

Where can you find help:

KK Women's and Children's Hospital has a Cancer Care team that provides comprehensive care to address the emotional distress in our patients with cancer. If you are adult women seen at KKH for cancer and would like to speak to a professional regarding your emotional distress, please call 6394 2205. To make an appointment, please call our Central Appointment at 6294 4050.



Nature – the sky represents heaven and water, life

The paintings are done by cancer patients during the heART - Art from the Heart sessions organised by Mental Wellness Service.

Useful telephone numbers

Central Appointments 6294 4050
KK Ask-A-Nurse Service 1900-KK-Nurse or
1900-556-8773 (chargeable at
\$0.80 per minute)

This brochure is supported by



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KK Women's and
Children's Hospital
SingHealth

Journey with Cancer



Mental
Wellness
Service

PATIENTS. AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO.



Journey with cancer is like walking on a long and uneven path but with determination, you will surely see the next spring filled with blossoming flowers

After you are diagnosed with cancer, you may feel shock, disbelief, numbness, anger, fear, anxiety, guilt, grief and sadness. Each person may have some or all of these feelings, and each will deal with them in a different way.

When you find out you have cancer, your personal beliefs and experiences can help you figure out what the diagnosis means to you and how you will handle it. Accepting the diagnosis and figuring out how cancer fits into your life is challenging, and especially as you face your own mortality and cope with the many demands of cancer. You may find it helpful to look more closely at your personal and family values, your spiritual beliefs, and what's most important in your life.

Cancer is a complex disease. There is often a great fear of the unknown and uncertainty about what is going to happen. Knowledge can help lessen your fear of the unknown. You can learn a lot about the type of cancer you have, its treatment, and your chances for recovery.

These tips can help you make your medical appointments as useful as possible:

- Make a list of questions to ask your health care team.
- Bring a family member or friend along to appointments. They can help you remember things later, as well as to give you support.
- Take notes. There may be lots of information given to you.
- Ask your health care team to explain anything you don't understand.

It's important to work through your feelings about cancer, because how you feel can affect how you look at yourself, how you view life, and what decisions you make about treatment.

You will not be able to change many things in your life. Focus on what you can change to make the best of your situation.

■ Things you can do to cope better:

- Ask for support from family, friends, and others. Just having someone who cares and will listen to you can be very helpful. If friends or family members are not able to be supportive, find others who will. Health care professionals (such as social workers, psychologists, or other licensed health professionals) and support groups can be extra sources of support.
- Get spiritual support through prayer, meditation, or other practices that help you feel more at peace.
- Pay attention to your physical needs for rest, nutrition, and other self-care measures.

- Find ways to express your feelings. Some find keeping a journal helpful, others cope with their emotions through artist expression such as painting, music, dance, photography.
- Allow yourself private time and space.
- Take walks or exercise. It is a good idea to talk with your health care team about activities suitable for you.
- Make changes at home to create a healthier environment, and/or talk with your doctor about making healthy lifestyle choices.
- Find out what helped other patients and families cope with cancer.



Cats night out

■ When do you need special attention:

Feeling sad all the time, having no interest in activities, having trouble sleeping, feeling hopeless, or thinking about suicide are signs that you need professional help. Other symptoms that may need treatment include feelings of panic, intense anxiety, or constant crying. If you think you might need professional help, talk with your doctor.