



A New Normal



Your Life Helper
a compassionate space to grow



Overview of Course

Here's what we'll cover:

1. What to expect
2. Tips and tricks to adjusting to life while in treatment.
3. Tips and tricks for transitioning back to “normal” following the completion of treatment.
4. Adjusting and coping after the loss of a child.
5. Helpful Resources



**“Be gentle with
yourself, you’re doing
the best you can.”**

—Unknown





What to Expect

During Treatment

- Be aware of any behavioral changes in your child as they are likely to occur. Although every child is different, some common behavioral changes can include:
 - Increase in irritability, changes in moods and tantrums (especially if these were prevalent before diagnosis).
 - Increase in anxiety and worries
 - Being more withdrawn
 - Insomnia/disrupted sleep



After Treatment

- Conflicting feelings
 - It's not uncommon to yearn for closeness but feel isolated and that those who frequently helped during treatment have distanced themselves (Bjork et al., 2010).
- Conflicting emotions
 - You may find yourself feeling happy and relieved that your child has completed treatment. However, at the same time you may also feel sad and worried of a relapse or losing the support of your child's medical team (Bjork et al., 2010).





Tips & Suggestions: During Treatment

You can enter a subtitle here if you need it





Tips and Suggestions

1. Provide as much structure as possible
 - a. Children thrive on structure and will seek it out. Structure is especially important for a child going through cancer treatment. All of the unknowns and changes following a diagnosis can evoke feelings of fear and worry. If you are able to provide consistent and predictable structure this can help to alleviate many fears and worries (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).
2. Maintain consistency
 - a. It will be tempting to want to caudle your child during this time .However, it's important to try your best to keep the same expectation and consequences as well as responsibilities that your child had prior to their diagnosis. Doing so can help provide your child with a sense of normalcy and structure (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).
 - b. Allow your child to continue to participate in extracurricular activities **IF** your child's medical team deems it safe to do so (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).
 - c. Maintain communication with your child's friends and teachers. Keeping in contact with these people will contribute to maintaining structure and normalcy (Gratez et al., 2019;).
3. Attend support groups
 - a. Going to support groups can help you and your family connect with others experiencing similar situations. Support groups can help alleviate feelings of loneliness, provide an opportunity to voice your concerns/frustrations, gain insight through other families experiences, and form long lasting friendships.



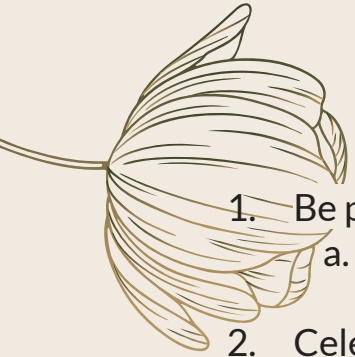
Tips and Suggestions (cont.)

4. Ask for help (National Cancer Institute, 2015)
 - a. It can be difficult to ask for help sometimes. You may feel as though you are inconveniencing someone or are just hesitant to ask in general. Remember to give yourself grace. You and your family are going through a challenging time. Your close family and friends will understand and likely be more than happy to help.
5. Get involved in activities put on by the hospital (National Cancer Institute, 2015)
 - a. Participating in fun hospital activities can help your child make new friends and relationships with children in similar situations.



Tips & Suggestions Post-Treatment

Tips and Suggestions

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1. Be patient! (National Cancer Institute, 2015)
 - a. Transitioning back to “normal” can be difficult and may take time to adjust. Remember that everyone copes differently and that there is no “right-way” to cope.
 2. Celebrate! (National Cancer Institute, 2015)
 - a. Battling and beating cancer is a huge accomplishment! Take time to celebrate completing treatments and being cancer-free!
 3. Continue/start to attend support groups (National Cancer Institute, 2015).
 4. Make sure you have a clear understanding of your child’s survivorship plan (National Cancer Institute, 2015).
 - a. Ask your child’s medical team for and questions or clarification if necessary.
 5. Remain in communication with your child’s medical team and child life specialist
 - a. Although your child has finished treatment they will still need to attend frequent check-ups. Check-ups can often cause anxiety for your child. By communicating with your child's medical team and child life specialist they can provide you with some ways to help alleviate the anxiety (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).
 6. Provide encouragement
 - a. Transitioning back to school and other activities can be difficult for your child. Providing them with words of encouragement can help make this transition smoother (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).



Coping with the Loss of A Child

Losing a Child to Cancer



1. Find ways to honor your child
 - a. Spending time celebrating your child's life can help with the grieving process.
2. Seek support
 - a. Losing a child is every parents worst nightmare and coping with this immense loss can be extremely difficult. Speak with a counselor, coach, or therapist to help with your grieving process. (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2020).

Resources