

Resources for Patients and Families Living with Cancer

Erie County Cancer Control Task Force

Diagnosis

Many people diagnosed with cancer want to be involved in making decisions regarding their treatment plan. There are many resources that will help you find out more about the disease. One of the most important resources you will have regarding your cancer diagnosis is your Primary Care Physician. Your physician will help guide you through the process of follow up and referrals to best meet your needs. If you are seeking a primary care physician you can call:

UPMC Hamot Physician Referral Line	www.upmchamot.org	(814) 877-5678
Your health insurance provider		
Healthy Woman Program (HWP)	The HealthyWoman Program (HWP) is a <u>free</u> breast and cervical cancer early detection program of the Pennsylvania Department of Health. This program is for women who are uninsured or in a low income bracket (250% of Federal Poverty Guidelines). Services provided by Adagio Health with several offices in Erie, PA. If breast or cervical cancer is detected through the HWP, you will be able to receive <u>free treatment</u> through the Department of Public Welfare’s Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Program.	www.pahealthywoman.org 1 (800) 215-7494
FORCE – Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered	FORCE is the only national nonprofit organization devoted to hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Our mission includes support, education, advocacy, awareness, and research specific to hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Our programs serve anyone with a BRCA mutation or a family history of cancer. If you believe that breast or ovarian cancer runs in your family, you may want to contact a board-certified cancer genetic counselor, geneticist, or equally-qualified health care provider. These health care professionals can help determine your risk for hereditary cancer. Although they cannot tell you whether you will or won’t get cancer, these experts can calculate a statistical range of your risk for certain cancers.	www.facingourrisk.org toll-free helpline: 866-288-7475, ext 704

Breast Health Navigators

UPMC Hamot	The breast health navigation program provides education and emotional support for patients and family members and acts as a liaison between the patient and treatment. With guidance from the breast health navigators, patients can count on the timely delivery of diagnostics, treatment, and follow-up services, key components to successful recovery.	(814) 877-5395 www.hamotforwomen.org
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Treatment

Cancer is generally thought of as one disease; however, cancer is actually a general name for more than 100 diseases in which abnormal cells grow out of control. Conventional treatments for cancer include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, hormonal therapy, and surgery.

- Chemotherapy is the use of medications/drugs to treat the cancer. These are most commonly administered intravenously (through a vein), orally, and topically (directly applied on the skin's surface). There are other, less common, means of administration as well. The drugs used are determined by the type and stage of the cancer.
- Radiation therapy is the use of high energy rays to stop or slow the cancer from growing. Other terms for radiation are x-ray therapy, radiotherapy, brachytherapy, and irradiation.
- Certain cancers are fueled by hormones. Hormone therapy is the use of medications to block the cancer cells from the hormones that encourage cell growth.
- Surgery is the removal of the tumor and any associated tissue surrounding the tumor.

At times, a combination of therapies is used to treat the cancer. Different cancers are treated in different ways. Many factors are regarded in making a treatment decision. Your oncologist (physician specializing in cancer) should discuss all options and possible side-effects of each treatment.

Complementary Treatments

Complementary and alternative medicines (CAM), also known as Integrative Medicines, are healing practices that complement mainstream medicine, based on the holistic treatment of the disease. There are many different types of therapeutic disciplines, including but not limited to the following:

- Acupuncture/acupressure
- Aromatherapy
- Biofeedback
- Diet/Nutritional therapy
- Massage therapy
- Meditation
- Reiki
- Tai Chi
- Yoga

It is extremely important to become well informed regarding alternative treatments. Many nutritional supplements used in CAM can interact negatively with chemotherapy and radiation. However, stress reduction therapies, such as meditation, massage, and yoga can be safe and beneficial for cancer patients. More information about Complementary and Alternative Medicine is available at the NCI's Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine (OCCAM) website: <http://cam.cancer.gov/>. It is recommended you talk to your health care provider before beginning any complementary therapy.

Clinical Trials

Clinical trials, or investigational treatments, are taken place as part of a research study. The study follows a “protocol” or precise study plan for executing the clinical trial to assure the safety and health of the patient, or subject. Patients may benefit by receiving drugs/medications that are otherwise unavailable. To find out more about clinical trials or if they are right for you, you can talk to your oncologist or contact:

American Cancer Society	www.cancer.org	1(800)227-2345
National Cancer Institute	www.cancer.gov	1(800)4-CANCER

Financial Assistance for Medications, Medical Expenses and Equipment

Organization Name	Description	Contact Information
Erie County Assistance Office	Residents of Pennsylvania can seek assistance and a range of services for themselves and their families from professionally trained staff members at county assistance offices. You can also apply for and renew your benefits from the comfort of your home using COMPASS, the online resource for cash assistance, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help with child care, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP), school meals, SelectPlan for Women and long-term living services.	814-461-2000
NeedyMeds	NeedyMeds is a non-profit information resource devoted to helping people in need find assistance programs to help them afford their medications and costs related to health care.	www.needymeds.org
PACE, PACENET, and PACE Plus Medicare	PACE, PACENET and PACE plus Medicare are Pennsylvania's prescription assistance programs for older adults, offering low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents, age 65 and older.	1(800) 225-7223 http://www.aging.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pace_and_affordable_medications/17942
CancerCare Co-Payment Assistance Foundation	The CancerCare Co-Payment Assistance Foundation is a nonprofit organization that helps people being treated for cancer afford co-payments for chemotherapy and targeted treatment drugs, ensuring their access to care for prescribed treatments.	1 (866) 55-COPAY 1 (866) 552-6729 http://cancercarecopay.org

Organization Name	Description	Contact Information
Chronic Disease Fund	Chronic Disease Fund® is an independent non-profit charitable organization that helps patients with chronic disease, cancer and other life-altering conditions who have private insurance or a Medicare Part D plan but cannot afford the cost of their medications.	1 (877) 968-7233 http://www.cdfund.org
HealthWell Foundation	When health insurance is not enough, HealthWell fills the gap. We help patients living with chronic and life-altering illnesses pay their share of prescription drug copayments, deductibles, and health insurance premiums.	1 (800) 675-8416 http://www.healthwellfoundation.org/
Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation	PAN is an independent non-profit organization that provides assistance to underinsured patients for their out-of-pocket expenses for life-saving medications.	1 (866) 316- PANF 1 (866) 316-7263 http://www.panfoundation.org/
Rx Outreach	Rx Outreach is a non-profit charitable organization. Our focus is on supporting low-income individuals and families who cannot afford the medicine they need to sustain or improve their quality of life. We offer over 400 different medications through our mail-order pharmacy.	1 (800) 769-3880 http://www.rxoutreach.org/
Fertile Hope	Fertile Hope is a national LIVESTRONG initiative dedicated to providing reproductive information, support and hope to cancer patients and survivors whose medical treatments present the risk of infertility.	1 (855) 220-7777 http://www.fertilehope.org/
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Patient Financial Aid Program	The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) provides a limited amount of financial assistance to help patients with significant financial need and who are under a doctor's care for a confirmed blood cancer diagnosis. This program is supported entirely by public contributions and patient aid funds are subject to availability.	1 (800) 955-4572 www.lls.org/#/diseaseinformation/getinformationsupport/financialmatters/
Linked by Pink	Linked by Pink is a local non-profit that raises awareness and provides emotional and financial support for young breast cancer survivors. Medical Grants, College Scholarships and Gift Bags for patients are available.	www.linkedbypink.org 814-969-5957 email: info@linkedbypink.org
StringsforaCURE™	StringsforaCURE™ Foundation founder Elisa Guida is a professional jeweler and two-time breast cancer survivor. Our mission is to educate, comfort and support cancer patients, focusing on the breast cancer patient. Submit an application for gift cards for gas, groceries, prescription medications, or lymphedema supplies: gloves, sleeves, compression garments.	814-520-1563 www.stringsforacure.com
C.H.O.S.E.N.	CHOSEN provides medical equipment and supplies to those who cannot afford them. The supplies are available based on donation to CHOSEN.	814-833-3023 www.chosenmissionproject.com
Asbury Methodist Church Ramps of Hope	Any resident of Millcreek Township may call our church office (833-9053) to see if we can build a ramp for them. Erie County residents that live outside of Millcreek can call "Ramps of Hope" director Debbie Hills at (440) 812-4624	814-833-9053 http://asburyerie.org/590528.html
UPMC Hamot Patient Accounting	UPMC Hamot has a charity care policy available for those people meeting certain eligibility guidelines.	814-877-6146 http://www.upmchamot.org/about/patients_visitors/billing.php

Assistance: Food

Organization Name	Description	Contact Information
Angel Food Ministries	Provides groceries to patients at a minimal cost to the patient. The program has a monthly menu.	814-898-1999
Meals on Wheels	Our delivery area is the City of Erie and Millcreek Township. This area is from Lake Erie to I-90 and Asbury Road to Nagle Road. If you live outside these areas, we cannot deliver to you. Office hours are 8AM to 4PM Monday – Friday. Applying is simple and can be done right over the phone. A three-day per week minimum is required for all meal programs.	814-452-6930
GECAC Farmer's Market Nutrition Program	Through the Department of Agriculture, Erie County residents 60 years of age and older may be eligible to receive vouchers to purchase fruits and vegetables from Farmer's Market Stands. FMNP offers four \$5 vouchers to be utilized at any of the 52 local participant vendors. The program runs from June through September.	814-459-4581 ext. 400 http://www.gecac.org/programs-and-services/elderly-and-aging/farmers-market-nutrition-program
Second Harvest Food Bank	Complete list of local food pantries, operating hours, and requirements available on the website	814-459-3663 http://www.eriefoodbank.org/

Assistance: Legal

Organization Name	Description	Contact Information
Erie County Bar Association	The Erie County Bar Association (ECBA) is a non-profit, professional association of judges and lawyers. The ECBA strives to provide valuable services to both its membership and our community. At the Erie County Bar Association we offer many services to assist the public including the Lawyer Referral and Information Services (LRIS) , E-Law, an online resource to help you understand the basics of many different areas of the law, and our Speaker's Bureau.	814-459-3111 https://www.eriebar.com/public-home
Northwest Legal Services	Northwestern Legal Services (NWLS) is a private non-profit corporation dedicated to providing free legal representation to low income people with civil legal problems.	814-452-6957 http://www.nwls.org/

Home Healthcare:

There are numerous agencies that provide home care aides, respite care, companions, specialized home care, palliative care and hospice. You should speak with your physician and social worker to discuss which level of care is best for you. Some services are covered by insurance while others are not.

Homemaker & Chore Services:

Many organizations offer to help cancer patients and their families with tasks/activities of everyday living. Private duty aides are available through some home care agencies or contact your health care team for a specific referral.

- Community Resources for Independence (income based) 814-838-7222

Palliative Care: Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families at every stage of their illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems: physical, psychosocial and spiritual. Speak with your health care team for referrals and additional information.

Hospice Services: The overall aim of hospice care is to preserve the quality of life and provide patients with comfort and dignity when medical treatment is no longer helping. Hospice care involves a team-oriented approach to expert medical care, pain management, and emotional and spiritual support expressly tailored to the patient's needs and wishes. Support is provided to the patient's loved ones as well.

Hospice focuses on caring, not curing and, in most cases, care is provided in the patient's home. Hospice care also is provided in hospitals, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Hospice services are available to patients of any age, religion, race, or illness. Hospice care is covered under Medicare, Medicaid, most private insurance plans, HMOs, and other managed care organizations. Speak with your health care team for referrals and additional information.

Breast Prostheses & Accessories:

- MedCare (formerly Great Lakes Home Health Services) 814-877-6631
- Blackburn's 814-454-2863
- Green Prosthetics & Orthotics, LLC 814-833-2311
- PA Artificial Limb & Brace CO 814-868-5231
- Villa Medical Supply 814-866-1999

Medical Equipment: Medical equipment may be prescribed by your physician. Your medical team will refer you to an appropriate provider based on your individual needs.

Health Education:

- Erie County Department of Health 814-451-6700
 - Northwest PA Tobacco Control Program 814-451-6784
- LifeWorks Erie 814-453-8755
- The Regional Cancer Center 814-836-2643
- UPMC Hamot Health Connection 814-877-6145

Counseling Services/Crisis Hotline:

If you are interested in personal counseling, check with your medical team.

- Crisis Hotline: Safe Harbor Behavioral Health 814-456-2014

Support Groups:

General Support		
Thrivers	The Regional Cancer Center For those with advanced cancer, several types of cancer, cancer that can't be cured, or treatments that are no longer working.	Kyle Noyer 814-836-2678
Family/Caregiver Support	The Regional Cancer Center	Ann Marie Cronk 814-836-2618
Prayer & Sharing Cancer Support Group	St. Mark's Center 429 E. Grandview (Erie)	Deacon Tom Metuzak deacontom@ holytrinityrc.org 814-456-0671
Look Good, Feel Better	American Cancer Society Look Good Feel Better is a non-medical, brand-neutral public service program that teaches beauty techniques to cancer patients to help them manage the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment. Group programs are open to all women with cancer who are undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, or other forms of treatment. One-on-one programs are also available.	800-227-2345
Support for Children		
Children's Support Group (CLIMB)	The Regional Cancer Center	Ann Marie Cronk 814-836-2618
Rainbows	Catholic Charities Diocese of Erie Rainbows provides a bridge to emotional healing for youth and their families that are grieving a death, divorce, separation or any other painful transition in their family. It is a safe, loving environment for these young people to sort through their pain and confusion. There are four programs of support: 1. Rainbows - for children in the elementary grades 2. Spectrum - for adolescents who live in single-parent families or stepfamilies 3. Kaleidoscope - a 12-section peer support program for adults dealing with unresolved grief due to any type of parental loss. 4. Prism - support for single parents, step-parents and for parents whose children are in the Rainbows program.	814-824-1250 elandini@eriercd.org

Support for Breast Cancer		
Breast Cancer Support Group	The Regional Cancer Center	Diane Simon 814-838-2600
Linked by Pink Breast Cancer Support	Linked By Pink is a local non-profit that raises awareness and provides emotional and financial support for young breast cancer survivors. One-on-one and peer group support available.	814-969-5957 email: info@linkedbypink.org
Reach to Recovery	American Cancer Society For more than 40 years, the American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery program has helped people (female and male) cope with their breast cancer experience. Reach to Recovery volunteers provide support through face-to-face visits or by phone.	800-227-2345
Support for Prostate Cancer		
Man to Man Prostate Cancer Support	American Cancer Society	800-227-2345
Support Leukemia and Lymphoma		
First Connection (Leukemia/Lymphoma)		800-726-2873 x2882
Bereavement Support		
Bereavement Support Group	Great Lakes Hospice	814-877-6120
GriefShare	First Alliance Church	Elaine Davison 833-6435 hmin3@msn.com
	Girard Alliance Church	814-774-4657
	Living Waters Church GriefShare is a special seminar and support group for people grieving the loss of someone close.	814-333-6170
Bereavement Support Group	VNA Hospice	
Bereavement Support Group	Corry Regional Hospice Home Health	814-664-5911
Bereavement Support Group	Heartland Hospice	814-848-5990
Bereavement Support Group	Hospice of Metropolitan-Erie	814-456-6689

Transportation:

- American Cancer Society: Road to Recovery 814-866-5174
- EMTA 814-452-3515
- Veterans Affairs Medical Center 800-274-8387 ext. 2095

Hats/Headscarves/Wigs:

American Cancer Society Free wigs available	2115 West 38 th Street Erie, PA 16508	814-866-5174
thebeaubeau		www.4women.com
Chic Boutique	5638 Peach Street Millcreek Square Erie, PA 16506	814-864-7454 www.chic-wigs.com
Hats For You		www.hatsforyou.net
Headcovers Unlimited		www.headcovers.com
Heavenly Hats Provides new hats, free of charge		www.heavenlyhats.com
Patti Myers Hair Fashions	3865 Walker Blvd Erie, PA 16509	814-868-3094
The Regional Cancer Center “Mad danas” available for \$8		814-838-9000
Simply Scarves Home parties or one-on-one sessions		www.simply-scarves.com janetkassir@hotmail.com 814-464-7136
“tlc” Tender Loving Care Hair loss and mastectomy products. Profits reinvested in the American Cancer Society.		www.tlcdirect.org
Wig Fashions by Carrie	1914 East 38 th Street Erie, PA 16510	814-824-9447

This resource listing is a reference for patients, families and providers. It is an excerpt of the version maintained and updated by the Erie County Cancer Control Task Force which is a collaborative effort of:

- The Erie County Department of Health
- The American Cancer Society
- Corry Memorial Hospital
- Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
- UPMC Hamot
- The Regional Cancer Center
- Saint Vincent Health Center
- United Healthcare
- LECOM

Updated: February, 2013

