Everything Else

Patient-centered care seeks the best outcome with the least disruption to your quality of life

December 13, 2021 By Bob Barnett

A cancer diagnosis focuses the mind. What matters most now is treatment. Work with your medical team to identify the most effective plan to send your cancer packing, and then get through it as best you can. Everything else can wait.

But everything else, of course, won't wait. Everything else is your life: your physical and emotional health, your family and friends, your ability to do what you need to do and want to do, your financial stability, your sense of self.

That's why patient-centered care seeks the best outcome with the least disruption to your quality of life. It's not either/or—in some cases, the most effective treatments may be the least disruptive. "Beyond Chemotherapy" explores how a new generation of precision cancer medicine, including immunotherapy and targeted therapies, may be easier to tolerate than traditional treatment. Discover more advances in Care & Treatment and News.

How will you build resiliency? Each of us is unique. Giancarlo Oviedo, 29, our cover subject, diagnosed with lung cancer at age 17, finds strength in family, faith and love. Deltra James, who has five children and metastatic breast cancer, gets stronger by giving back. Doreen Zetterlund is mastering the science of her cancer—with inspiration from Shakespeare. Siri Lindley is recovering from leukemia with the love of her wife and the gentle power of her horse.

To protect your whole self, you'll need a plan (see "Just Diagnosed? Start Here"). By all means, let it include self-care (Good Stuff). And don't neglect your finances; see Resources and Solutions ("Get Paid When You Can't Work"). Need to talk with someone about the challenges you're facing? Don't forget about chaplaincy (Your Team).

How has cancer affected your quality of life? Let us know by taking our Reader Survey.

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