

Steps to Take After a Cancer Diagnosis

A compassionate guide to help you take the next steps with clarity and support.

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1. Understand Your Diagnosis

- Ask for the exact name, stage, and grade of your cancer
- Start a binder or folder to organize medical records, notes, and resources
- Learn about treatment options specific to your cancer type
- Talk to your primary care doctor and oncologist
- Seek another medical opinion to feel confident in your plan
- Use expert resources like Summus to explore additional guidance

2. Build Your Support Network

- Share your diagnosis with trusted family and friends
- Reach out to support organizations (e.g., PanCAN for pancreatic cancer)
- Ask your care team to recommend peer groups or online communities

3. Partner With Your Healthcare Team

- Take an active role in treatment planning
- Ask about clinical trials, especially if treatment options feel limited
- Speak up about your values, preferences, and concerns

4. Take Care of Yourself

- Focus on nutrition, movement, rest, and stress reduction
- Take it one day, one moment at a time
- Celebrate small victories and give yourself grace
- Reflect on what you can control, not just what you can't