



#### REFERENCES:

This information was summarized or adapted from:  
National Cancer Institute. Adjustment to Cancer:  
Anxiety and Distress (PDQ®). 2015.

City of Hope Patient SupportScreen education materials for Couples Clinic:  
What do I need to know about feeling anxious or fearful?

Department of Supportive Care Medicine  
Patient, Family and Community Education

"DEPRESSION WEB CONTENT-HL-EW.DOCX" CHECKED BY HEALTH LITERACY ADVISOR (BUILD 6152) 2017



CityofHope.org

20000.N.11175.FL

# LIFE AFTER CANCER: ANXIETY

It is normal to feel emotionally drained when dealing with a serious illness like cancer. Cancer and its treatment can cause both physical and emotional changes that can last long after active treatment has ended.

Anxiety is a common symptom that people feel after treatment is over. There are many unknowns about the future. Often, coming back to your treatment center for follow-up care or testing can also cause stress and anxiety.

**If this sounds like you, please read inside.**



## WHILE ANXIETY IS NOT THE SAME AS STRESS, YOU CAN OFTEN FEEL SOME OF THE SAME SYMPTOMS:

- Feeling dizzy, drowsy and tired
- Having trouble sleeping
- Heart palpitations/racing heart
- Muscle aches
- Feeling irritable, impatient
- Nausea/sick to stomach
- Diarrhea
- Headaches
- Trouble focusing
- Restlessness
- Easily distracted
- Depression

## TAKE ACTION!

- **If you have any of the symptoms listed above, talk to your health care team.** Plan to meet with your doctor or nurse practitioner and discuss how you have been feeling and ask for resources to help with dealing with anxiety.
- Answer the questions in the “Am I Anxious?” dialogue box.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Find support and supportive care services such as: spiritual care, social workers, psychologist, psychiatrists or support groups.
- If possible, identify situations that may make you feel worse and try to prepare for them.
- Try relaxation techniques like deep breathing or guided meditations before these stressful events to help you cope.
- **BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE.** Exercise can help reduce anxiety and stress and improve sleep.

### AM I ANXIOUS?

- Do you have repeating thoughts that interrupt you daily?
- Are you on edge most of the time?
- Do you have difficulty breathing when you are stressed?
- Do you find it difficult to relax?
- Do you feel your heart pounding when you are under stress?

**If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, talk with your health care team about these feelings.**

- Many people find it helpful when they meet others who have gone through cancer. Some online support groups include:
  - ABCD Breast Cancer Support **800-977-4121**  
abcdbreastcancersupport.org
  - Imerman Angels  
One-on-one cancer support **866-IMERMAN (463-7626)**  
imermanangels.org

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT CITY OF HOPE

Talk with your survivorship health care team about your concerns. Your doctor may also want to refer you to additional support services such as psychiatry and psychology.

Talking with a social worker may also help. You can reach a social worker by calling the Division of Clinical Social Work at **626-256-4673, ext. 82282.**

See also, *How to Get Mental Health* information sheet. It will help you with finding a mental health professional who accepts your health insurance, Medi-Cal or Medicare, to help treat you in your community.

You may also find helpful information, education and support at the *Sheri & Les Biller Patient and Family Resource Center*. Programs such as support groups, education classes, music therapy, art therapy and more may help you to deal with your feelings.

## SOME SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS THAT MAY HELP WITH DEPRESSION:

- Yoga
- Massage
- Support Groups
- Mindful Meditation
- Tai Chi
- Guided Meditation Videos

Visit the Supportive Services events calendar for class descriptions, dates and to reserve your spot.

The Biller Patient and Family Resource Center is located on the Duarte campus in the Main Medical building behind the Guest Services desk or you may call **626-218-CARE (2273).**