

Quotes from Friends of Cancer Teens

“I couldn’t believe that she had cancer, I just wanted to help her out and give her a big hug or something.”

-Sarah

“It was all mixed emotions I felt, I mean I didn’t understand what cancer really is, and I was sad because I just didn’t get it.”

-Maddy

“I was scared because the first thing that I found out was she was in the hospital and that worried me. It would have helped to know what to expect.”

-Josh

*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune--without the words,
And never stops at all*

-Emily Dickinson



Simone Weinstein wrote this pamphlet to help you help your friend with cancer. Simone was diagnosed with Leukemia when she was 14 years old, and finished her two and a half years of chemotherapy in 2006

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simonerw@gmail.com

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MY FRIEND HAS CANCER

a Pamphlet for Teens

a Guide to Help You Better Understand and Communicate with Your Friend Who Has Been Diagnosed with Cancer



What To Do

- **Visit** your friend at the hospital
- **Invite** your friend out even if you think they cannot come; let them make the decision. Don't think that they are too sick to go out all the time. Being included means a lot.
- Bring food (if they can eat) or **bring something** you have made for them. NOT FLOWERS! Flowers can have mold and may cause an infection. Balloons are o.k. if it is NOT latex; helium balloons are fun.
- **Make something** like a poster to put in the hospital room for your friend to look at, as they may be there for a while
- **Talk** about what's going on in your life, because they are surrounded by the world of cancer; something new is refreshing
- Send **mail** (THEY WILL LOVE IT!)
- **I.M., E-mail, Myspace, Facebook**, text- just let them know you are thinking of them.
- **Watch T.V** with your friend
- **Play** games, do a craft **together**. Remember your friend gets tired really easily, don't take offense if they fall asleep when you are there. You being there is comforting.
- Just **be there** for them
- Set a time and day you can **come over**, don't just say call if you need anything.
- **Hugs** are ok, but ask first
- **WASH HANDS AND NO SHARING DRINK OR FOOD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Things to say

- "How are you feeling today?"
- "I hope tomorrow is a better day!"
- "This is what's going on in school....."
- "I like your hat/clothes/shoes"
- "How is your treatment going?"
- "What TV shows have you been watching?"

Things not to say

- "Are you feeling better?" They won't for a while.
- "Get well soon!" Cancer is not a cold or flu.
- "You are so lucky you don't have homework."
- Don't criticize your own appearance.
- "I am so tired."
- "I just had the worst night of my life."

- **Tiredness**- from chemotherapy
- **Depression**-from being in such a horrible state
- **Weakness**- from all the drugs
- **Hair loss**-from chemotherapy
- **Puffy belly/cheeks**- chemotherapy and prednisone
- **Bruising**- blood platelets low from chemotherapy
- **Very pale skin**- hemoglobin counts are low from chemotherapy
- Loss or gain of **weight**- from the drugs
- Loss or gain of **appetite**- from prednisone or chemotherapy
- **Chemo brain**- can not think clearly or can't remember as much as used to before cancer treatment
- **Long hospital stays**: counts too low for chemotherapy/transfusions/infections/ surgery's/radiation/scans
- **Emotional** because of where they are at in there lives
- **Sense of smell** much more sensitive because of chemotherapy. DON'T WEAR COLOGNE OR PERFUME!!!
- **Vomiting**- because of chemotherapy
- **Not calling you**- too tired to call- you should call them; don't expect for them to be able to make any effort
- **Eating messy**- because they don't care

What To Expect

- **Anesthesiologist**: doctor who give drugs to relieve pain or put patients to sleep during surgery.
- **Bone Marrow**: Cells inside the bones where the body makes blood.
- **Broviac/Port**: An external tube that goes to a main artery of the heart, to get chemotherapy, blood transfusions, or to be hooked up to an IV pole.
- **Cancer**: Abnormal cells that rapidly grow and destroy normal cells. Cancer can be in one part of the body or, like in Leukemia in blood, a body's whole system.
- **Cat scan**: special x-ray equipment to make multiple pictures of the inside of the body. The machine goes around the patient.
- **Chemotherapy**: Drug treatment for cancer. There are many types. Some are liquid, others pills or shots, and include methotrexate, AR-C, vincristen, and 6-MP.
- **Clinic**: place for check ups, blood cells counts and some treatments.
- **Hemoglobin**: Red blood cells, carrying oxygen.
- **IV**: a common way of getting medicines into the body. The IV drips down from a container through a tube and needle into a vein or the broviac.
- **MRI**: Huge machine that scans for soft tissues, bones, and tumors and makes a picture of the cancer or chemotherapy side effects. The patient lies down in a big tube and can't move for up to half an hour.
- **Oncologist**: a doctor who treats people with cancer
- **Platelets**: help the blood clot and prevent bruising, they are in the blood.
- **Pathologist**: a doctor who studies cells and tissues removed from the body as well as in making a diagnosis based on changes in these cells.
- **Prednisone**: is a steroid to help blood cells grow faster and is used in combination with chemotherapy drugs, such as vincristen.
- **Radiation**: Treatment of cancer with high-energy rays to kill cancer cells. The radiation comes from a machine put near the cancer.
- **Radiologist**: doctor who takes pictures inside the body, like x-rays
- **Relapse**: The cancer returned after seeming to be gone. This is very bad.
- **Remission**: This is the goal of treating cancer- to make the cancer undetectable and then, hopefully, gone.
- **Spinal Tap/Lumbar Puncture**: A shot of chemotherapy in the spine.
- **Tumor**: an abnormal mass of tissue
- **White Blood Cells**: Cells that protect from infection and diseases

Vocab: