

More Information

Breast cancer is the most feared cancer among women.

Newly diagnosed woman may face fears as they go through stages of acceptance—from denial to anger to grief.

Women sometimes are unsure about their treatment choices; after treatment, they may also be afraid that their breast cancer might return.

This brochure offers 10 suggestions to help you face fears on your breast cancer journey.



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SISTA AH Circle *Fear*



SISTA AH Talk!

Women of Color Breast Cancer Support Group



10 Ways for Manage your Breast Cancer Fears

Decide what you can handle: Realize that for most women, breast cancer is scary. Acknowledge your fear. But, don't let your diagnosis blindsides you. Check your emotions--anxiety and depression add to fear. The first step is to think about what you can handle--and what is beyond your reach.

Protect yourself: Stay away from negative people, negative talk, and negative news.

Limit stress: Life goes on, even with a breast cancer diagnosis. Financial concerns, work issues, family matters, etc., do not stop because of cancer. Try listening to music, relaxing, meditating, praying, or exercising as a way to keep clear your mind.

Build trust: Developing a good relationship with your health care team--oncologist, nurse, radiologist, surgeon--will go a long way to reduce fears about your treatment. This will take time, but a good place to start is to have a one-on-one conversation with each member of your team.

Understand what to expect: Most women fear breast cancer treatment side-effects. It is important to learn what could happen as a result of your treatment. Even those this news can be overwhelming, it will empower you to adapt to whats ahead.

Ask the experts: Seek information from credible sources.

Learn to navigate the healthcare system: Managing appointments for tests, treatment, and following is often daunting. Here are a few tips that may help:

-Learn addresses, office locations, parking availability, and other need-to-know information prior to your appointments.

-Discuss what to expect at each appointment with the referring physician.

-Bring someone with you for your first appointments--at least until you feel comfortable.

Stay healthy: A poor diet and sedentary behavior will not help you cope with breast cancer treatment side effects. To reduce fear (and anxiety), eat well, exercise, and reduce stress.

Get support: It helps to talk with other people who have been through what you are going through. A women who has completed breast cancer treatment is the best support for overcoming the fear of breast cancer. Consider joining a support group like SISTAAH Talk! (www.sistaahtalk.net).

Face your fears: Take a deep breath. Make a mental note, use a pen and paper, or say out loud what you fear. Evaluate each item based on what you can and cannot change. Seek help--pastoral counseling, support group facilitaton, or guidance from a trusted friend--as needed.

