

# What's Happening to Me?



*Coping and living with breast cancer*





Breast cancer can be overwhelming. You may face many physical and emotional struggles. The shock and amount of new information may cause you to not think clearly. This booklet includes information that may help you cope with some of these issues.

It may also help you explore and accept your feelings. You will read about how to get support from others. Also, survivors who have faced breast cancer will give you ideas to help you cope and get the support you need.



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# Coping

## Understand your emotions

The word “cancer” can bring about sudden and intense emotions. You may have feelings like fear, anger, frustration, depression and even helplessness. These emotions are normal. No one can tell you how to feel, how not to feel or to change the way you feel.

Allowing yourself to express your emotions can help you begin to cope. This is a time for you to take care of yourself and focus on healing. How do you begin? Writing down your thoughts can help. Answer the questions below.

Why am I afraid?

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What am I unable to think about or talk about?

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What am I angry about?

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Who am I angry with?

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When do I feel out of control?

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In what situations do I struggle to express my feelings?

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In what ways do I feel alone?

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When do I feel okay?

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“I was shocked. I never expected to have breast cancer. It doesn’t run in my family. I exercised and ate well. I was sure it was not cancer. I guess I was in denial. I thought, ‘They’re gonna take this lump out and I’ll be on my merry way.’ It took me a very long time to accept that I got breast cancer — even though I did everything right.”

“At first my emotional system shut down. I did what the doctor told me to do. I went on with my life. I didn’t talk about it much and tried not to think about it. Then one day I got a headache. That’s when I realized I hadn’t cried — so I had a good, long cry. I must have cried for three or four days straight.”

“I was mad. How dare this cancer come and mess up this good life I was leading. But the anger helped me fight it — I educated myself — I read everything I could find about treatment.”

“I thought I was going to die. I remember thinking, ‘Well, I won’t need the summer clothes I just bought because I won’t be around.’ I didn’t know if I would make it. But when I woke up day after day and I was alive, I thought maybe there was a chance.”



## Ways of coping

As you cope, it may help you to learn about your diagnosis and make plans for the future. You may also ask for help, vent your feelings, avoid talking about it or even deny that there is a problem. All of



these responses are normal. At different times, you may use a few or many of these ways of coping. Your emotional healing begins once you have come to terms with your diagnosis and have the information you need. Keep in mind that your actions can make an impact on your recovery.

### Learn about your diagnosis.

*“I didn’t understand what the doctor was saying. He wanted to do the surgery the next day. I asked him how long it could wait. He told me three weeks. So I took the three weeks. That’s when I read many books. Then I understood what was happening.”*

### Talk to other survivors.

*“At first I just worked as much as I could. I couldn’t face thinking about it. It took a long time before I could talk about my diagnosis with anyone, aside from my doctor. I started going to a support group. That made a big difference for me. It helped to talk to people who have been through it.”*

### Take care of yourself.

*“From the beginning, I started taking better care of myself. I paid close attention to my diet. I even asked friends to pray for me. It helped me to become a little more positive. I realized that there were things I could do to help myself.”*

# Support

## Get emotional support

Family members and close friends (co-survivors) can give you emotional support. For some, asking family and friends for help is easy. But for others, it can be hard. Loved ones often want to help, but don't always know how. How do you begin to ask for their support? You can start by sharing your thoughts and feelings with them. Here are some ideas:

- I just need for you to listen.
- It is hard for me to say the word “cancer” or tell you how I am feeling. I am afraid I might upset you by talking about it.
- I want you to be honest with me about your thoughts and feelings.
- I would like for you to hold my hand.
- I feel like my cancer has made us strangers, and we are drifting apart. I would like for us to talk.

“What I was about to hear was unexpected. My family doctor said — ‘John, I didn’t want to tell you this on the phone, but you have breast cancer.’ I wasn’t prepared for that. Wasn’t breast cancer a woman’s disease? I had never even heard of a MAN with breast cancer! I never dreamed I could get a “woman’s disease.” I wondered how I would fit into this world of breast cancer. Getting diagnosed with breast cancer was scary, even for me — a man. We aren’t supposed to show our fear.”



Sometimes even strangers can help. Support groups and one-on-one counseling may help with your emotional recovery.

- **Support groups** — Talking with other survivors is a good way to share your feelings and experiences. They understand what you are going through. By going to a support group, you may feel less lonely and scared. They can give you information and help you recover. They can also give you a sense of community. To find a support group, see the resources section of this booklet.



- **One-on-one counseling** — Counseling with a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, counselor, social worker or member of the clergy may help you cope. Counseling can also help to reduce anxiety or depression. Your doctor, oncology nurse or social worker can give you a list of counselors.
- **Support groups for men** — For men, breast cancer is rare. It may be hard to find a local support group. Online support groups are a good way to share experiences with other men with breast cancer.

“My family really wasn’t there for me. I live alone and my closest relatives live out of state. When I was at the hospital, the social worker told me about a support group for women with breast cancer. I started going. At first I didn’t talk much, but just listening to what other women had to say helped a lot.”

## Get the information you need

By getting information, you can learn more about breast cancer, make informed decisions and regain some control. Test your knowledge below:

### True or False?

1. Understanding the latest medical procedures and treatments for breast cancer is my doctor's job, not mine.

**False.** Without question, your doctor needs to know about the most current breast cancer procedures and treatments, but so do you. The more you know about treatments and their side effects, the better prepared you will be to decide on your treatment plan with your doctor.

2. I do not have to read more than I can handle. I can choose to read what I want, when I want.

**True.** Sometimes too much information can be overwhelming! You know your limits. Read what you are comfortable with, then stop. If you feel you have more information than you can handle, set it aside for a later time.

3. My doctor will think I do not trust him if I ask to get a second opinion.

**False.** Your doctor should not be offended and may encourage you to get a second opinion. Advice from a second doctor is always a good idea.



“I didn’t question my doctor, and I didn’t read about breast cancer. Women didn’t do that back then. I knew my doctor and I trusted him. As I look back, I wish I hadn’t been so trusting. I sometimes question the decisions that were made for me.”

“I asked my husband where I should start. He suggested we go to the hospital’s cancer information center. They have a lot of information. Once I understood what was happening, I could make decisions about my treatments — I knew what the doctor was telling me — I could gain some control.”

“At first I had very little information. So I just asked questions wherever I went. I didn’t have a computer, but I did have a library card. I checked out a lot of books from the library. That’s where I found phone numbers for national breast cancer organizations like Susan G. Komen®. Before I knew it, I had more information than I knew what to do with.”

“I had a friend pick up some pamphlets when she went for her mammogram. That was the start. She offered and I said, ‘fine’ — I was still in a daze. Later on, I got information from a woman in my support group who was going through chemo. Learning a lot about medical terms and knowing you’re not alone — that others are going through it too — helps you get through the whole situation.”

## Remember who you are

A breast cancer diagnosis can change a woman's image of herself. If you feel others are treating you differently or that they are avoiding you, you might ask them about it. You cannot change the way others act toward you. But sometimes it may be a misunderstanding. If you fear that breast cancer will affect how you relate with others, you may want to consider the following:

- Keep your normal routine as much as you can. Take a break when you need to, then pick up with your usual activities.
- Laugh and have fun with friends. Get together to talk about things other than breast cancer. Get lost in a good book. Listen to music. Go see a movie.
- Remind family and friends that you can still speak for yourself and make your own decisions.
- Ask health care providers not to refer to you as “a cancer patient,” but rather a person who is receiving medical care for breast cancer — or as a survivor.



“I continued to work while I was going through chemotherapy. I am a nurse and I get a lot of pleasure from my job. It was important for me at the time to continue to provide care for others.”

“I signed up for a ceramics class. I met some new friends. No one there knew that I had breast cancer. For one night a week I could go and talk about anything but breast cancer. It was a great escape.”

“Nobody pitied me and that was wonderful. When I started to get down on myself, they wouldn’t let me get away with it.”

“I asked my husband to reassure me that he wouldn’t leave me because I had breast cancer. I think he was surprised that I could even think such a thing — but it did cross my mind.”



## Ask for practical help

It is important to maintain your routine and do as much for yourself as you can. There will be times when you are too tired to do anything. You may be weak from the effects of cancer or worn out from treatment or side effects.

Think about the things that you do as a part of your daily routine. Make a list. Some things you can set aside, but others you cannot. Ask your co-survivors for help. Your co-survivors are your family, friends and co-workers — among others. They can help with the laundry, the bills, cleaning and running errands. Sometimes all it takes is asking.

### Keep in mind:

- Getting help from others does not mean that you will become dependent or helpless.
- You are not a burden to others. This is your time to be taken care of. You deserve it.
- Not everything will be done as you like it. Let it go and rest.
- Accept offers for help.





“When my husband went out of town for a week after my surgery, I asked friends to come over to help. It was the simple things that I couldn’t yet do after my surgery. Mostly, they brought me food. One of my neighbors even washed my car. I was touched.”

“I had two teenage children when I was going through chemotherapy. You have to ask them for help, and I did. We made a cooking and cleaning schedule. They rotated jobs. Of course they complained some. To this day, I don’t think they really knew how much help they were to me.”

“My husband did a huge amount — far more than usual. For a few months, he took over the grocery shopping and the laundry. We also took some shortcuts. We started buying microwave dinners and ordered take-out.”

“I contacted the social worker at the hospital and told her I needed some help. She got me coupons for cab rides to and from the hospital. She was even able to get a housekeeper to come to my apartment to clean and cook for me.”

## Build a relationship with your doctor

Both you and your doctor are responsible for your health. Your doctor has the knowledge and skills to diagnose and treat your breast cancer. But you are the only one who can follow through with your doctor's advice. For this reason, you should work together as a team. Breast cancer cannot be treated in just a few weeks. You will have a relationship with your doctor for a long time. Open and honest communication is important. These tips may help you talk with your doctor and build your relationship.

- Bring a pen and paper or even record your doctor visits.
- Bring co-survivors with you so they can listen and support you.
- Be honest with your doctor about your symptoms and concerns.
- Ask your doctor to explain anything that you do not understand or instructions that are not clear.
- Repeat your doctor's words back to him or her to be sure you understand everything correctly.
- Take the time you need to get the answers to your questions even if it means calling your doctor again.
- Ask to speak with a nurse, health educator or social worker to talk about your concerns.

## Coping physically

### Changes in your appearance

With treatment, you may have hair loss, nail weakness, skin problems, lymphedema and weight changes. These side effects can be very upsetting. How you look can affect how you feel.

**Hair loss** can occur during chemotherapy. Your hair will grow back after the treatment ends. Your hair may not be the same color or texture. To keep your hair for as long as possible, be gentle when brushing, combing and styling your hair. Use mild shampoos and do not use permanents or relaxers. You can also cut your hair short to make it look fuller. Think about what you would do if you lost most or all of your hair.

- Think about how you want to cover your head, or even if you want to cover it. It is your choice. You may want to talk about it with your family.
- Scarves, hats, wigs or false eyelashes may make you feel better. Think about buying a wig to match your hair color before you start to lose your hair.

**Nail weakness** or damage to your fingernails and toenails may occur from chemotherapy. The nails may become brittle and sore, develop ridges, get darker or fall off.

Like hair loss, nail problems are temporary. Keeping your nails short during treatment can make nail care easier. Your nails will return to normal once chemotherapy ends.

**Skin problems**, such as redness, irritation and dryness, may result from radiation therapy. These may cause discomfort. Here are some ways that may help relieve or prevent these problems:

- Treat your skin like you would if you had a sunburn. Not all lotions can be used during treatment, so check with your doctor first. If you don't know how to treat your skin, ask your doctor.

- Try not to shave the underarm area of the treated side. If you must shave, use an electric razor.
- Protect your skin from the sun. Use doctor-approved sunscreen with an SPF 15 or greater during and after treatment.

**Lymphedema** is swelling in the hand, arm and sometimes the chest/breast. It can occur when lymph nodes are removed from your underarm area or as a result of radiation therapy. Lymphedema can occur weeks, months or even years later. There are a few things you can do that may reduce your risk of lymphedema. Ask your doctor or nurse for more tips. Here are a few:

- Have blood pressure tests, shots (including chemotherapy) and blood tests done on the arm that is not affected.
- Avoid injury to the affected arm. If you are cut on the affected arm or hand, clean and bandage the cut right away. Call your doctor if you think a cut might be infected.
- Avoid tight jewelry on the affected arm. Avoid clothing with elastic cuffs.
- Do arm exercises such as weight-lifting. Exercise can reduce symptoms and improve body image and strength. Talk to your doctor.

**Weight gain or loss** during treatment can affect your body image. Some people gain weight with chemotherapy. Try to keep your normal body weight with proper diet and exercise. Take care of yourself by eating a balanced diet and being physically active. Walking and doing simple stretches are good ways to begin.

- Wear a few new pieces of clothing that are comfortable and look good on you.
- Wear makeup or colors that make you feel good.

## Breast changes/scars

Breast surgery changes your body. A breast change, such as a scar, can affect how you feel about your body. For some women, surgery does not affect how they feel about themselves. For others, it is hard to accept the changes. Some women may choose to have breast reconstruction or choose to wear a breast prosthesis. The choice is yours. It can be helpful to ask other women about the choices they have made.

“I remember the day my bandages were taken off — I was in a happy mood. But when I saw my scar, I wanted to be left alone. I sent everyone out of the room and had a good cry. Then I thought, ‘This is how it’s gonna be.’”



“I was startled, but my scar wasn’t a shocking or horrible thing. I was just grateful to be alive. I felt very lucky.”

**How can you cope with your feelings about the changes to your body? Here are some suggestions:**

- Write in a journal about your changing body.
- Make jokes when you feel you can laugh about the changes.
- Write a poem, good or bad, about how you look.
- Buy some new clothes if you can.
- Begin to do exercises, such as stretching or walking.
- Talk with friends and family.

## Intimacy and sexuality

If you are in a relationship, tell your partner how you feel about your body. Open and honest communication is key. Try to talk with your partner as soon as you can. He or she can help change your dressings or give you a massage. Touching, holding and sharing intimate thoughts are great ways you and your partner can start to feel at ease with your body. If you find your desire for sex has changed since surgery, talk to your partner, doctor, social worker or nurse about it.

Your sexuality includes far more than just how you look. Sexuality comes from within. Before you can be close with someone, you must first be comfortable with yourself. How you feel about letting your partner see your scar may depend on how comfortable you were with showing your body in the past.



Accepting your body is the first step toward loving yourself and reaching out to another. You can start by finding quiet, safe moments to look at your scar, to touch it and to value your whole body.

## Coping emotionally

### Living with a breast cancer diagnosis

You might see your life differently living with breast cancer. This is a chance to do things in a new way.

#### Celebrate

- Enjoy being alive.
- Focus on the positive.
- Find something to laugh about every day.
- Have a party to celebrate your life.
- Take a vacation.

#### Do what you want

- Take new risks.
- Start saying “no” to things you do not want to do.
- Start saying “yes” to things you have always wanted to do.

This is also a time to reflect and think back on your past. Remember your greatest successes. Who are you today? Are you the person you imagined you would be? Are there things you have always wanted to do that you have not done yet? Begin now, and do one of those things. Make a plan and promise yourself that you will complete it. Even if your goal is out of this world, remember that you are trying to fulfill your dreams.

“Finding out I had cancer caused me to rearrange my priorities. Things that used to annoy me don’t anymore.”

“Cancer has made my life better. I know that sounds weird, but it’s true.”



## Fear of recurrence

It is important to follow your treatment plan and go to the doctor regularly. Living with breast cancer, you may have many emotions. These may include fear and anxiety. You might have fear of your cancer coming back after treatment. You may have anxiety while waiting for test results or about treatment. Many people have these thoughts. They may never go away. But as time goes on, they don't come as often. You can do things that may lower your risk of recurrence. You can watch your weight through diet and exercise. Talk to your doctor right away if you notice any change from normal.

How can you cope with fear and anxiety? Here are some suggestions:

- Know what to expect — learn about your diagnosis.
- Talk to other survivors.
- Attend a support group.
- Exercise.
- Relax, meditate and manage your stress.

"I had a scare eight months after my surgery. I found a lump in the other breast. I thought, 'I cannot deal with this. I cannot go back to the doctor.' I was just so scared. But I did. The lump turned out to be benign! Now I know if cancer does come back, I'll be that much stronger to cope with it."



“Once in a while I worry about the cancer coming back. If my shoulder starts hurting, I think, ‘Oh, no.’ I’ve heard about cancer spreading to the bone. So far it’s always just normal aches and pains, but I go to my doctor anyhow. If cancer does come back, I can deal with it. If I got through it once I can get through it again.”



“I’ve had a couple of lumps since my cancer. They were just cysts. But it’s always on my mind; and if you read the statistics, anyone would be scared. So I’m careful. I go to my doctor for my yearly clinical breast exams and mammograms.”

## Depression

For some, breast cancer may cause depression and emotional distress. If the following symptoms last longer than two weeks, they are signs of clinical depression and it's important to talk to a health care provider or see a therapist:

- An inability to find joy in activities that used to bring pleasure.
- A constant sad mood on most days.
- A loss of interest in work or hobbies.
- Poor concentration.
- Prolonged insomnia (inability to sleep).
- Feeling tired.
- Change in eating habits.
- Withdrawal from friends and family.
- Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness or guilt.
- Increasing thoughts of death or a desire to die.

Depression needs to be treated, just like the breast cancer itself.

Your provider may prescribe an antidepressant drug if you are going through a difficult period. However, be sure to talk to your oncologist before taking any medications for depression as some can interfere with breast cancer treatments.

## Spiritual needs

What is the purpose of my life?

Why did this happen to me?

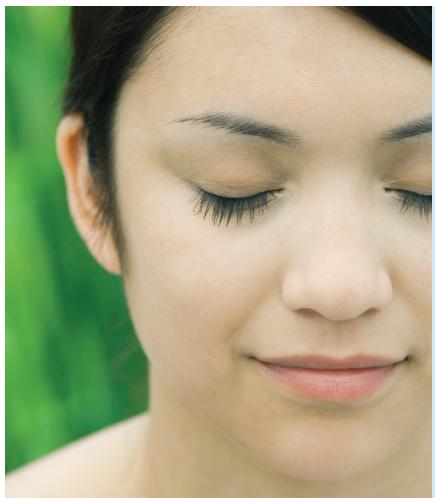
Where do I go from here?

No matter what you believe, being diagnosed with breast cancer is scary. It makes you think about the possibility of death. You may begin to think about the meaning of your life.

It is important to understand your spiritual needs. You may choose prayer, either alone or with family and friends. You might read spiritual or inspirational books. You may take long walks while thinking about your life. No matter what you do, be sure to take the time to work through your feelings.

Some other ways you can connect with your spiritual self are to:

- Go to religious services.
- Write in a journal.
- Create poetry, stories, art or music.
- Spend quiet time with people you care about.
- Volunteer to help people in need.
- Find time to be alone.



## The healing process

In time you may find that coping with breast cancer is no longer a daily struggle. There are many ways to work through your feelings and move on with your life. Talk to someone, such as a counselor. He or she can help you think through what cancer has meant for you or how it has affected your relationships. Join a social club that may have nothing to do with cancer, but can give you the chance to laugh and relax. Think about what kinds of activities might work best for you. You may want to try one or more of these ideas or come up with your own.

### Talk

- Share your feelings with friends and family.
- See a counselor, psychologist or spiritual advisor.
- Join a breast cancer support group.

### Do

- Take an art or writing class.
- Go for a walk.
- Volunteer with an organization.
- Listen to music.

### Pamper yourself

- Get a massage, manicure or pedicure.
- Take a bubble bath.
- Put your feet up and read a good book.

### Socialize

- Join a social group or club (not cancer-related).
- Entertain friends and family at home.
- Ask a friend over for lunch or a movie.

## Share your story

Sharing your story with others can help you cope with your emotions. There are many ways to share your story. One way is to become a breast cancer advocate. A breast cancer advocate is someone who devotes their time to support the breast cancer cause.

Learn all you can about breast cancer. Then, use that knowledge and your experience to share your story with the public. This helps get other people involved. Other ways to be an advocate are to raise funds for research, lobby elected officials or give resources to women without insurance. You can get involved in advocacy efforts within organizations like Susan G. Komen®. For more information, see the Resources section in the back of this book.

You can also be a patient advocate. You can volunteer to visit other breast cancer survivors in the hospital. If your hospital or community does not have such a program, you may want to start one.



“When I get over this, I want to give back to the community. Everyone was so good to me — the people at the hospital, my doctor, my friends and family...”

"I volunteer at the cancer center, and I'm part of a group that visits newly diagnosed cancer patients. Other people can volunteer, but they can't help them the way I can because I've been there."



You can also be an advocate by writing an article for your local newspaper. It can help you focus your thoughts, and your story may inspire someone else. You can also share your story on [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) and provide hope for millions of women and men around the globe.

### Other Ways to Get Involved

You can support the breast cancer cause by doing the following:

- Participate in an event, like the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® or the Susan G. Komen 3-Day®.
- Volunteer your time with your local Komen Affiliate.

These are just some ideas. However you choose to get involved, just know that everything you do makes a difference!

## Other issues

### Working during treatment

Working during your treatment can be good for you. It can help you keep your routine and focus your thoughts on something other than breast cancer. But, it can also be a struggle. Keeping up with your normal tasks while going to treatment can be draining. Treatment side effects can also get in the way and cause you to lose focus on your work.

1. Ask your doctor whether your health will allow you to keep working and/or whether you should limit your activities.
2. Talk with your boss about short-term changes to your schedule or duties. Write down what you want him or her to know before the meeting. Clearly state your needs. Point out the skills you continue to bring to your position as an employee.

Here are some things you might want to discuss with your boss:

- Reduced or flexible work schedule.
- Short-term reduction or change in job duties.
- Breaks so you can rest during the day.
- A desk away from the breakroom to avoid food smells.
- Help in addressing problems while you are out of the office.
- Work from home.

3. Decide whether or not to tell your co-workers that you have cancer.

The amount of support you receive will depend on the nature of your workplace. Your co-workers can be a great source of support and encouragement. But not everyone may be as understanding as you would wish. If you tell your co-workers about your cancer, be prepared for a variety of reactions. Some may be concerned that you will not be able to keep up with your work. Others may offer to take on some of your load, or to talk with you about how you are feeling. Be clear in stating what sort of help you need, or in asking that co-workers not take over your tasks. Ask them to be honest with you, and to be patient.

### **Telling co-workers and colleagues about your breast cancer is your choice.**

If you work for a larger company, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) may be available. EAP provides counseling for work and personal problems. It is against the law for your employer to fire you or give you other duties because of your breast cancer. Four federal laws protect your job:

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Federal Rehabilitation Act
- Family and Medical Leave Act
- Employee Retirement and Income Security Act

For fact sheets on your rights in the workplace, contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission at 1-800-669 EEOC. If you have a problem or complaint, you can talk with a representative at 1-800-669-4000.

## Paying for medical care

Medical care is expensive. You may have concerns about paying for this care. Your insurance may pay for most of it. But you may receive many medical bills that can be confusing and overwhelming. These may come from your primary doctor, hospital, anesthesiologist, surgeon, radiologist and even the lab that does your blood work. Try to keep organized and ask for help when you need it. Here are some ways to help:

- Save a copy of all your medical bills, statements and receipts. Ask a friend or family member to help with keeping records and filing.
- If you are insured, refer to your coverage booklet to find out what is covered under your plan. Learn what your insurance company will pay and the process for making a claim. Get the phone number and name of a claims processor that you can contact when you need help understanding your coverage. Keep note of your conversations and record dates and names. Be persistent and patient.
- Visit [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org) or call our breast care helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) for a list of financial assistance resources.
- If you are not insured, learn about your options, financial issues, health insurance risk pools and other resources that may be helpful. Your state insurance commissioner may be able to give you names of companies that provide insurance for high-risk or uninsurable clients, or refer you to the Medicaid program.
- For more help, ask your doctor to refer you to a social worker or case worker.

## Resources

### National and local organizations

**Susan G. Komen®** offers a breast care helpline service to those in need of breast health and breast cancer information and support. Se habla español. TDD available. In addition, on [komen.org](http://komen.org), you can read inspiring and survivor stories about hope from both men and women as well as learn about Komen's advocacy efforts.

Phone: 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636)

Hours: 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET / 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. PT

[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

**American Cancer Society** has research, education and patient service programs to help cancer patients and their families cope with cancer. Se habla español.

Phone: 1-800-ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**CancerCare** offers free counseling and emotional support, information about cancer and treatments, financial assistance, educational seminars and referrals to other support services. Se habla español.

Phone: 1-800-813 HOPE

[www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org)

**Cancer Information Service**, a part of the National Cancer Institute, has information specialists that are available to help answer your cancer-related questions whether you are a patient, family member or friend, health care provider, or researcher. Se habla español.

Phone: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

**The Cancer Support Community** provides support, education and hope to people with cancer and their loved ones.

Phone: 1-888-793-WELL

[www.cancersupportcommunity.org](http://www.cancersupportcommunity.org)

**Mautner Project of Whitman-Walker Health** offers support programs (online and telephone) for lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals living with cancer, and their partners.

[www.whitman-walker.org/mautnerproject](http://www.whitman-walker.org/mautnerproject)

**National Lymphedema Network** provides education and guidance to lymphedema patients, professionals and the public.

Phone: 1-800-541-3259

[www.lymphnet.org](http://www.lymphnet.org)

**Sisters Network® Inc.** is a national African American breast cancer survivorship organization.

Phone: 1-866-781-1808

[www.sistersnetworkinc.org](http://www.sistersnetworkinc.org)

**Young Survival Coalition** provides information on breast cancer in young women.

Phone: 1-877-YSC-1011

[www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

This list of resources is made available solely as a suggested resource. Please note that it is not a complete listing of materials or information available on breast health and breast cancer. This information is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or to replace the services of a medical professional. Further, Susan G. Komen® does not endorse, recommend or make any warranties or representations regarding the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, quality or non-infringement of any of the materials, products or information provided by the organizations referred to in this list.

## Notes:



1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636)  
[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

**Other booklets in this series:**

- What's Happening to the One We Love?  
*Helping co-survivors cope with breast cancer*
- What's Happening to Mom?  
*Talking to your children about breast cancer*

We would like to extend thanks to breast cancer survivors, their children, and our panel of professional experts who helped in the development of this booklet.