



Talking With Children about a Loved One's Cancer

Patient Education Resource Center (PERC)
Information Guide

Brochures

For children and teens

- American Cancer Society. **It Helps To Have Friends: When Mom or Dad Has Cancer.**
- Cancer Family Care. **What About Me? A Booklet for Teenage Children of Cancer Patients.**
- KidsCope. **Kemo Shark.** A printable version is available at: <http://www.kidscope.org/>
- National Cancer Institute. **When Your Parent has Cancer : A Guide for Teens.** A printable version is available on NCI publications through the NCI's publications' locator at: <https://cissecure.nci.nih.gov/ncipubs/>

For parents

- CancerCare. **Helping Children When a Family Member has Cancer.** A printable version is available at: http://www.cancercare.org/about_us/connect_booklets.php

Coloring books

- American Cancer Society. **Because....Someone I Love has cancer: Kids' Activity Book.**

Articles

- Gupta, Nelly Edmondson. **Taking Care of the Kids: When a Parent Has Cancer, Raising Children Poses Special Challenges....and Rewards.** InTouch; Vol. 4, No. 2, March 2002. (p.23).
- Schnipper, Hester Hill. **Growing Pains: How to Cope When Your Teenage Daughter Cannot.** MAMM; Vol. 3, No. 9, July/August 2001. (p. 22).

The purpose of this information guide is to direct patients and health care professionals to sources of information on cancer and related topics, it does not constitute an endorsement of the information contained in the resources. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to provide starting points for Information seeking.

All listed materials can be found at the Patient Education Resource Center of the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center in room B1-361. An online version of this document can be found at: http://www.cancer.med.umich.edu/support/information_guides.shtml

- Yaffe, Risa Sacks. **Parenting through Cancer: There Should be an Open Exchange Between Children and a Parent with Cancer.** *Coping Magazine*; Vol. 14, No. 2, March/April 2000. (p. 74).
- Ness, Eric. **Straight Talk : Kids React Differently to a Parent's Diagnosis.** *Cure*; Vol.7, No.1, Spring 2008 (p. 16).

Books

For adults

- Collins, Leigh & Nathan Courtney. **When a Parent is Seriously Ill: Practical Tips for Helping Parents and Children.** Metairie, LA: Jewish Family Service of Greater New Orleans, 2003.
- Hamilton, Joan. **When a Parent Is Sick: Helping Parents Explain Serious Illness to Children.** Nova Scotia, Canada: Pottersfield Press, 2001.
- Harpham, Wendy Schlessel. **When a Parent Has Cancer: A Guide to Caring For Your Children.** Rev. Ed. New York : Perennial Currents, 2004.
- Heiney, Sue P. et. al. **Cancer in the Family: Helping Children Cope with a Parent's Illness.** Atlanta, GA: American Cancer Society, 2001.
- Russell, Neil. **Can I Still Kiss You? Answering Children's Questions About Cancer.** Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, 2001.
- van Dernoot, Peter. **Helping Your Children Cope with Your Cancer: A Guide for Parents and Families.** New York, NY: Hatherleigh Press, 2002.

For Kids

Ages 4-7

- Ammary, Neyal J. **In Mommy's Garden: A Book to Help Explain Cancer to Young Children.** Leighton, PA: Canyon Beach Visual Communications, 2004. For very young children. Available in Spanish.
- Blake, Claire and Blanchard, Eliza and Parkinson, Kathy. **The Paper Chain.** Santa Fe, NM: Health Press, 1998.

- Carney, Karen L. Barklay and Eve: **What is Cancer Anyway? Explaining Cancer to Children of All Ages**. Wethersfield, CT: Dragonfly Publishing Company, 1999.
- Frahm, Amelia. **Tickles Tabitha's Cancer - Tankerous Mommy**. Hutchinson, MN: Nutcracker Publishing Company, 2001.
Told through the eyes of Tabitha, a young girl, this is the story of family in which the mother is being treated for cancer.
- Kohlenberg, Sherry and Crow, Lauri. **Sammy's Mommy Has Cancer**. New York, NY: Magination Press, 1993.
Sammy's mommy receives treatment for cancer, goes into the hospital for surgery, recovers at home and shares her continuing love for him.
- Numeroff, Laura. **Kids Speak Out About Breast Cancer**. Samsung Telecommunications America and Sprint PCS, 1999.
Short pieces written by kids participating in KIDS TALK, a support group for children whose mother has breast cancer. Beautifully illustrated. Suitable for ages 4-10 and for other types of cancer as well.
- Parkinson, Stearns Carolyn. **My Mommy Has Cancer**. Rochester, NY: Park Press, 1991.
A beautifully illustrated book about a boy coping with his mother's illness.
- Schick, Eleanor. **When Mama Wore a Hat**. Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, 2007
- Watters, Debbie, et al. **Where's Mom's Hair? : A Family Journey through Cancer**. Toronto, Canada: Second Story Press, 2005.

Ages 5-10

- Ackermann, Abigail & Adrienne. **Our Mom Has Cancer**. Atlanta, GA: American Cancer Society, 2001.
Written and illustrated by two sisters ages 9 and 11, the girls describe their mother's illness from their perspective.
- Cohen, Cindy K. **My Daddy's Cancer: An Interactive Book for Children. My Mommy's Cancer: An Interactive Book for Children**. Bloomfield Hills, MI: Promise Publications, 1999.

- Harpham, Wendy S. **Becky and The Worry Cup**. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997. This book accompanies "When a parent has cancer" written by the same author.
- Speltz, Ann. **The Year My Mother was Bald**. Washington, DC: Magination Press, 2003.
A scrapbook of an 8 year old girl whose mother was treated for breast cancer. For ages 8-13.
- Winthrop, Elizabeth, and Betsy Lewin. **Promises**. New York: Clarion Books, 2000.

Pre-teens

- Clifford, Christine and Lindstrom, Jack. **Our Family Has Cancer, Too!** Duluth, MN: Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers, 1998.
The perspective of an eleven-year-old boy on his family's coping with the mother's illness.
- Goodman, Michelle B. **Vanishing Cookies: Doing OK When a Parent Has Cancer**. Benjamin Family Foundation, 1990.
Written in a question and answer format, this book is intended for kids ages 10-16 whose parents are undergoing cancer treatment.
- Hannigan, Katherine. **Ida B: and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster and (Possibly) Save the World**. New York, NY: Greenwillow Books, 2004.
Ida B's idyllic childhood is idyllic is shuttered when her mother is diagnosed with breast cancer. How this sensitive, creative girl comes to terms with the monumental changes in her life makes for a deeply moving story. For ages 9-12. (also published on CD)
- Swenson, Judy H. **Cancer: the Whispered Word**. Minneapolis, MN: Dillon Press, 1986.
Includes an explanation of the biology of cancer and some of the terms. For ages 8-14.

Teenagers

- Pennebaker, Ruth. **Both Sides Now**. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2000.
A book for young adults focuses on mother-daughter relationships and how their family reinvented itself at a time of crisis.

Audiovisual Resources

- Cancervive. **Kids Tell Kids what it's Like when their Mother or Father Has Cancer**. Los Angeles, Calif.: Cancervive 1998.
Kids do all the talking in this 15-minute video and discuss their hopes, fears and the adult burden placed upon them when cancer strikes a parent. The film is faithful to the kid's point-of-view and encourages communication between family members.
- Fox Chase Cancer Center. Philadelphia, 1996. **Talking About Your Cancer: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Cope**.
An excellent starting-point for discussions with children about cancer. The Patient Education Resource Center has free copies for distribution.
- Harpham, Wendy. Innovative Training Systems. **We Can Cope**. 2000.
A series of three tapes presents the coping strategies of children, teens and parents in families with cancer.

Web Resources

- **Dealing with a Cancer Diagnosis in the Family** at the American Cancer Society site
 - Go to: <http://www.cancer.org>
 - Click on "Patients Family & Friends"
 - Scroll down and click on: "Children and Cancer"
 - Scroll down and select the appropriate document under "Dealing with a Cancer Diagnosis in the Family"
- **Kids Konnected**
Access at: <http://www.kidskonnected.org>
- **What do I tell the children? - A guide for a parent with cancer**
→ Go to: <http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk/>

- Click on: Resources and Support
- Scroll down and click on “Talking to Children”

Organizations

- **KIDSCOPE**
Website: <http://www.kidscope.org>
3399 Peachtree Road, Suite 2020
Atlanta, GA 30326
- **Kids Konnected**
Website: <http://www.kidskonnected.org>
Hotline (800) 899-2866
2701 Cabot Rd. Ste.102
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.

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