

[TRACK 6: CONCLUSION]

Conclusion

[Narrator]

Think about the information and stories you have just heard. When you start to look for your own information, think about how to determine how factual and accurate it is. Make a list of the people you know in your community who would be good sources of cancer-related information.

[Narrator]

One simple telephone call to the right person – a doctor, social worker, nurse, librarian, health educator, or pharmacist who specializes in cancer or to an experienced cancer survivor -- can quickly lead you to helpful sources of information. Local resources combined with the information such as Antonio, Lloyd, and Gloria found through the Internet and telephone calls to health-care professionals and national organizations gave these survivors the knowledge they needed to begin to cope with the challenges brought by cancer.

[Narrator]

In summary, every person, regardless of what kind of cancer they have or what kind of treatment they choose needs certain, basic information. Every person affected by cancer should take these specific steps:

- Take the time to get the information you need: You will need solid information on the best drugs, and doctors and clinics with the best records for success in cancer treatment.
- Put Together the Best Team: You can help pick the experts to be part of your health-care team. Call on other cancer survivors, nurses, social workers and other health-care professionals to be part of the team.
- Pick people you respect and trust, and who will treat you as a part of the whole team.
- Get a Second Opinion: Good doctors welcome second opinions. When you are faced with more than one treatment option, it is good to ask for another viewpoint.
- Look for What's New: There may be openings for cancer survivors willing to try promising new treatments in one of hundreds of clinical trials.
- Don't Go It Alone: Helpful friends, other cancer survivors, and support groups can make the tough times easier.
- Read the Fine Print: Ask questions and study your insurer's benefits handbook so that you will know what is covered and what is not. Find out about the limits or "caps" of your insurance and work with the health-care team to use your insurance funds wisely.
- Keep Your Care on Track: Records are the key to keeping track of all the information you are collecting, including the information about your treatment and plan of care.
- You may also want to listen to the Cancer Survival Toolbox program entitled "First Steps for the Newly Diagnosed" for tips on all of these issues.

[Narrator]

Your knowledge about your cancer, and how you use this knowledge, can make a difference in how well you live with your cancer, and even how long you live. The decisions that you will make about your plan of care are just too important to let someone else decide for you. Knowledge is the most powerful tool you can have in your own personal Cancer Survival Toolbox. Remember, your best advocate is you.

[Narrator]

As a final note, please refer to the booklet that came with the Cancer Survival Toolbox for a list of nationwide resources specifically for cancer survivors. Some organizations that you may want to contact are:

- The National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, which has free booklets on remaining hopeful after a cancer diagnosis, advocating for yourself and others, working with your health care team to make sure your needs are met, navigating insurance issues, and understanding your employment rights. NCCS can also provide you with information on cancer survivorship issues. The NCCS number is 1-888-650-9127, or visit www.canceradvocacy.org; www.c.a.n.c.e.r.a.d.v.o.c.a.c.y.org.
- The National Cancer Institute, at 1-800-4-CANCER, which is 1-800-422-6237.
- The American Cancer Society, at 1-800-227-2345

This is the end of the Cancer Survival Toolbox program entitled "Finding Information." You may also want to listen to other Toolbox programs such as "Making Decisions," "Topics for Older Persons," and "First Steps for the Newly Diagnosed."