

Toolkit for Men

International treatment guidelines or protocols typically refer to diseases in general and are not tailored personally to each person. As you are unique, ensure the medical team adapts the treatment protocol to you and your needs specifically.

Knowing what to expect beforehand allows you to be prepared and to make necessary arrangements.

We have collected tips and advice from other men within the Belong communities to help you manage your journey.

Well – being

- ❖ Slow down, breathe, and take time to gather information.
- ❖ Allow yourself time to adjust to your new situation.
- ❖ Take someone with you to doctor visits.
- ❖ Although men tend to share less, try to find a trusted counselor, family member, or friend about how you feel.
- ❖ Find the people who can help you understand what is going on. The community groups in Belong allows you to remain anonymous and receive tips and advice from others in your shoes.
- ❖ Ask about physical therapy and about different types of exercise, as that could help you to feel more energetic and that may help shorten the journey to recovery.
- ❖ Remain socially connected to others. Social activities (even virtually) help you focus on something other than cancer.
- ❖ In today's times, mindfulness, yoga, relaxation, and meditation is practiced by many men.
- ❖ Look at changing your diet and begin practicing healthy nutrition.
- ❖ Although you may consider yourself as Superman, asking for help is a strength, not a weakness. There are no prizes for struggling on your own.
- ❖ Discuss side effects with your doctor. There may be an easy solution available.
- ❖ If needed, learn about pelvic floor exercises to prevent incontinence.

Intimacy:

- ❖ Dating, relationships, sexual intimacy, and body image may be different for you after treatment. This is entirely normal.
- ❖ Bear in mind, many sexual problems caused by cancer and other treatments may be temporary. Take your recovery at your own pace.
- ❖ If you are single, in a relationship, or dating someone new, you should not be shy to discuss sex and intimacy with your partner and the healthcare team, reach for support if needed. Working together can bring back that loving feeling.
- ❖ If you plan on having children in the future, discuss fertility conservation options with the healthcare team before starting treatment.

Top Tips:

- ❖ Practice gratitude, especially towards those who support you.
- ❖ Build a network of colleagues that supports you and your career during your journey and helps you remain positive.
- ❖ Keep your sense of humor. Laughter has many positive effects on the mind and body.

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