

10 Tips for Living Well with Multiple Myeloma



Learning you have a multiple myeloma diagnosis is life-changing. It can take anyone by surprise, and it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. Inside, you'll find ideas

for coping with multiple myeloma. Some of them may help you feel more in control. Others will help you be a more active member of your health care team.

10 Tips for Living Well

If you or a loved one has multiple myeloma, consider some of these 10 Tips to help you feel more in control and more proactive about this cancer journey:

- 1. Learn as much as you can and make active choices in your care.** There's a lot to learn about multiple myeloma and what it means for you. Do your research so you can talk honestly with your doctors and caregivers to build a supportive treatment team. Since this cancer must be managed over the course of your life, it's important to stay aware of how you feel, your lab results, and how treatment works over time. Learn how to emotionally manage "watch and wait," and learn where to go for accurate and helpful information.
- 2. Seek a second or even third opinion.** When you get a second or third opinion, it can help you learn which treatment teams, care plans, financial resources, and facilities you like best. There are many new and promising treatments being tested in clinical trials. When you learn from different experts, you can stay aware of and have access to the best treatments available.
- 3. Talk openly with your family and friends.** Your health care team can teach you how to tell others about what multiple myeloma means for you. Be open to receiving help. [MyLifeLine.org](https://www.mylifeline.org) is a tool that can connect your friends and family to the help you may need.
- 4. Build exercise and a healthy diet into your daily life.** One of the best things you can do is to pay attention to how you exercise and what you eat. These things are critical for strength, a healthy body weight, and feeling better. They also help to limit side effects like neuropathy or protecting frail bones. Even small changes can help you feel better. Ask for physical therapy or a Physical Medicine doctor to help you safely build exercise into your routine. Ask for a dietician to help with nutrition.
- 5. Acknowledge and address your feelings.** A diagnosis of multiple myeloma can trigger strong emotions like sadness, fear, or depression. Find ways to address your feelings. A therapist may help, especially if you have strong feelings. Try journaling, exercise, or creative projects to release tension.
- 6. Learn to be mindful and relax.** An important goal is to find a sense of peace and enjoy small moments. Do things that bring you comfort. This is not always easy. What helps you feel calm—a walk, yoga, listening to music, or cooking? There are meditation, mindfulness, and hypnosis apps, videos, and programs that work well.
- 7. Seek activities you enjoy.** Just because you have multiple myeloma doesn't mean you can't enjoy life! Find humor in your day. Enjoy your alone time or spend quality time with people you care about.
- 8. Retain as much control as you can.** Since multiple myeloma must be managed over many years, you can make a plan that helps you feel more in control. You can adjust your treatments or consider clinical trials. Remember that your medical records are yours, so ask for them. Let your health care team know how you feel.

9. Talk with others who live with multiple myeloma. People living with multiple myeloma understand what you're going through and can help. Time and time again, cancer patients share they feel comfort and strength when they talk with others who also have multiple myeloma. Consider a support group. Your doctor, nurse, or social worker can help you connect.

10. Maintain a spirit of hope. Even if your cancer is complex, you can still feel hopeful. Set small goals and aim to enjoy daily pleasures. Focus on those things. Some days will be better than others, but you can and should continue to enjoy the special moments in your life.



Multiple Myeloma Information & Support

American Society of Clinical Oncology • 888-282-2552 • www.asco.org

CancerCare • 800-813-4673 • www.cancercares.org

National Institute of Health's Clinical Trial Search • ClinicalTrials.gov

International Myeloma Foundation • 800-452-2873 • www.myeloma.org

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society • 800-955-4572 • www.LLS.org/myeloma

For clinical trials: www.LLS.org/clinicaltrials

Multiple Myeloma Research Foundations • 866-603-6628 • www.themmr.org

For clinical trials: www.themmr.org/treatment-options/clinical-trials

NCCN Guidelines for Patients: Multiple Myeloma • www.nccn.org/patientresources/patient-resources/

Myeloma Central • www.myelomacentral.com/

Patient Advocate Foundation • 800-532-5274 • www.patientadvocate.org

National Cancer Institute • 800-422-6237 • www.cancer.gov

Cancer Support Community Resources

The Cancer Support Community's (CSC) resources and programs are available free of charge. To access any of these resources below call 888-793-9355 or visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org.

Cancer Support Helpline® — Have questions, concerns or looking for resources? Call CSC's toll-free Cancer Support Helpline (888-793-9355), available in 200 languages Mon–Fri, 9 am–9 pm ET.

Open to Options® — Preparing for your next appointment? Our trained specialists can help you create a list of questions to share with your doctor. Make an appointment by calling 888-793-9355 or by contacting your local CSC or Gilda's Club.

Frankly Speaking About Cancer® — Trusted information for cancer patients and their loved ones is available through publications, online, and in-person programs. www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FranklySpeakingAboutCancer.

Services at Local CSCs and Gilda's Clubs — With the help of 170 locations, CSC and Gilda's Club affiliates provide services free of charge to people touched by cancer. Attend support groups, educational sessions, wellness programs, and more at a location near you. www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FindLocation.

MyLifeLine — CSC's private, online community allows patients and caregivers to easily connect with friends and family to receive social, emotional, and practical support throughout the cancer journey and beyond. Connect with other Multiple Myeloma patients by joining the Managing Multiple Myeloma online discussion board. Sign up at www.MyLifeLine.org.

Grassroots Network — Make sure your voice is heard by federal and state policy makers on issues affecting cancer patients and survivors by joining our Network at www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/become-advocate.

Cancer Experience Registry® — Help others by sharing your cancer patient or cancer caregiver experience via survey at www.CancerExperienceRegistry.org.

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This book is available to download and print yourself at www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/Multiple-Myeloma. For print copies of this booklet or other information about coping with cancer, visit Orders.CancerSupportCommunity.org.

The Cancer Support Community provides this information as a service. This publication is not intended to take the place of medical care or the advice of your doctor. We strongly suggest consulting your doctor or other health care professionals to answer questions and learn more.

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