

Additional Caregiving Resources

American Cancer Society - www.cancer.org

Hats

For women who lose their hair as a result of chemotherapy treatments, Walloohats.com has a wonderful assortment of comfortable hats if one chooses to wear them.

National Cancer Institute - www.cancer.gov

St. Peregrine - the Roman Catholic Patron Saint of Cancer

When I (Mary Bevis) was told of my cancer diagnosis, my oncologist told me about St. Peregrine. After hearing this and then completing additional research on St. Peregrine, I decided that while we are Episcopalians, we worship the same loving God and having a St. Peregrine medal would be a constant reminder of God's grace to all of us. I found one on Amazon and have worn it ever since. (Here's where to find more information on St. Peregrine and how he became the Roman Catholic Patron Saint of Cancer: [StPeregrine.org/biography/.](http://StPeregrine.org/biography/))

Virginia Hospital Cancer Resource Center

VHC has a wonderful Cancer Resource Center, staffed with extremely supportive staff who will help with all aspects of working through the cancer journey. Ellen Schelble, RN, BSW, Survivorship Program Coordinator, 703-558-6090, is the contact at the Cancer Resource Center and will help with so many aspects of this journey. More information can be found here:

VirginiaHospitalCenter.com/medical/oncology/cancer_support_services.aspx

Wigs

Most likely, a cancer patient who undergoes chemotherapy will suffer hair loss. This is usually an especially difficult side effect for women. For those who opt for a wig during this period, I found Marilyn Bater (contact info listed below) to be a wonderful resource. Please see me – Mary Bevis – for additional information.

Bravadas Wigs & Extensions
11213 "K" Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-32-4247
Marilyn Bater

And last, but not least...

- St. Mary's wonderful Clergy and Staff are always available at 703-527-6800.
- The priests make in-home visits as well as hospital visits. They are available by phone - just call the office because they offer tremendous help and support.
- If you or someone you know is in the hospital for any reason, please alert the staff!

Caregiving Helpful Ideas & Suggestions

- **Cards** – The person on the receiving end will so appreciate all cards, from a simple, “I’m thinking of you” to a more detailed message. They are wonderful to receive!
- **Home Visits** – Always appreciated but don’t stay too long as fatigue can be an issue.
- **Meals Brought** – Both for “that night” and already frozen. Best if can be brought in containers (plastic bags) that do not have to be returned. Often, after chemo, a patient doesn’t feel much like eating normal food but the spouse and family will enjoy a home cooked meal!
- **Meeting with Someone Who Has Gone through Cancer** – and can give you the day-to-day realities of what happens from the perspective as someone who has gone through treatment.
- **Phone Calls** – Not during the 4-5 days following a person’s chemotherapy treatment when a patient usually feels lousy, but after those immediate days following treatment, phone calls are great.
- **Support for the Caregiver and the Caregiver’s family** - The caregiver’s role doubles immediately after a cancer diagnosis, and that person needs support as much as the cancer patient. The Caregiver’s family needs support, as well.
- **Text Messages** – These are encouraged and welcomed at any time.

In most cases, it is probably not wise to ask a cancer patient about their prognosis as no one can definitely say – only odds can be given by the doctor and patients are often not comfortable with such discussions outside of the doctor’s office. This is a patient-by-patient issue and the question is generally determined by how close you are to the patient in question, i.e., very close friend, relative, etc. If you are not in this category, my advice is not to ask.

All cancer patients want a good outcome. There is not a test to let a patient know that the cancer has been beaten. Patients are deemed “in remission” when, after treatment, no additional cancer is discovered and deemed cured when no additional cancer has been discovered five years after the last treatment. Patients are closely monitored during the first two years post treatment and then monitored every six months for years three through five.