

[TRACK 3: RESOURCES]

Joan, Oncology Nurse: Part II

[Narrator]

Where else can you find good information? There are a large number of support systems and associations, both locally and nationwide. You don't have to go it alone. The Resource Booklet that accompanies your Toolbox lists valuable telephone numbers and credible websites. Also, some cities and regions have private cancer resource centers.

[Narrator]

The American Cancer Society, or ACS, answers questions about cancer and connects callers with resources in their community through their National Cancer Information Center. The ACS has many pamphlets and books on different cancers, as well as information on supportive care, and cookbooks that may be of interest to cancer survivors. Materials will be mailed to you at no charge. The ACS also has offices located in most medium-sized and big cities. The listing in the telephone book is under "A" for American Cancer Society. The ACS's toll-free telephone number—1-800-ACS-2345; that's 1-800-227-2345—connects callers with the National Cancer Information Center.

[Narrator]

The National Cancer Institute – or NCI -- through its Cancer Information Service provides access to many types of information resources. Of course, the NCI has many printed and online materials, ranging from simple, easy-to-read pamphlets to in-depth reviews -- called " Cancer Facts." -- covering different cancers, treatments, and supportive care. Cancer Facts are available in a form that is written just for cancer survivors. Summaries of many different cancer topics can also be found in PDQ[®] or Physicians Data Query. Summaries are written for both patients and for health-care professionals. You can get both forms. NCI's printed materials are widely available from treatment facilities, resource libraries, doctor's offices, and regional offices of the Cancer Information Service, and you can find them online at www.cancer.gov.

[Narrator]

The NCI's toll-free telephone number -- 1-800-4-C-A-N-C-E-R -- that's 1-800-422-6237 -- connects callers with the nearest office of the Cancer Information Service. Materials you ask for will be mailed to you at no charge. The toll-free number, 1-800-332-8615, allows those who are hearing impaired to access the Cancer Information Service.

[Narrator]

The Internet offers what seems like endless information -- from research articles, to treatment information, to emotional support. On the Internet, cancer survivors can get information from anywhere in the world, all with the touch of a few keys on a computer at home, or in public libraries, health-resource centers, or community centers. Trained librarians and information specialists can help you use the Internet if you don't already know how. The information available through the Internet is growing every day.

[Narrator]

A word of caution: There is a great deal of very good and helpful information available on the Internet. But, there is a lot of false information, too. The Internet reflects real life, and it is important to question your sources. Remember that the most reliable medical information will come from non-profit cancer organizations, research facilities, hospitals, libraries, and

government agencies. In addition, you may want to find the answers to the following questions when evaluating whether or not the information provided by a particular website is trustworthy:

Who runs or sponsors the website? For example, a website with dot gov at the end identifies a government agency, dot edu indicates an educational institution, and dot org is often used for a professional organization.

Is it clear how you can contact the owner of the website? If the person or organization is willing to be contacted, they are more likely to have credible information.

Who wrote the information? The authors should be clearly identified.

Who reviews the information? The “About Us” section of the website may identify the editorial board.

When was the information written? If the information is old, it may be outdated.

Does the website make claims that seem too good to be true? Take the “too good to be true” test—information that sounds unbelievable probably is unbelievable.

[Narrator]

For cancer survivors who do not or cannot use the Internet, it is recommended that they ask a friend with Internet access to help out. When it comes to information about medical treatment, anything that is more than two or three years old is likely to be out of date. Even with information that has been published within the last two or three years, you have to find out if this information is still current today.

[Joan]

I always remind cancer survivors I work with that there’s a lot of good information, and a lot of questionable information out there. It’s up to you to question how good and reliable the information is, and figure out how much to trust it. To determine the value of a book or magazine article, look at the author’s credentials. Does the author seem to be respected among cancer care professionals? Has the book been reviewed by experts or professional groups? Does the book or article tell you its source of information? Are there conflicts of interest in the publication or sales of the book or magazine?

[Narrator]

You will hear about famous people with cancer and how they learned facts about cancer and cancer treatments. As someone who is not famous or in a special position, you may worry that you will not be able to find out all the facts. This is not true. Everyone can find the information they need. If you don’t know where to begin to look or if you are not sure you can do it yourself, you probably do have friends or relatives who can help find information. You might find it helpful to hear how other people with cancer have found and used information. Let’s listen now to three cancer survivors who have used their skills to look for information. Our first is Antonio, who is 60 years old, was born in Puerto Rico, and now lives in New York City.