

SUPPORT AFTER A BREAST CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Social support

Social support is the emotional support, practical help, advice and other benefits you get from people in your life including:

- Family members
- Friends
- Spiritual advisors
- Co-workers
- Medical team members
- Other cancer survivors

Benefits of social support

- Reduced anxiety and stress
- Reduced depression and emotional distress
- Reduced perception of pain
- Improved mood and/or self-image
- Improved ability to cope
- Improved feelings of control
- Improved mood and self-image
- Improved sexual function and enjoyment

What do I do now?

Anyone who's ever had breast cancer knows what it feels like to hear, "You have cancer." You may feel angry, afraid, overwhelmed and unsure about the future. These feelings are normal. Don't let them keep you from getting the support you need.

Learn all you can

Knowing what to expect can help. Learn about your breast cancer. Get information about treatment options, side effects and clinical trials. Doctors can guide you on your options, but you will make the final decision about what's best for you.



Coping

Allow yourself to express your emotions. It can help you begin to cope. This is a time for you to take care of yourself. Coping with breast cancer requires time, acceptance and support. You may need different kinds of support at different times. Your medical team, family and friends can help.

Why you need social support

No one should face breast cancer alone. Getting support is important for your well-being. Surround yourself with people who care about you. It can be hard to ask for help, even when you really need it. Your friends and family often want to help, but may not know how.

Social support can take many forms. Here are some examples:

- Sharing your cares and concerns with a close friend
- Joining a support group or seeing a therapist
- Getting rides to and from treatment from a family member or friend
- Getting help from a family member or friend with cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping or childcare
- Getting help from a social worker about financial concerns
- Learning about your type of breast cancer and treatment options
- Building a relationship with your doctor and talking openly

For more information, visit komen.org or call Susan G. Komen's breast care helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 10 PM ET.

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**Susan G.
Komen®
Breast Care
Helpline**
1-877 GO KOMEN
(1-877-465-6636)
or email
helpline@komen.org

Resources

Susan G. Komen®
1-877 GO KOMEN
(1-877-465-6636)
komen.org

American Cancer Society
1-800-ACS-2345
cancer.org

CancerCare®
1-800-813-HOPE
cancercares.org

Related educational resources:

- [Talking With Your Doctor](#)
- [Talking With Your Partner](#)
- [Talking With Your Children](#)
- [What's Happening to Me?](#)

Ways to find support

Support groups are a good resource. If you choose to join a support group, find one that's right for you. Some groups provide information and education, while others focus on emotional support. There are groups for people in different stages of illness or recovery. Support groups are a commitment of time and energy. Most who join agree it's worth it.

Support groups may be held by professionals, while others are led by peers. Some support groups meet in person at churches or homes and others are online.

The Komen Breast Cancer Facebook group is a place where those with breast cancer, family and friends can talk with others and gain friendship and support.

Susan G. Komen® provides a free telephone support group for men with breast cancer. They discuss the challenges of breast cancer, exchange information and get support. To learn more, call the Komen Breast Care Helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) or email helpline@komen.org.

Some people are more comfortable talking one-on-one with a counselor or therapist. Others prefer to keep their feelings to themselves or to share them only with close family and friends. Everyone has different needs. It's important to find a healthy support system that works best for you.



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