

## Young Adults with Cancer

The challenges of cancer are different for people between the ages of 18 and 40. At this age, it is typical to feel invincible and believe that serious diseases happen only to older people. The reality is that most people your age are likely to be healthy. Their concerns and problems may seem far less serious and important than your own. It is important to be able to turn to people who understand your unique challenges and concerns.



HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOURSELF WHILE YOU ARE BEING TREATED FOR CANCER AND ONCE TREATMENT HAS ENDED:

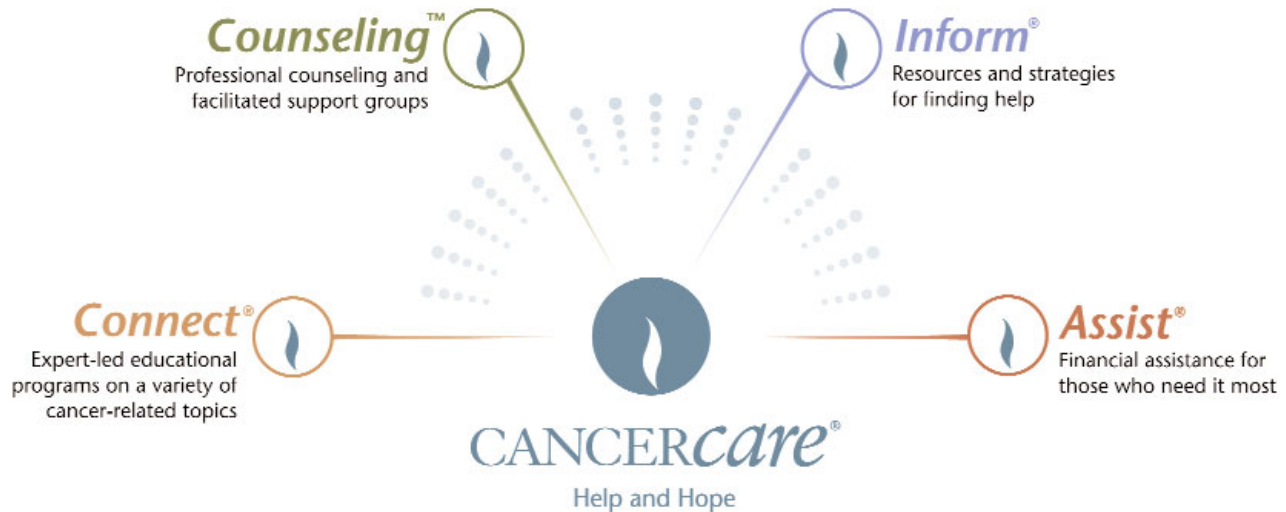
- **Become Informed:** Obtain reliable information about your diagnosis and treatment. Knowledge is a source of power and can help you feel more in control.
- **Accommodate Life-Cycle Interruptions:** Sometimes cancer treatments change your typical work or school schedules. Some people are able to modify their daily routines by working or going to school part time. For others, it makes sense to consider short-term disability or taking a leave from school.
- **Seek Support:** Attending a support group gives you the opportunity to compare your experiences and solutions with other young adults. Individual counseling gives you the opportunity to address how cancer affects dating, your career goals, and life priorities.
- **Reach Out to Family and Friends:** Your family and friends are part of your support team, but they may need a few facts about cancer to help them understand your situation. The educational materials and websites you turn to for information can also help those closest to you.
- **Manage Physical Changes:** Prepare yourself for any physical changes due to treatment by having your doctor explain and illustrate what these changes may look like. Wear clothes that fit your current size. Consider using a wig or comfortable hats.
- **Get Information on Physical Intimacy:** Dating and romantic relationships are important. Read educational materials about sexuality and cancer. Ask your doctor or nurse to refer you to professionals trained in sexual rehabilitation.

- **Learn About Preserving Your Fertility:** Cancer treatments can alter your ability to conceive a baby. You may need to make decisions about preserving your fertility by sperm/ova banking. It is important to speak with your oncologist about fertility concerns before you begin treatment.

## CANCERCARE CAN HELP

CancerCare has a staff of professional oncology social workers that are sensitive and knowledgeable about how to help young adults with cancer. CancerCare offers face-to-face, online and telephone support groups for young adults and their partners and family members. CancerCare also offers individual counseling, telephone education workshops and financial assistance. All of our services are completely free of charge.

### *The CANCERcare® Constellation of Services*



CancerCare's services are provided free of charge to anyone affected by cancer

1-800-813-HOPE (4673) • [www.cancercares.org](http://www.cancercares.org)