



Newsletter

Newsletter
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CCS is a nonprofit, community-funded cancer resource center that provides current and reliable information, education, and direct-support services to cancer patients and their families who reside in Bonner and Boundary counties of North Idaho.

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Embodying cancer

*By Maria Alberg,
Yoga teacher*

When we hear our physician mention cancer, our minds and bodies react at and below the threshold of the conscious mind. We each respond emotionally in a unique way, including in our bodies.

The protocols for treating cancer have increased the likelihood of survival, but they still affect our experience. Treatments change with new research discoveries, yet as physicians try to refine and target treatment for all cancers, we're often treated systematically no matter what form we have.

Every cancer client

experiences different levels of pain and/or discomfort, nausea and lack of appetite, and effects of surgery and radiation. We try to cope by living "normally." But in my work, discussions, and study with cancer clients, I've recognized that there is no "normal" as before cancer. "Normal" changes on a daily basis.

It's hard to maintain an even keel, and when we're unable to express emotions in a healthy way, we can feel angry, depressed, frustrated, fearful, and lonely. Our bodies reflect our symptoms and emotions in our posture, gestures, and movements. We may not notice how often we clench our hands, grip



with our toes, or hold our stomachs, chests, or shoulders tightly. It's not uncommon to find ourselves curled up in the prenatal position, a very protective posture.

Our bodies provide important clues and information. These can lead us to friends and therapists who can help us heal and recover from the multiple changes we face throughout the cancer process.

Browse or borrow books at "Laney's Library"

*By Brittany Rhyne,
Administrative Assistant*

What do you really know about your diagnosis?

Here at CCS, we have books on cancer that address every aspect of your diagnosis. Having a hard time finding foods that

tempt your appetite?

Laney's Library has cookbooks for all types of cravings or lack thereof. Perhaps you're concerned about how to explain your diagnosis to your children and loved ones? We have a book on that, too.

In our collection for

perusal or checkout are over 150 books, including inspirational stories from fellow cancer patients.

Please come in and pour yourself a cup of tea or coffee, snuggle up on one of our couches, and lose yourself in Laney's Library.



Stephanie Moss,
Certified Nursing
Assistant and
Program Director

Keep weight on during treatment

Keeping weight on while going through cancer treatment is difficult for many. You may find yourself lacking an appetite, food might taste bland, and its overall smell might make you green in the face.

During this time, it's important to keep track of your calorie intake. Many clients come in and ask how to keep weight on while they're having a hard time keeping food down. Not eating enough

can lead to drastic weight loss and even malnutrition. Cancer patients who lose weight typically develop serious nutritional problems that compromise their immunity and chances for survival.

If you find one particular food item or dish that you just crave, go for it! Some doctors may have you on a special diet for other pre-existing conditions, so make sure the dish you crave doesn't

conflict. For example, if you're a diabetic and you crave something sugary, rethink before indulging.

CCS offers different flavors of Ensure, a nutritional liquid supplement, and has cookbooks (see story on Page 1) for use by those undergoing treatment. Drinking Ensure is a great way to add calories and nutrients when you don't feel like eating.

We hope the tips below are helpful, too.

**10 ways to
include calorie-
dense foods in
your diet**

- ◆ Eat small servings frequently. Try to eat least five to six small meals daily.
- ◆ Always have high-calorie, ready-to-serve snacks on hand: cheese sticks, hard-boiled eggs, ice cream, yogurt, and canned pudding.
- ◆ Add butter or margarine, mayonnaise, and jam to toast, sandwiches, bagels, or muffins.
- ◆ Add salad dressings or mayonnaise to salads.
- ◆ Cook with vegetable oils.
- ◆ Add sour cream to baked potatoes and butter or margarine to mashed potatoes. Have cream-based soup instead of clear broth.
- ◆ Sprinkle extra cheese on favorite pasta dishes and pizza.
- ◆ Drink whole or 2% milk instead of skim milk.
- ◆ Prepare a home-made milkshake or try commercial nutritional liquid supplements such as Ensure Plus and Boost Plus.

Looking good and feeling better

By Helen Tapp,
Esthetician

CCS has teamed up with the American Cancer Society's Personal Care Products Council Foundation and the National Cosmetology Association to bring a wonderful program to its clients.

The Look Good/Feel Better program is designed to help women undergoing cancer treatments such as radiation, chemotherapy, surgeries, and repeat biopsies. These treatments all take their toll on the patient's appearance, making it seem impossible to them

to put their best face forward.

The *free* program consists of a two-hour class, taught by trained volunteer cosmetologist or estheticians who help women experiencing appearance-related side effects from cancer treatments and pro-

(Continued on page 4)



Anger management for patients and families

Bambi Lassen, Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Talking about anger is taboo to many in our culture; some think anger is not an appropriate feeling to experience, while others express anger inappropriately because they haven't been taught how to use it for improving relationships or relieving stress.

Anger is a protective feeling, a reaction to a situation that causes discomfort or disagreement. It can be appropriate, and what's key are the choices we make about how to deal with it.

Cancer patients may feel angry when they learn they have a cancer diagnosis, about the time they have to take off work for treatment, the disease's side effects, or a loss of physical abilities.

Family members may feel angry because they cannot make the cancer go away, or they may think

about choices their loved one made that may have caused the cancer.

Everyone experiences anger, and often we don't know how to manage it. Anger is a cycle: Something happens to make us angry, a so-called "invitation to anger." We can react to the invitation

You can't solve problems when you're angry because the brain is working in reptilian, or "fight or flight," mode.

or take a break to calm down. People who aren't educated in how to manage their anger will usually react and engage in an inappropriate way, and the problem will usually get worse.

You can't solve problems when angry because the brain is working in reptilian, or "fight or

flight," mode. One consequence of engaging when angry is guilt about acting in an unintentional way. The trick is to take a break before the problem gets worse, calm down, and then process a way to solve the problem.

We all experience early warning signs in our bodies before we feel anger: a tightening of the fists, jaw, throat, or head; a reddening of the face; a faster heartbeat; or a desire to stomp the feet. These physical signs are telling us to take a break before a problem gets out of hand. You can say, "I'm feeling angry now, and I need to take a break."

As your body calms down, process the problem and solve it with your loved one or doctor. Remember, anger can improve your relationships and decrease stress if you pay attention to your physical warning signs.



We all experience early warning signs in our bodies before we feel anger.

Client's corner: Life after cancer

By Barbara Clapp

Let's face it, cancer stinks! I'm a victim of cancer: I didn't choose cancer, it chose me.

What I lost to cancer: my health, self-esteem, breasts, and hair,

plus my home, my marriage, and my retirement.

What I gained: great strength, wisdom, my new cancer family, great love and support from my family as well as old and new friends, a brighter and more exciting outlook,

purpose, and much more.

What I don't want: pity from anyone, and to be called a "survivor." I plan to die some day of something other than the "Big C," and to me, "survivor" is not the cor-

(Continued on page 4)

**Community Cancer Services
Serving Bonner and Boundary
Counties since 2002**

1215 Michigan St., Suite B
Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

Office hours
Monday 9-3, Tuesday 9-3,
Wednesday 8-2, Thursday 9-3

communitycancerservices.org

Home of "Heather's House"

Become a friend of "Heather's House" and make a difference in local cancer patients' lives today. CCS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and your donations are tax-deductible.



A personal need in our community for support for family, friends, and neighbors affected by cancer prompted outdoor skiing enthusiast Heather Gibson and her friend, local nurse practitioner Cynthia Dalsing, to create Community Cancer Services in 2002.

Heather passed away in August 2006 after an eight-year battle with cancer. Her memory lives on in CCS and in the hearts of friends and family who knew her.

You can become a "Friend of Heather's House" by making a donation or getting involved as a volunteer. Business and personal sponsorships are available.

Please call the Community Cancer Services office during office hours at 255-2301, or visit our website at www.communitycancerservices.org.

Looking good, feeling better: Workshop offers tips, support

(Continued from page 2)

cedures. Each woman receives a complimentary kit full of beauty products to take home. In these classes, patients find support and friendship in a positive and uplifting setting.

These classes are conducted

several times a year at Community Cancer Services. Registration is required. For more information and a schedule of when "Looking Good, Feeling Better" will be held over the next many months, talk to a Community Cancer Services staff person today, and get started on

your way to looking good and feeling better.

It's a small step that could make a big difference in how you look at yourself and the world during your cancer treatment — and beyond.

Life after cancer: It's your choice how to face the future

(Continued from page 2)

rect word for my journey. I prefer the word "normal," where my reality is just that — *my* reality.

Today I'm more focused, brighter, clearer about my needs, and I'm aware of others' needs. I look forward to each day with a smile.

I just can't wait for my next birthday. It's like I was given a

second chance, and I'm embracing it with all my might. All the rest is just fluff.

Yes, I still have challenges — for starters, the drugs, doctor's appointments, and questions that are still part of it all. This is now a part of my normal life. But whether it's raining or not, it's a beautiful day for me.

My advice to anyone going

down this path: Smile, move forward, reclaim yourself with love in your heart. No more fear. Have a sweet life. May love, joy, and peace find its way to you in your journey.

The greatest power you have is the power to choose. It's your choice how you are going to live after cancer.