

# how to use the CANCER101 planner

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## The five-tabbed accordion folder

Keep your papers organized and in one place. When your paperwork begins to outgrow the five-pocket folder, move it all to a three-ringed notebook or separate folders and keep it at home in a safe place. Don't forget to fill out your "If Found" card located in the pocket on the cover of the planner.

## The CANCER101 Planner

1. **Get organized:** The more organized you become, the less overwhelmed you will feel by the day-to-day demands of being treated for cancer. Use the organizer to keep all of your information in one place. Share the planner with your caregiver and/or healthcare team by asking them to keep notes of important conversations with them. Use the calendar to manage your medication regimen and appointments.

For all your post-treatment appointments, use the ten-year calendar to track your follow-up appointments. It's up to you to follow your doctor's advice regarding medications and future appointments.

2. **Get informed:** Learning about your cancer and what's there to assist you will make you more comfortable about your diagnosis. You'll also feel better about the treatment decisions you'll have to make. Find out about the lectures, support groups, and wellness classes in your area. These programs are offered by many cancer centers and local advocacy groups and are often free and open to the public regardless of where you are being treated. They are a great way for you and your caregivers to learn about living with cancer.

## The Web site: CANCER101.org

Visit our Web site to learn about new resources and updates to the resources listed in this planner. If you prefer, get organized online and access your information from any computer.

# four important things you need to know

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1. **If English is your second language, find a translator.** If you find the contents in this planner difficult to understand, please ask a friend, family member, caregiver or healthcare professional to translate the lifesaving resources listed in this planner. Also, ask your translator if he or she can join you at your appointments to help you understand your doctor's recommendations.
2. **Try not to panic.** We know it's frightening to hear you have cancer — whether you are hearing you have cancer for the first or second time. Once you understand more about your cancer and your treatment plan, you will feel less frightened and overwhelmed.
3. **You are not alone!** There are many organizations available to assist you with your financial and emotional needs. Many of these organizations are located in your hometown or are just a phone call away. Share your specific concerns with a healthcare professional, and he or she will help you find the support you need.

## Healthcare professionals can help you find:

- Options to lower or eliminate your treatment costs
- Clinical trials
- Advice on how to manage your monthly bills if you cannot work due to your illness
- Free transportation to and from your doctor's appointments
- Resources to help provide nutritious food and/or home cleaning services
- Free or low-cost child care
- Free wigs
- A patient advocate or nurse navigator to help you fill out forms and schedule appointments. They can also assist you in finding all the above resources.

4. **Use the CANCER101 planner!** If you keep all of your information organized and in one place, you will feel less overwhelmed. Share the planner with your caregiver and healthcare professionals and ask them to write down information in the planner for you. It is difficult to understand everything the doctors are telling you no matter what language you speak. If it is clearly written in the planner, you will be able to re-read the information again when needed.