Coming Out with Cancer

Living After Cancer Treatment

I AM DIANE
I LIVE STRONG
CANCER SURVIVOR

You are not alone.

There are over 12 million cancer survivors in the United States today, and even more people will help care for a partner, family member or friend with cancer. There are an estimated one million lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) cancer survivors.

Being a cancer survivor means more than just living. It means living life your way as an LGBT cancer survivor.

You can use this booklet to help you identify your concerns and figure out where to go for help.

How to use this booklet:

1. Go through this booklet and check off the physical, emotional and day-to-day concerns you have.
2. Take this booklet with you the next time you see your health care provider.
3. Use this booklet to talk to your health care provider or to call the resources listed on pages 16–20.

I AM JOHN
I LIVE STRONG
CANCER SURVIVOR

Physical Concerns
Pain, Body, Lifestyle

After treatment, you may have special needs in caring for your body. Ask your health care provider what changes in your body you can expect.

Do you have concerns about changes in your body?

Make a check next to the things you would like help with or write down your own concerns.

Pain or Swelling

- ☐ I have pain that does not go away.
- ☐ I have swelling in parts of my body.

Body Changes

- ☐ I am unsure how the medicines I am taking will affect my body.
- ☐ My feelings about my body have changed.
- ☐ I feel tired often.
- ☐ I have trouble remembering things and my mind works more slowly than before.
- ☐ My sexual function has decreased.

Lifestyle

- ☐ I want to know how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- ☐ I am having changes in my dating life and/or my relationships.

Other Concerns:

_____

You are not broken.

Adjusting to life with or after cancer takes time. Do it at your own pace, but don't do it alone.

Find the support systems that work for you and use them. Leave the rest.

— **Brian,** cancer survivor

Physical Needs
Pain, Body, Lifestyle

Your health care provider can help you understand how to address your concerns and how to find LGBT specific resources to help you. You may not feel like you need help. But many survivors have found that receiving help from these services made their lives easier. It can also be especially helpful to speak with other LGBT survivors about their experiences.

Do you need help meeting your needs?

Check the box next to the services or information you need.

Pain or Swelling

- ☐ I want to learn more about ways to relieve pain.
- ☐ I want to know about other services such as massage, aromatherapy or yoga.

Body Changes

- ☐ I want help restoring my strength and my ability to move around.
- ☐ I would like information about my fertility options.

Lifestyle

- ☐ I would like help with tasks at home.
- ☐ I would like to know how cancer affected my sexualilty.
- ☐ I would like help understanding how cancer may impact my relationships.

I AM DIANE
I LIVE STRONG
CANCER SURVIVOR

Emotional Concerns

Feelings, Relationships, Life Changes

When you finish your treatments, you may wonder what to expect. You may have many emotions and new concerns. This is normal. Some people fear that the cancer will return. Relationships with family and friends may change.

Do you have emotional concerns?

Make a check next to the things you would like help with or write down your own concerns.

Feelings

- ☐ I am worried that the cancer might return.
- ☐ I am feeling sad or depressed.
- ☐ I worry about my body image.
- ☐ It am uncomfortable when someone makes assumptions about my cancer.

Relationships

- ☐ I am not sure how to talk to my partner, friends and family about my cancer.
- ☐ I am not sure how to talk to people I date about my cancer.

Life Changes

- ☐ The things that are important to me have changed.
- ☐ My cancer has changed my spirituality.
- ☐ I don't know what to expect.

Other Concerns:

_____

I am determined to **live and enjoy life** in the face of uncertainty.

— **Vince,** cancer survivor

Emotional Needs

Feelings, Relationships, Life Changes

No matter how you feel after your treatments, talking with other people can help you handle the emotions you are having. Past survivors strongly recommend openly talking to your partner, loved ones, health care providers or licensed counselors.

You are not alone in dealing with your cancer. Your partner, friends and family can learn how to support you during tough times. You can also talk to counselors that work with other LGBT cancer survivors.

Do you need help meeting your needs?

Check the box next to the services or information you need.

- ☐ I want to talk to other LGBT cancer survivors and/or others my age about cancer.
- ☐ I want to know what to expect and where I can find emotional support.
- ☐ I want to know how I can best talk to my friends and family about my cancer.
- ☐ I would like to talk to a professional about the feelings I am having.
- ☐ I would like my family to talk to a professional about the feelings they are having.

I AM ROB
I LIVE STRONG
CANCER SURVIVOR

Day-to-Day Concerns

Money, Job, Resources and Legal Rights

Your day-to-day concerns may change as you finish treatment. You may want help figuring out health insurance or with the cost of your medicine. You may worry about money or your job. These are some of the concerns other cancer survivors have. As an LGBT person you have the right to receive the same care as anyone else.

Do you have day-to-day concerns?

Make a check next to the things you would like help with or write down your own concerns.

Money and Insurance

- ☐ I need help paying my bills and medical costs.
- ☐ I need help with health insurance.
- ☐ I need help applying for state medical programs.
- ☐ I need help finding a health care provider I trust.

Job

- ☐ I want my boss to understand my special needs as a cancer survivor.
- ☐ I am having difficulty finding work.

Finding Resources

- ☐ I need help with my children.
- ☐ I am having trouble traveling to my medical appointments.

Other Concerns:

_____

Keep getting up and fight cancer…**be a survivor.**

— **Patty,** cancer survivor

Day-to-Day Needs

Money, Job, Resources and Legal Rights

As a cancer survivor, you are not alone. There may be resources in your community that can help you and your partner with your day-to-day concerns. Talk to your health care provider or one of the resources listed in the back of this booklet to find the services you need.

Do you need help meeting your needs?

Check the box next to the services or information you need.

Money and Insurance

- ☐ I would like to know more about organizations that provide help with health insurance and money issues.
- ☐ I want to make sure I am treated fairly by my health care provider.
- ☐ I want to know about my partner's legal rights.
- ☐ I want to know about the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Job

- ☐ I want to make sure I am treated fairly at work.

Finding Resources

- ☐ I would like help finding resources in my community or on the Internet.
- ☐ I would like to know how I can find transportation to my medical appointments.

I AM BRIAN
I LIVE STRONG
CANCER SURVIVOR

To learn more about these services, I can:

- ☐ Talk to a health care provider, nurse or social worker who is sensitive to my concerns.
- ☐ Reach out to other cancer survivors.
- ☐ Call one of the groups on the back pages.
- ☐ Research on the Internet or at the library.
- ☐ Reach out to members of my faith-based groups and local LGBT community.
- ☐ Talk to my partner, family and friends.

Talk to your doctor about the information you find.

Plan for Your Next Steps

Now that you have checked off the physical, emotional and day-to-day concerns you have, it is time to set a plan of action. Follow these steps to get the help you need.

1. Make sure you have gone through this booklet and checked off all the concerns you have.
2. Think about where you will look for help and support.
3. Discuss the concerns you checked off in this booklet with your doctor or someone on your healthcare team.
4. Call the toll-free numbers on the following pages, or visit the websites to help you find the services you need.

Resources

These groups can help you with your physical and emotional needs. They can also help you with day-to-day issues such as insurance and money matters.

The LIVE**STRONG** Foundation

Toll-free: 1.866.235.7205
www.LIVE**STRONG**.org/GetHelp

The LIVE**STRONG** Foundation will provide you, your family, friends and caregivers with support, education on treatment options and fertility preservation, and referrals to financial and local resources. Ask for a free LIVE**STRONG** Guidebook. It provides important information and tools to support you through your cancer journey. You can call the LIVE**STRONG** Foundation Monday—Friday, 9AM—5PM EST.

LGBT Aging Issues Network

www.asaging.org/networks/index.cfm?cg = LAIN

The LGBT Aging Issues Network can help you to address concerns related to housing, healthcare, long-term care and other needed services.

Mautner Project
Toll-free: 1.866.MAUTNER (1.866.628.8637)
www.mautnerproject.org

The Mautner Project is a resource of the National Lesbian Health organization. They can help you find support services and health resources.

National Cancer Institute
Toll-free: 1.800.4.CANCER (1.800.422.6237)
www.cancer.gov

You can speak with caring staff who can explain medical information in easy-to-understand terms.

National Coalition for LGBT Health
Toll-free: 1.202.558.6828
www.lgbthealth.net

The National Coalition for LGBT Health can help you connect to organizations and resources related to LGBT concerns and cancer.

National LGBT Cancer Network
www.cancer-network.org

The National LGBT Cancer Network works to improve the lives of LGBT cancer survivors and those at risk through education, training and advocacy. They can help you find LGBT support groups, providers and research studies to participate in.

List local resources here:

Support Groups

Contact these groups to help you find the support you need. Each of these groups can help you connect with other survivors and/or find emotional support in your area.

American Cancer Society
Toll-free: 1.800.ACS.2345 (1.800.227.2345)
www.cancer.org

An information specialist can answer your questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can also help you find support groups in your area.

Cancer Hope Network
Toll-free: 1.877.HOPE.NET (1.877.467.3638)
www.cancerhopenetwork.org

Cancer Hope Network provides support to cancer patients and their loved ones by linking to individuals with similar cancer experiences.

Cancer Support Community
Toll-free: 1.888.793.9355
www.cancersupportcommunity.org

In July 2009, The Wellness Community and Gilda's Club joined forces to become the Cancer Support Community. The Cancer Support Community continues to help optimize patient care by providing essential, but often overlooked, services including support groups, counseling, education and healthy lifestyle programs.

Out With Cancer
www.outwithcancer.org or www.LGBTcancer.org

Out With Cancer is a leading national LGBT Cancer survivor support and advocacy nonprofit. They can connect you with LGBT support groups and also offer online peer support network.

List local support groups here:

Notes

Notes

Notes

THE LIVE**STRONG** FOUNDATION SERVES PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CANCER AND EMPOWERS THEM TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE WORLD'S LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH.

Special thanks to the cancer survivors who made this brochure possible.

LIVESTRONG

© 2004 – 2014 LIVE**STRONG** is a registered trademark of the LIVE**STRONG** Foundation. The LIVE**STRONG** Foundation is a 501(c)(3) under federal tax guidelines.