

25 Tips When a Loved One Has Cancer

Rebecca and John Moores
UCSD Cancer Center

25 *YEARS of*
ADVANCING
CANCER
CARE

Caring for a loved one with a serious disease can be both a deeply rewarding and stressful experience. In conjunction with our 25th Anniversary, the Moores UCSD Cancer Center offers the following 25 tips for caregivers. We hope this information is helpful to you.

- 1) Give yourself and your loved one time to adjust to the diagnosis.
- 2) A positive attitude is beneficial for you and your loved one.
- 3) Giving care to a loved one with cancer requires patience, flexibility, courage and a good sense of humor.
- 4) Good communication is essential to learning how best to work with your loved one.
- 5) Plan special times together away from the routine of treatment, such as a special evening out for dinner, a movie or play, etc.
- 6) Talk about the future. Hope is very important.
- 7) Being a caregiver can reveal hidden strengths, and enrich your family life.
- 8) As a caregiver, you can choose to take the primary caregiver role or, depending on the level of support from family and friends, divide it between two or more persons.
- 9) Being a caregiver can affect you emotionally, physically and financially. For guidance, speak with your Cancer Center Social Worker.
- 10) To better understand your loved one's diagnosis, treatment and progress, be an active participant during clinic visits.
- 11) Using a journal or notebook during your loved one's appointments, etc., will help you stay organized.
- 12) Encourage your loved one to engage as much as possible in normal daily activities.
- 13) Give yourself permission to feel emotions about your loved one's situation, and confide in a friend or counselor to provide insight and support.
- 14) Set up a list of activities that your family or friends can sign up to do weekly or monthly.
- 15) To help reduce your stress, make time for regular exercise, meditation or some other form of relaxation.
- 16) If care is long term, arrange for extended periods of relief — take a vacation.
- 17) Attempt to maintain as much of your routine as possible, but recognize that you may need to alter some of your daily activities if you are the primary caregiver.
- 18) Take advantage of caregiver support groups and credible websites for resources and support.
- 19) Taking care of you is important: Remember to get adequate rest and nutrition, and take time for personal care.
- 20) Select funny movies to watch together. Good humor is healthy for the body and soul.
- 21) Allow yourself private time to do nothing, or something important to you.
- 22) Spiritual support through prayer or the guidance of a spiritual leader can be good medicine.
- 23) Designate a family member or friend who can help field phone calls regarding your loved one's progress.
- 24) If you have children in the home, assign them age appropriate tasks to accommodate the necessary changes in the household routines.
- 25) Rely on the Cancer Center's professional team for information and support.

For more helpful information, visit the *Outreach section* of the Moores UCSD Cancer Center website at www.cancer.ucsd.edu.

Rebecca and John Moores
UCSD Cancer Center

Helping You **GET CONNECTED!**

The following phone numbers and website address are provided here to help you quickly and easily access the information you need:

GENERAL INFORMATION: 858-534-7600

IF YOU ARE A NEW PATIENT:
619-543-3456 *or toll-free* 866-558-7933

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE INFORMATION
ABOUT CLINICAL TRIALS:** 858-657-7020

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE
A CHARITABLE DONATION:** 858-822-0175

WEB SITE: www.cancer.ucsd.edu



OPENING EARLY 2005 **UCSD Medical Center Campus, La Jolla**

The new Rebecca and John Moores UCSD Cancer Center offers the most advanced clinical services in one comfortable, convenient location—bringing a new level of cancer care to San Diego.