

# CareGivers4Cancer

*Battling cancer together*

## Ten Tips for Working with Your Medical Team

### How to deal with the medical team

- 1 Get involved.** Begin asking questions, questions, questions of the medical team. Do not leave the examining room until you have understood what the doctor has discussed.
- 2 Listen to your intuition.** Usually, you are 99% on target. You know your patient better than any doctor; become in tune with your loved one.
- 3 Make a list of medications.** Every time you go to a doctor's appointment, take this list and leave it with them. This is so critical and helpful to each doctor. Each doctor may prescribe a new medication or delete a drug, so this is a must in keeping everyone informed.
- 4 Take notes or record the doctor's session.** Be ready for your doctor's appointment; have questions ready. There will be times the doctor will have a lot of time to spend with you, but there will be days when his time will be limited.
- 5 Become knowledgeable.** Research the Internet. Knowledge is power, and there are many different resources. Talk to other people and the nurses; do your homework.
- 6 Get a calendar.** Write down every appointment. Do not schedule more than 2 per week including treatments. It is too hard on both of you to do more in one week.
- 7 Secure telephone numbers.** Know how to reach your doctor during office hours and after hours. Keep doctor telephone numbers close to the phone at all times. Keep those emergency phone numbers handy at all times, even in the car. Know your pharmacy number as well.
- 8 Do your homework before calling the doctor with a challenge.** Before you call the doctor, take the patient's temperature, blood pressure, and heart beat so you can talk to the nurse intelligently. Keep the list of medications handy.
- 9 You have options...learn them.** Know your loved one's medical options: chemotherapy, radiation, both, oral chemo, or surgery as an alternative
- 10 Keep a positive attitude.** "The glass is half full or it is half empty", depending on your attitude. You can wring your hands and have a pity party, or you can become involved with this journey. The more active you become in this journey, the more knowledgeable you will become. Remember, knowledge is power and you will feel a sense of control.

