



REDUCING STRESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is upon us. All the cooking, and the shopping and the parties. Families and friends to see. So many details! It can be a wonderful time of year, but also one, regardless of how much we anticipate and enjoy the festivities, which can cause stress, especially for the cancer patient. The days between Thanksgiving and New Year's don't have to be pressure-filled, though. In fact, by putting into action some of the following strategies, cancer patients can alleviate some of the tension and still keep the door open for celebrating during the season.

Stress and fatigue are taxing and counterproductive to healing. Evaluate your to do list. Where possible, eliminate things that are stressful, or that leave you without adequate time to rest. Do you really have to reorganize the ornaments this year? Perhaps waiting until treatment is over before tackling all those boxes in the basement will lighten the load and give you extra time to relax.

Prioritizing is key with holiday festivities, especially when there are multiple doctor's appointments to keep, along with work and family responsibilities. To minimize stress and fatigue, choose what's important where holiday events and details are concerned and forget the rest. It's really okay NOT to do everything. Even more okay? Say no! Take care of yourself and save your energy for the events and activities that matter the most to you.

Also, don't attend events that are draining. Choose gatherings that are uplifting and energizing, and remember to make sure members of your support network attend events with you. It's also helpful to set limits. Decide how long you'll stay at a particular party; moreover, if you're at a party and beginning to feel weary, listen to your body and head home, rather than wearing yourself out.

Consider your family's traditions. Which ones are the most meaningful, the most stressful or the most fatiguing? Again, prioritize and keep the ones that matter most - perhaps the top three - and let the rest go this year. If you've always been the host for a particular family or friend gathering, consider starting a new tradition and change up the routine by inviting someone else to take the reins, or by moving the party to a different location.

Holidays can add extra financial burdens to families. As a strategy to reduce stress, and to experiment with a new tradition, consider drawing names with families for gift giving, or consider giving cards, or pooling money and making a family contribution to a charity. Some families find that trying something new invigorates the holidays not only to the cancer patient, but the rest of the family, as well.

If gift giving is your thing, consider creative ways to make shopping less tiresome. Catalogs and online shopping make gift purchasing much easier, leaving you with time to rest and keep clear of crowded shopping areas.

If you find you have taken on too much over the holidays, or begin to feel stressed and in need of additional support, support group meetings at our center are a great way to share your challenges and learn new ideas from others facing similar struggles. Sometimes hearing from another cancer patient who shares the same common ground can give you a fresh approach to overcoming challenges.

And finally, remember that your patient guide is a great resource and can work with you and your family members to help develop an action plan to help make this holiday season right for you.



RECIPE CORNER QUICK CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS



Try this yummy soup from *Eating Well Through Cancer*, by Holly Clegg, for an easy, nutritious meal, perfect now that the weather is cooler. The flour tortillas are a great trick to use for no-trouble dumplings and will enhance the chicken soup. This recipe makes 8 to 10 servings. (Go to www.hollyclegg.com for more information about this cookbook and author).

Ingredients

- 5 1/4 cups canned fat-free chicken broth
- 5 1/4 cups water
- 1 1/2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into pieces
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 10 (6-inch) flour tortillas

Directions

Pour the chicken broth and water into a large pot. Add the chicken pieces, carrots and salt and pepper to taste. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and continue to cook for 25 minutes, or until chicken is done and carrots are tender. Cut the tortillas into small wedges. Add the cut up tortillas to the pot and stir. Continue to cook until the tortillas are tender, about 5 minutes. If you need more liquid in pot, add more broth or water.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories 178 Protein (g) 20, Carbohydrate (g) 15, Fat (g) 4, Calories from fat (%) 20, Saturated Fat (g) 0, Dietary Fiber (g) 0, Cholesterol (mg) 40, Sodium (mg) 598, Diabetic Exchanges: 2 very lean meat, 1 starch

PATIENT GUIDE'S CORNER

Editor's Note: It means so much for patients to share their stories with us. The following note is from a patient (who has since passed away) describing to friends and family how his patient guide made a difference in his cancer journey:

In April of 2010, I went to the local doctor's office for a simple cough that was getting old. I had been coughing for almost 3 months. In May, I was diagnosed with Stage 4, terminal non-small cell lung cancer. A small amount has also traveled to my kidneys and brain. The fix will be to use radiation a total of 31 times on my lung...and the kidneys and brain will be treated...5 times each. After the radiation treatments are completed, they will do a PET scan to see how much cancer is left and determine how much chemo to use to help treat the balance.

Although the facility, staff, nurses, techs and doctors seem to all be amazing people, I would have to say that my patient guide, Meaghan Hennings, has made the impossible happen. She has helped me with all my questions and has lead me in the right direction on who to contact with different matters that arise and has become my main point of contact for anything I need help with.

--Trace Mason

"MY PATIENT GUIDE HAS BEEN MY TREE TO LEAN ON WITH ROOTS THAT SEEM TO FIND ENDLESS SOURCES OF ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS."

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DECEMBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				BENEFIT SUPER SALE 1 9AM - 4PM MASSAGE THERAPY 11AM - 2PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM	BENEFIT SUPER SALE 2 9AM - 4PM MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM	3
4	ROCK SPRINGS SUPPORT GROUP @ 1124 COLLEGE DR. 5:30PM - 6:30PM 5	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM GROUP ACCUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM 6	SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM ANGELS CHRISTMAS TEA 1PM - 3PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM 7	MASSAGE THERAPY 11AM - 2PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM 8	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM 9	10
11	ACS LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER 10AM ROCK SPRINGS SUPPORT GROUP @ 1124 COLLEGE DR. 5:30PM - 6:30PM 12	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM GROUP ACCUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM HOLIDAY ART THERAPY WORKSHOP 1PM - 2PM 13	SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM 14	MASSAGE THERAPY 11AM - 2PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM 15	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM 16	17
18	ROCK SPRINGS SUPPORT GROUP @ 1124 COLLEGE DR. 5:30PM - 6:30PM 19	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM GROUP ACCUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM 20	SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM 21	MASSAGE THERAPY 11AM - 2PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM 22	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM 23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE
25 CHRISTMAS	CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY 26	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM GROUP ACCUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM 27	SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM 28	MASSAGE THERAPY 11AM - 2PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM 29	MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM 30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE

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6501 E. 2nd St • Casper, WY 82609
Phone 307-235-5433 • Fax 307-233-4700

15 Shrine Club Road • Lander, WY 82520
Phone 307-332-0324 • Fax 307-332-0382