

Maintaining normalcy while battling cancer

Millions of people across the globe are diagnosed with cancer every year.

Each cancer patient approaches their diagnosis and treatment differently, but making an effort to keep life as normal as possible while being treated for cancer can help people overcome their disease and prevent them from dwelling on the adverse effects cancer can have on their lives.

Though the idea of maintaining a level of normalcy may be the furthest thing from a person's mind upon being diagnosed with cancer, the National Cancer Institute notes that people with cancer can still enjoy life. Daily routines such as going to work and spending time with family and friends can lift cancer patients' spirits and give them a sense of purpose beyond beating cancer.

Cancer treatments can produce a host of both minor and significant side effects. During treatment, many cancer patients experience fatigue, nausea and/or vomiting. When symptoms

allow, cancer patients should do their best to live as normal a life as possible during their treatments. Achieving such normalcy may require a few tweaks to one's typical routine, but such changes are minor.

- Let others know when you plan to exercise. Physical activity has been shown to boost energy levels, making exercise a valuable ally to cancer patients. Exercise may be difficult, if not impossible, when treatment-related fatigue is at its worst. But physical activity when symptoms are less severe can provide the energy boost cancer patients need along with all of the other benefits routine exercise provides. The NCI advises



cancer patients to get their physicians' approval before exercising during treatment. In addition, patients should let loved ones know when and where they are planning to exercise as a safety precaution.

- Work from home. Going to work is another way for cancer patients to maintain some normalcy during their treatments. On days when treat-

ment-related symptoms make it difficult to travel, men and women can work from home. Doing so will provide a sense of fulfillment at the end of the workday without having to navigate potentially taxing commutes to and from the office.

- Set goals. The NCI advises cancer patients to think about what they want to do when they feel well again. Setting goals can give patients in treatment something other than beating cancer to work toward. Planning an overseas trip or learning about a potential career change can focus patients on goals that do not involve their disease.

Daily life during cancer treatment need not be vastly different from how it was prior to diagnosis. Some tweaks to patients' typical routines may be necessary, but they can still live full lives as they work toward beating their disease.



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