



Guam Cancer Passport

A Guide to Survivorship and Care





Remi Pangan

Sept. 1, 1958 - June 21, 2010

Fight Back

"Love never fails."

Corinthians 13:8

This booklet is lovingly dedicated in memory of Remi Pangan, Chairperson of the Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition (2009-2010), and member of the Cancer Survivorship and Quality of Life Action Team that spearheaded the preparation of this booklet. Without her efforts and driving force, this booklet would not have been made possible.

What Cancer Cannot Do

Cancer cannot cripple LOVE

It cannot shatter HOPE

It cannot corrode FAITH

It cannot eat away PEACE

It cannot destroy FRIENDSHIP

It cannot suppress MEMORIES

It cannot silence COURAGE

It cannot invade the SOUL

It cannot steal eternal LIFE

It cannot conquer the SPIRIT

~Author Unknown



***"What lies behind us
and what lies before us
are tiny matters compared to
what lies within us."***

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Valley"

Courtesy of Francis J. Garido, Photographer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the following Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition members who spearheaded and spent countless hours on the preparation of this booklet:

Remi Pangan† & Angelina Mummert,
assisted by team members
Andrea Ada, Marisha Artero, Tina Clay, Cecilia "Lee"
Cruz, Tim De La Cruz, Cerina Mariano,
Amy Santos and Florence Sgro.

We also acknowledge the efforts of previous team members, Stephanie Tajeron and DeeDee Babauta, and reviewers, John R. Taitano, MD, and Michael Ehler, PhD.

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Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control Program
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Fax: 735-7500
Website: www.dphss.guam.gov

References & Sources:

American Cancer Society website - www.cancer.org
National Cancer Institute website - www.cancer.gov

This publication was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number U58 DP000781-03 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to respectfully acknowledge the following courageous cancer survivors who contributed their thoughts and messages of hope with us for this booklet. It has added a richness and shared dimension that leads to true enlightenment on survivorship.



Donna Baker



Patrick Wolff



*Marie Borja
Luarca*



Fred Tyquiangcot

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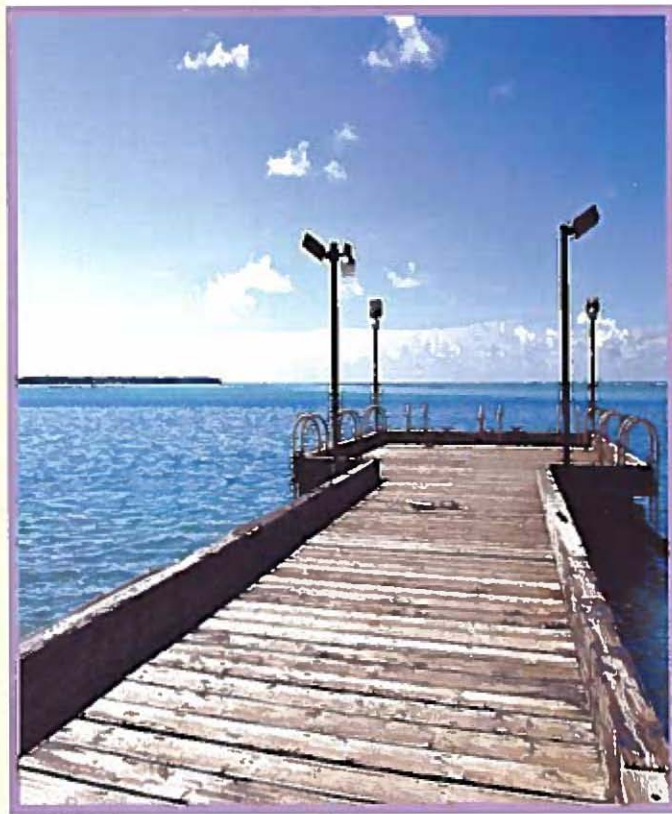
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"Terns" Skinner Plaza, Hagåtña
Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

"I encourage all newly diagnosed cancer patients to be tough and face it. Don't be ashamed."

~ Fred Tyquiangco†



Cocos Island, Merizo

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

Chapter 1

Being Told You Have Cancer

Step 1: Understanding Your Feelings.

You've just been told by your doctor that you have cancer. You will have many feelings and your feelings can change from day to day, hour to hour, or even minute to minute. Some of your feelings may include denial, anger, fear, stress, anxiety, depression, sadness, guilt, loneliness and numbness. All these feelings are normal.

Being HOPEFUL is also normal. No one is cheerful all the time, but while you are dealing with cancer, HOPE can be an important part of your life.

You will experience both positive and negative thoughts. Choose to linger on the positive while you work through the negative. Remember that cancer when caught early, and sometimes even in its later stages, can be overcome.

Your journey toward healing may take months or even years, but it is not impossible. It will be a long, and may be for some a short battle, but, in the end one wins with strength, will and determination. It is important that you learn and understand your disease well. Know what your options for care are both on- and off-island. Learn all you can.

Learn about the type of cancer, its stage, treatment options, and available on-island and off-island care. Ask your doctor the hard questions, read about it, and search for people who had it.



2008 Guam Relay For Life

"There are times you may feel alone, but know that you are not. As you think about how cancer has changed your life and your family's life, think about reaching outside your family to get help."

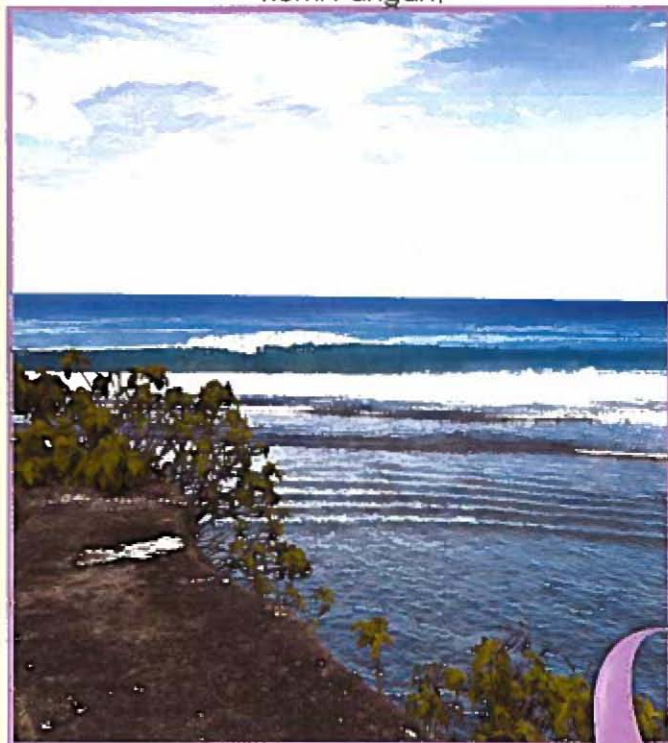
Learn from their experiences and stories. Learning and knowing about your diagnosis will help you make informed decisions about your health care. The road to recovery begins by knowing what your options are at every step of the way.

There are times you may feel alone, but know that you are not. In 2002, there were an estimated 24.6 million people worldwide who were diagnosed with cancer. In Guam, on average every year, an estimated 316 people were told by their doctor they have cancer.

Knowledge is power. Learning and knowing about your diagnosis maintains your self control and guides you on what steps you need to take next.

"We must not fear life, we must understand it. In the same way, we must not fear cancer, we must understand it."

~ Remi Pangant



"Wave"

Courtesy of Francis J. Garido, Photographer

Chapter 2

What is Cancer?

Step 2: Learn more about your type of cancer and its treatment.

Take this booklet with you to your healthcare provider to help you understand your cancer. Let this passport be your guide. Keep it on hand as a ready reference to remind you of questions to ask your doctor.

Cancer in humans has been written about from the dawn of recorded history. Egyptian mummies and fossilized bone tumors from ancient times have been found to have evidence of cancer. The

Greek physician Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.), called the "Father of Medicine," is credited with originating the word cancer.

So what is cancer? Cancer is a term used for diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and are able to invade other tissues. Cancer is not just one disease but many diseases. There are more than 100 different types of cancer. Most cancers are named for the organ or type of cell in which they start—for example, cancer that begins in the colon is called colon cancer. Cancer that begins in the basal cells of the skin is called basal cell carcinoma.

Cancer diagnosis is made by a doctor. A patient's signs and symptoms are not enough to know whether or not cancer is present. If your doctor suspects cancer you will probably need to have more tests done, such as x-rays, blood tests, or a biopsy. In most cases, a biopsy is the only way to tell for sure whether or not cancer is present.

To do a biopsy, a piece of the lump or abnormal tissue is removed and sent to the lab for analysis. There a pathologist (a doctor who specializes in diagnosing diseases) looks at the tissue under a microscope to see if it contains cancer cells. If there are cancer cells the doctor tries to figure out exactly what type of cancer it is and whether it is likely to grow slowly or more quickly. Scans can measure the size of the cancer and whether it has spread to nearby tissues. Blood tests can tell doctors about your overall health and can show how well your organs are working.

To help remember what the doctor says, you may take notes or ask whether you may use a tape recorder. You may also want to have a family member or friend with you when you talk to the doctor—to take part in the discussion, to take notes, or just to listen.

“Look, Cancer SUCKS. There is no two ways about it. But this is your opportunity to make a choice on your path, you can sit there and feel sorry for yourself or you can take control of your life.”

~Donna Baker



"Pier" - Merizo

Courtesy of Francis J. Garido, Photographer

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Ask your health care provider (health care provider includes doctors, nurses, and any others involved in your treatment and healing).

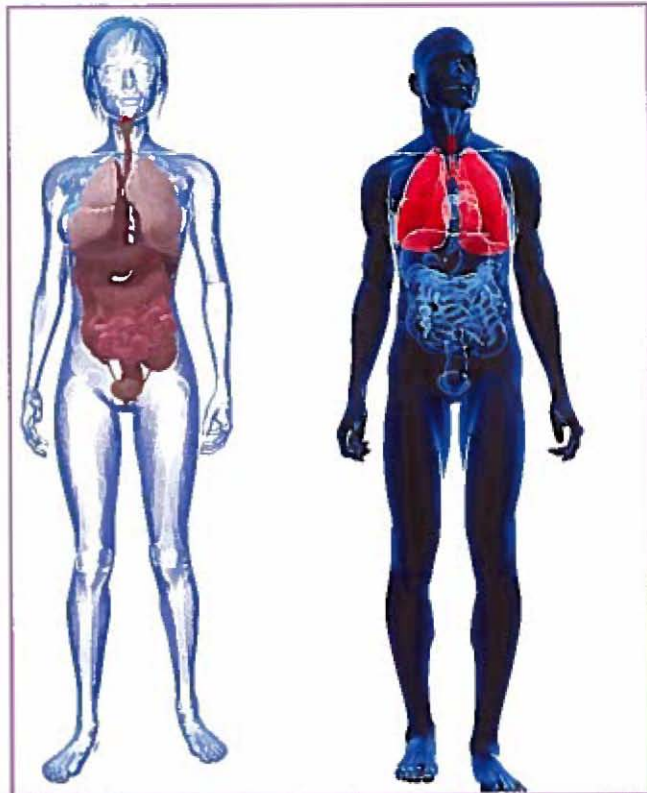
What type of cancer do I have?

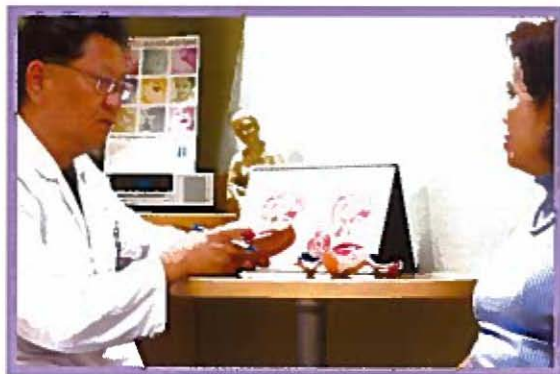
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Where is my tumor/lump? Please show me where.





What is my prognosis as you see it?

Notes: _____

Chapter 3

Understanding Treatments

Step 3: Learn what treatments are being recommended by your doctor and all that is involved.

The three major types of treatment for cancer are surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy. Depending on the type and stage of the cancer, two or more of these types of treatment may be combined at the same time or used one after another.



Island Cancer Center
Guam Surgicenter,
Tamuning

NOTES PAGE

Treatment Recommendations

What treatments are you recommending?
And why? How quickly do I have to make a
decision about my treatment?

Notes: _____

What is the goal of treatment?

Notes: _____

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What are the possible risks or side effects of
treatments?

Notes: _____

What are the pros and cons of my treat-
ment?

Notes: _____

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Are there other treatments for me to consider?

Notes: _____

How often will I need to come in for treatment or tests?

Notes: _____

Will treatment be in the hospital or as an out-patient or in the clinic?

Notes: _____

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Is the treatment available on Guam? If not, where do you recommend I seek treatment?

Notes: _____

What are the names of the drugs I will need? What are they for?

Notes: _____

Other questions to ask your doctor may also include:

- What if I miss a treatment?
- How will my life change? Will I need to make changes in my work, family life, and leisure time?
- What other drugs or treatments may I have to take?
- How will you know that my treatment is working?
- Why do I need blood tests and how often will I need them?
- If other specialists take part in my care, who will coordinate my entire treatment program?
- What symptoms or problems should I report right away?
- If I don't feel sick, does that mean the treatment is not working?

"My husband and I tried to find humor in our everyday life while undergoing treatment. It made for a great feeling when you really aren't feeling well."

~Marie Borja Luarca



"Flower Spring" - Hagåtña

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

- What are the chances that my cancer may come back (recur) with the treatment plans we've discussed?
- What can I do to be ready for treatment?
- Will I still be able to have children after treatment?
- Are there any special foods I should or should not eat?
- Can I drink alcoholic beverages?
- Will my insurance cover treatment? What costs will I have?
- What is the best time to call you if I have a question?

Getting a Second Opinion

Now that you have learned more about your disease, diagnosis, and treatment options, you may now be ready to seek a second opinion. Every patient who is diagnosed with

cancer is encouraged to seek a second opinion. A second opinion involves going to a different institution and seeing a qualified doctor(s) who is/are specialists in treating your type of cancer. It may involve consultation with a medical oncologist, radiation oncologist, and surgeon. It's best if you can meet with them as a team so they can explain your cancer and you can ask any questions. It's important to seek their opinions and understand the disease better since:

- Cancer is a very serious disease that grows rapidly. If it is not diagnosed properly the first time, there is often no second chance.
- The doctor is human and could make a mistake.
- Another doctor could see something that one doctor doesn't see.
- A specialist could have more experience and know more about your type of cancer.

This is an especially good idea if you feel uncertain about the proposed treatment. For example, if you have prostate cancer and a urologist (a doctor who specializes in diseases of the urinary organs in females and the urinary tract and sex organs in males) has recommended surgery, you may want to see a radiation oncologist to learn about non-surgical treatment.

Consider getting a second opinion when:

- You want to be sure you have explored all options, including clinical trials.
- You think the doctor underestimates the seriousness of your illness.
- The doctor doesn't know what is wrong with you.
- You have a rare or unusual cancer.
- You think there may be another treatment available.
- Your insurance plan requires it.

Before you begin looking for a second opinion, contact your insurance company to find out what your policy covers. Many insurance companies will cover a second opinion if your doctor requests it.

Once you have decided who you will see for your second opinion, ask that your medical records, original x-rays, and test results be shared with the referral doctor. You will need to sign a release of information form. Or you may want to take copies of your medical records to the new doctor yourself. Be sure to take all of your medicines (including vitamins and supplements) with you on your first visit. It is advisable to request copies of all your medical tests and diagnoses. Keep them in a safe place so you can refer to them.

The new doctor will review your medical history, prior test results, do a physical exam, and maybe suggest more tests.

"I encourage all newly diagnosed cancer patients to be tough and face it. Don't be ashamed. Only you can maintain your pain, good heart ... strength. Remember this is your life, so you are the center... the most important person in the circle."

—Fred Tyquengco†



"Splash"

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

Chapter 4

Making Decisions

Step 4: Decide on your treatment(s) based on facts.

Now that you know your available treatment options, you must make an informed decision about how to proceed with your treatment and care. Although you may still be emotional at this stage, you must make decisions based on facts, NOT on the emotions of the moment.

Ask as many questions as you need to. Do not hesitate. No question is unimportant. Write down your questions as they come to mind. Bring them with you to the doctor. Some healthcare professionals can focus better on what you are asking when the questions are written. The more questions asked, the more you can clear doubts, and cope with uncertainties.

Chapter 5

Treatment Details

Step 5: Start your treatment with a positive attitude and learn to cope with changes in your body.

Questions to ask your health care provider:

If I choose surgery:

How much of my _____ will be removed?

How long will I stay in the hospital?

Will I need follow-up care?

When can I get back to my normal activities?

"My reactions upon receiving a diagnosis of prostate cancer were shock, fear, anger, and bewilderment (at the complexity of the decisions my wife, Viv, and I needed to make). But the Lord graced my path with an array of prayer partners, fellow prostate cancer sufferers, caregiver angels, and wise professionals who guided us through the ordeal and for whom we shall ever be grateful."

—Pat Wolff



"Clouds" - Pili

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

If I choose radiation/chemotherapy/hormonal therapy:

When will I start my treatment? When will it end?

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

How long will each individual treatment last?

_____ hours _____ minutes

How often will I need to come in for treatment?

Can I work during treatment?

Will I have any limitations in my daily living?

What physical changes will I experience?

What side effects will I experience?
Will you give me something for my side effects?

Will there be pain from the treatment, and will you give me something for pain?

What emotional changes will I feel? Is there anything you can recommend for my emotional changes?

What else can I do to help my treatment work best?

What are the best foods to eat during my cancer treatment?

Coping with Physical and Emotional Changes

When you have cancer and when you are having treatment for cancer, you go through changes. Cancer and its treatment can change how you look and feel. Some of the changes may include:

- Surgery can leave scars or change the way you look.
- Chemotherapy can cause your hair to fall out.
- Radiation can make you feel tired.

- Some drugs may cause you to gain weight or feel bloated.
- Treatments can make it hard to eat. They may upset your stomach and make you throw up. Or they can make you feel so sick that you do not want to eat. Some treatments can make it harder to get pregnant or father a child.

Cancer treatment can last for weeks or months. The good news is that most of these side effects go away when the treatment is over. You will want to know as much as you can about side effects, even before treatment begins. This way, you can talk with your doctor about ways to treat them.

Your self image can change because of the effects of treatment. For example, you may experience the following:

- Your body is not the same as it was.
- If you're single, your dating life may be awkward.
- Your sex life may change.

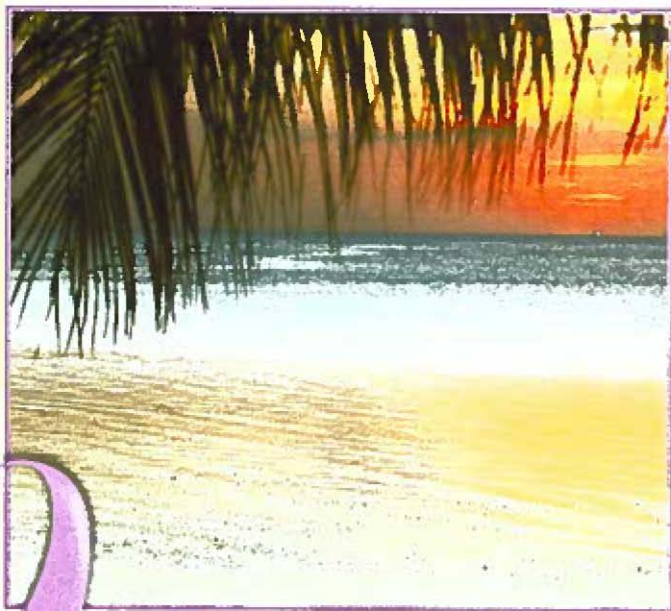
If cancer surgery changes the way you look, you may want to have reconstructive surgery. If a part of your body needs to be amputated (cut off) because of cancer, a prosthetic device (an artificial or man-made body part) can replace what was cut off. Cancer treatment may cause you to lose your hair. You may want to cover your head and keep protected from the sun. You may also feel that wearing a wig or scarf improves how you look.

Coping with these changes can be hard. But, over time, you learn to accept them. You learn to accept your new self-image by:

- Staying involved in life.
- Getting help when you need it, and talking openly about sex and feelings of closeness with loved ones.

"So stay positive and KNOW, you will make it through this and you will hold your head up high and be the strongest you have ever been because the universe knows you can handle this and come out on top."

~Donna Baker



"Green Flash"

Courtesy of Frank B.J. Garido, Photographer

Chapter 6

After Treatment

Step 6: Be vigilant and follow your doctor's advice to have regular check ups.

Health care providers cannot tell you if the cancer will come back, but will suggest frequent check-ups. It is natural for anyone who has completed cancer treatment to be concerned about what the future holds.

You may be concerned about the way you look and feel, and about what you can do to keep the cancer from recurring (coming back). You will want to know which doctor will follow you, how often to see the doctor for follow-up appointments, and what test you should have. Understanding what to expect after cancer treatment can help you and your loved ones plan for follow-up care, make life-style changes, and make important health-related decisions.

You should request a comprehensive care summary and follow-up plan from your doctor once you complete your treatment. You should ask your doctor the following questions once cancer treatment ends. The answers can help inform you about your care and what to expect next.

What treatments and drugs have I been given? _____

How often should I have a routine visit?

What are the chances that my cancer will come back or that I will get another type of cancer? _____

What follow-up tests, if any, should I have? _____

How often will I need these tests?

What symptoms should I watch for?

If I develop any of these symptoms, whom should I call?

What are the common long-term and late effects of the treatment I received?

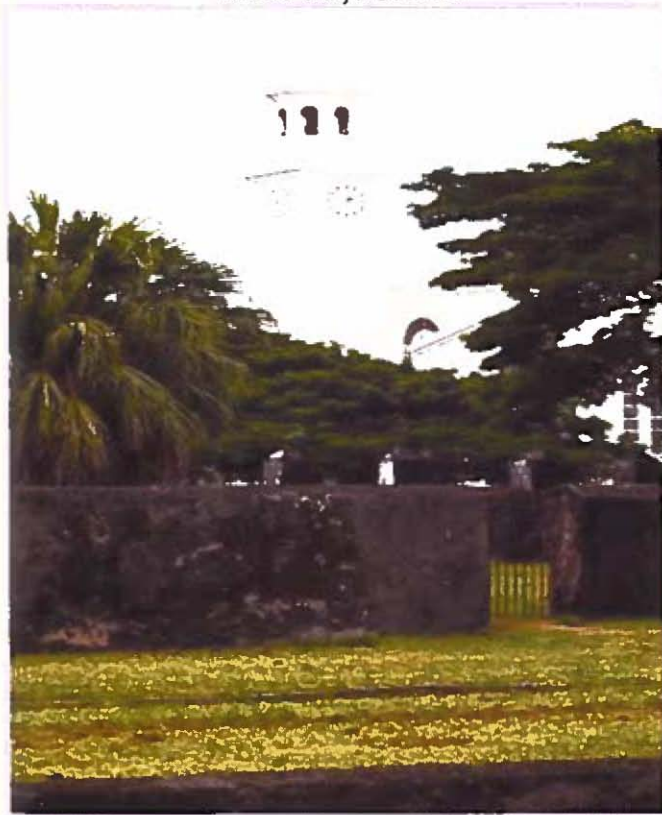
What should I do to maintain my health and well being? _____

Will I have trouble getting health insurance or keeping a job because of my cancer? _____

You may find it helpful to write these questions down and take notes or tape record your discussions with the doctor to refer to at a later time.

"We also found our spiritual side because of my experience. It has brought us even closer to our family."

~Marie Borja Luarca



"Agaña Cathedral Basilica"

Courtesy of Francis J. Gonzalez, PhD, D. Min.

Chapter 7

Speak Out and Reach Out

Step 7: Talk to someone and seek out your family and friends to support you while you're going through your journey with cancer.

Take time for yourself. Your cancer will not only change your life, but also the lives of those around you. Cancer impacts families in many ways. Talking about cancer can be hard for some families. Routines of family life may change. Roles and duties within the family will change. Relationships can be both strained and strengthened. Dealing with money and insurance often becomes hard. You may need to change where you live and with whom, at least for a while.

Once you **accept** that you have cancer, you often feel a sense of **hope**. As acceptance sinks in, you may find it much easier to speak out.

"Cancer reminds you what is really important in your life and what you need to focus on. It's your opportunity to live the life you have always wanted, your way, on your terms."

~Donna Baker



"Puddles"

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

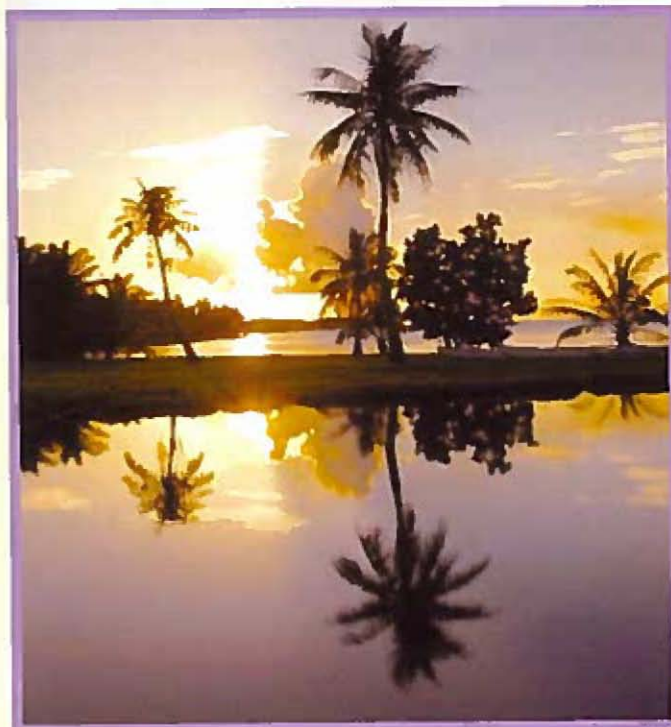
Cancer is hard to deal with all alone. Although talking about your cancer can be hard at first, you may find that sharing your thoughts and feelings helps you deal with your cancer. As you think about how cancer has changed your life and your family's life, think about reaching outside your family to get help.

Talking to someone is a powerful way to conquer all the negative feelings and gives you a positive attitude on how to move ahead. It frees you and allows you to concentrate on your treatment. It allows you some relief from the worries and fears. It points a guiding light in the midst of the darkness.

Many people also find faith as their source of support. You may find that talking to a leader in your religious or spiritual community can be helpful. Just knowing that you have a circle of people for support, makes your journey a lot lighter.

"You need to focus always on the POSITIVE. Surround yourself with friends and family that support you. BE FREE to love, to laugh, and only think positive thoughts."

—Donna Baker



"Sunset"

Courtesy of Francis J. Garrido, Photographer

People you can turn to for help include family and friends; others who also have cancer; support groups; spiritual help; health care providers; and care givers. Living with a serious disease such as cancer is not easy. You may worry about caring for your family, keeping your job, or continuing daily activities. Concerns about treatments and managing side effects, hospital stays, and medical bills are also common.

Doctors, nurses, and other members of the health care team can answer questions about treatment, working, or other activities. Often a social worker can suggest resources for financial aid, transportation, home care, or emotional support. Meeting with a social worker, counselor, or member of the clergy can be helpful if you want to talk about your feelings or concerns.

Friends and relatives can be very supportive. Also many people find it helps to talk with others who have cancer.

People with cancer often get together in support groups. In these groups, you and your family members meet with other patients or their families to share what they have learned about coping with the disease and the effects of treatment. It is important to keep in mind, however, that everyone is different. Ways that one person deals with cancer may not be right for another. You may want to ask a member of your health care team about advice from other cancer patients.

The important point to remember is that you don't have to be alone in your journey. Widen your circle, seek family support, find support groups in your community. You will be amazed that there are always people who are compassionate, willing to listen, and helpful in every way.

Chapter 8

Cancer Resources

Step 8: Contact your local resources for cancer information and assistance.

It's important to get information on cancer so you know what's going on. If you don't have a health care provider, call the Medical Social Services office of the Department of Public Health and Social Services at 735-7168/7351.

Cancer Treatment Centers (Guam):

Cancer Center of Guam647-4656
Island Cancer Center, Guam
 Surgicenter646-3363
FHP Cancer Center646-5825
 ext 8220

Hospitals:

Guam Memorial Hospital .. 647-2330/2552/2939
U.S. Naval Hospital
 Guam 344-9340 / 9202 / 9586
 (for active duty and retired military & dependents only)

Cancer Information and Education:

American Cancer Society
 Guam Office 477-9451/2
Cancer Research Center of Guam
 (University of Guam)735-2988/9
Guam Cancer Registry
 (University of Guam)735-2988
Guam Breast and Cervical Cancer
 Early Detection Program, Dept. of Public
 Health and Social Services ..735-0671/0672
Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control
 Program, Dept. of Public Health and
 Social Services735-7335 / 0673

For up-to-date cancer information, you can also call these organizations' toll free numbers or visit their websites:

American Cancer Society1-800-227-2345
 Website: www.cancer.org
NCI Cancer Information Service1-800-422-6237
 Website: www.cancer.gov

Cancer Support Group:

American Cancer Society
 Guam Office477-9451/2

Financial Assistance—Non Govt. Organizations:

American Cancer Society

Guam Office477-9451/2

Edward M. Calvo Foundation472-6854

Government Assistance:

Dept. of Public Health and Social Services

Catastrophic Illness Assistance

Program735-7241 / 5

Medicaid Assistance Program735-7241 / 5

or735-7270

Medically Indigent Program735-7241 / 5

Guam Medicare Assistance Program735-7388

Guam Medical Referral Office

Governor's Office:

Guam office475-9350 / 53

Hawaii office1-808-955-4826

Los Angeles office1-213-894-3413

Philippines office011-632-687-7950

Home Health Care & Hospice

FHP Home Health (hospice also)646-5825

.....ext 8473

Guam Nursing Services ...649-2815 or 649-4000

Guam Visiting Nurses646-6877

Health Services of the Pacific

(hospice also)647-5355 / 6 / 7

Paradise Home Care475-4005

or988-4005

Social Services/Respite Services:

Catholic Social Service635-1422~25

Medical Social Services.

DPHSS735-7168/7351/7174 / 7356

National Family Caregiver Support Program

University of Guam735-3277~9

or735-3290~2

Guam Cancer Organizations:

American Cancer Society

Guam Office477-9451/2

Edward M. Calvo Foundation472-6854

Pacific Association of Radiation Survivors

web addressrcgolf@guam.net

Strides for the Cure649-2370

Other Important Information

Contacts & Phone Numbers

My Doctor: _____

Clinic: _____

Health Insurance: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Emergency Contact Person: _____

Medical History

Allergies: _____

Medications: _____

Other Medical Information:



Cancer Survivor Support Group

"How does one survive cancer? Of course — good doctors, good insurance, good luck. But the real healing comes from not being forgotten. From attention, from care, from love, from being surrounded by a community of those who demand information on your behalf, who advocate and stand up for you when you are in the weakened state, who sleep by your side, who refuse to let you give up, who bring you meals, who see you not as a patient or victim but as a precious human being, who create metaphors where you can imagine your survival."

-- Eve Ender, The Guardian, June 12, 2010

