and family routines.



Access financial support.

If you make less than \$75,000 per year (or less than \$150,000 as a couple), the federal government will be sending you a one-time payment of \$1200 (or \$2400 for couples). Families with children receive an additional \$500 for each child. There are also expanded [small business grants](#) and [unemployment support](#) available.

If you are worried you have COVID-19, the government requires costs of COVID-19 testing to be covered by your insurance, and many insurers are covering [treatment-related costs](#), too. If you do not have health insurance, ask a local Federally Qualified Health Center or local health department if there are resources to help you get tested and treated.

Cancer patients in active treatment can apply for Cancer Care's [financial assistance program](#) for food, medication, household needs, transportation, lodging, house care and child care. Call 800-813-4673 to apply.

MORE SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THESE ORGANIZATIONS.

Organization	Description	Web Link	Contact Information
American Cancer Society	Patient services and cancer-related education	cancer.org	Phone: 800-227-2345 Live chat available
Cancer and Careers	Workplace advice, interactive tools and educational events	cancerandcareers.org	Phone: 646-929-8032 Email: cancerandcareers@cew.org
CancerCare	Professional support services and cancer information	cancercare.org	Phone: 800-813-4673 Email: info@cancercare.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Information to reduce COVID-19 risks for cancer patients.	cdc.gov/cancer/survivors/index.htm	Phone: 800-232-4636 cdc.gov/dcs/contactus/form
Cancer Support Community	Social and emotional support	cancersupportcommunity.org	Phone: 1-888-793-9355 Live chat available
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship	Advocacy and resources for cancer survivors and their loved ones	canceradvocacy.org/blog/coronavirus-cancer-resources-for-survivors/	canceradvocacy.org/about-us/contact-us/
National LGBT Cancer Network	Online support groups and educational resources	cancer-network.org	Phone: 212-675-2633 Email: liz@cancer-network.org
Patient Advocate Foundation	Professional case management services to resolve to access care and financial obstacles	patientadvocate.org	Phone: 800-532-5274 Email: help@patientadvocate.org

For more survivorship resources, return to bit.ly/AdvancingCancerSurvivorshipCareToolkit2019

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