Things to Know

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There are many things to learn about a cancer diagnosis. In this section, you and your family can learn about:

- How cancer is treated
- How to find a cancer specialist
- How to anticipate problems before they occur
- How to find support
- How to stay well during treatment

Finding a cancer specialist and treatment center

One of the first things to do is to find a cancer doctor. Your current doctor or nurse will help you and your parents find a pediatric oncologistâ€"a doctor who focuses on treating children and teenagers with cancerâ€"or a medical oncologist who specializes in adolescent and young adult oncology. Most often, teenagers with cancer should be treated at a specialized cancer center where medical oncologists and pediatric oncologists work together to plan treatment. Find acancer center [2] near you.

Learning the facts

Other teenagers with cancer say that learning about cancer and knowing what to expect during treatment helped them feel more in control and less anxious. Here are some ways to find cancer information:

- Use the Internetâ€"there are many sites about cancer, including some written just for teenagers. Just remember that not everything you read on the Internet is reliable and up-to-date. Ask your doctor or nurse to recommend some good websites orfind other resources for teens with cancer [3].
- Ask your doctor to give you information written for patients.
- Get in touch with support groups of other teenagers who are going through or have recovered from the same cancer as you.
- Go to a public library and ask the librarian to help you find information about your type of cancer.
- Speak up during your doctor's appointments andask questions [4]. Becoming involved in your care helps you feel in control of the situation. Talk about the cancer and treatment with your parents and doctor so you can fully understand.

There is a lot of information available about cancer, so don't feel like you have to read everything right away. Talk about the information you find on the Internet with your doctor.

A treatment plan

Your oncologist will work with you and your parents to come up with a plan for how to treat your cancer, including the types of treatment you will have and how long treatment may last. Being prepared and knowing what to expect is an important step in the treatment planning process. Learn more aboutcancer treatments [5].

Finding a clinical trial

Many teens who have cancer are treated as part of a clinical trial, which is a way to test a new treatment to prove that it is safe, effective, and possibly better than a standard treatment. People who participate in clinical trials are among the first to receive new treatments before they are widely available. However, there is no guarantee that the new treatment will be safe, effective, or better than a standard treatment.

Clinical trials have already helped doctors find effective treatments for many types of cancer that are common for teens. Ask your doctor or nurse to find out if there are clinical trials for you. If they don't know, checkwww.clinicaltrials.gov [6], or call a member of the Children's Oncology Group (www.curesearch.org [7]) who can help you find the closest member. Learn more aboutclinical trials [8].

Ask for help

Coping with cancer can be tough sometimes. Your parents, friends, and other teenagers with cancer can provide important sources of support. Many teenagers and their families also find that speaking to a therapist or counselor trained to help teens with cancer to be very helpful. Learn more about finding help and support

[9].

More Information

Finding a Treatment Facility [10]

Cancer in Teens [11]

Additional Resources

Teens Living With Cancer: Your Treatment Plan [12]

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[2] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Publications+and+Resources/Support+and+Resource+Links/General+Cancer+Organizations+and+Resources/Cancer+Centers+and+Cooperative+Groups
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/25142
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/25150
[5] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Coping/Age-Specific+Information/Cancer+in+Teens/Treatment+Information
[6] http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/
[7] http://www.curesearch.org/
[8] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Coping/Age-Specific+Information/Cancer+in+Teens/Treatment+Information/Clinical+Trials/Clinical+Trials
[9] http://www.cancer.net/node/25149
[10] http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Treatments%2C+Tests%2C+and+Procedures/Finding+a+Treatment+Facility
[11] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Coping/Age-Specific+Information/Cancer+in+Teens
[12] http://www.teenslivingwithcancer.org/cancer-facts/treatment/your-treatment-plan/