Building Support and Resiliency during Blood Cancer

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Agenda

- Types of Blood Cancers
- Common Symptoms
- Scanxiety
- Coping Strategies
- Increasing Support
- Resiliency
- Q&A
Types of Blood Cancers

**THERE ARE 3 MAIN TYPES OF BLOOD CANCERS**

**LEUKEMIA:** cancers found in the blood and bone marrow caused by the overproduction of abnormal white blood cells

**LYMPHOMA:** a group of blood cancers that develop in the lymphatic system

**MYELOMA:** cancer formed by malignant cancer cells, typically originating in the bone marrow
Newly Diagnosed

- Fast-paced introduction to the world of cancer
- Learning as you are experiencing
- Anticipation of a lifestyle change
- Telling others about the diagnosis
- Financial concerns
Common Symptoms

- Pain in bones and joints
- Fatigue
- Increased risk of infection
- Difficulty breathing
- Weight loss
- Unexplained bruising or rashes
- Headaches and dizziness
- Swollen lymph nodes
Procedures

- Bone marrow biopsy
- Blood transfusion
- Stem cell transplant
Scanxiety

**Definition of scanxiety**

1. a: apprehensive uneasiness or nervousness usually over an impending or anticipated ill such as the anticipation of an upcoming scan or test to determine cancer growth or remission.
Coping with Scanxiety

• Be mindful of what you read
• Be mindful of who you connect with
• Distract yourself with activities that you enjoy
• Awareness of self-talk
• Set a time limit on worrying
• Breathing exercises
Coping Strategies

- Increasing support
- Self-care
- 4 M’s of Well-being
- Relaxation techniques
Self-Care

- Self-care gives you a sense of control.
- Research suggests that regular self-care can reduce the adverse effects of stress, such as sleep disturbances and anxiety.
- The practice of self-care can reduce the influence of stress, which can lead to better health and encourages one to continue to engage in self-care.
Four M's of Well-Being

- Movement
- Meaningful Connections
- Mindfulness
- Mastery
The Wellness Wheel can be used to create a self-care plan.
Relaxation Techniques

- Mindfulness Meditation & Guided Imagery
- Deep Breathing
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Grounding Exercises
- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Massage
- Music
Increasing Support

- Connecting with family and friends
- Get paired with a mentor through Imerman Angels
- Individual counseling
- Join a support group
Increasing Support

- Greater sense of meaning, purpose, and fulfillment
- Increases sense of belonging
- Human nature to form connections with others
- Contributes to your self-care
- Helps to build your own internal resources
- Activates stress-reducing chemicals
Managing Conversations

- Be mindful of your comfortability in sharing
- Keep communication open and honest
- Tell your family and friends if you need some time before you are ready to talk about updates in detail
- If there are identified persons that you don’t wish to share with, you could practice what to say when people ask how you are
Coping Strategies for Caregivers

- Recognize your responsibilities
- Identify your stress triggers
- Lean on family members for support
- Seek additional assistance and utilize resources
- Connect with other caregivers
- Take care of your emotional and physical health
- Devote time for yourself
Resilience

- Bouncing back or bouncing forward?
- Key Components in Resilience
  - Facing fear
  - Realistic optimism - focus on positive without denying the negative
  - Self-awareness - recognize what makes you unique
  - Mindfulness - being present in the moment, actively noticing, non-judgmental
Resilience

- Key Components in Resilience Cont’d
  - Self-care
  - Relationships
  - Expressing gratitude - hunt for the good stuff, what went well
  - Maintaining a sense of humor
  - Having resilient role models
Exercise

What are two things that you are grateful for today and why?
Wellness House Support Groups

Leukemia & Lymphoma Support Group
2nd Thursdays, September 9, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Multiple Myeloma Support Group
3rd Thursdays, August 19, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Scanxiety Drop-In Group
Mondays, 3:00-4:30pm