

Checklist: Life with Cancer.

Heading into your first treatment can be nerve-racking.

This list will help you feel more prepared as you begin treatment. Keep scrolling for a list of things to help you get through treatment..

What to think about ahead of time

- **Side effects** - Understanding what side effects you can expect from your type of treatment will allow you to prepare for them as best as possible.
- **Caregivers** - Figuring out your support system before you start treatment allows you to focus on healing your body, while they take care of all the extra stuff life throws at you.
- **Finances** - Cancer is expensive. Understanding the estimated cost of your treatment plan, including what your insurance will cover, is important. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the cost, our CareLine patient navigators can help you find additional financial support.
- **Work** - Depending on your job, you may need to take time off for treatment or to heal afterwards. Have those conversations with your employer before you begin treatment so everyone has the same expectations.
- **Your medical team** - Ask about any tips and tricks they might have to make treatment as seamless as possible.

What to take with you

- **A loved one** - Taking a loved one with you to treatment is possibly the most important thing we could include here. Depending on your treatment, you may have to sit around for a while or you may be tired afterwards, so having someone you can trust to hang out with you and drive you home afterwards is very helpful.
- **Cozy items** - Your favorite pillow, blanket, socks, or slippers can help you feel more comfortable during a long treatment.
- **Comfy clothes** - It's important to wear comfy, loose fitting clothes that you can sit around in for long periods of time and easily get in and out of. Consider clothes that you can easily roll up the sleeves of and provide access to your chest if necessary, like a front button down shirt. And dress in layers to easily manage any body temperature swings or the cold hospital.
- **Activities** - Bring things to pass the time. Some of our favorites include books, magazines, and puzzles like a crossword or Sudoku. Don't forget your headphones to listen to podcasts or music, watch a show downloaded to a device, or call a friend..
- **Food** - Snacks can help you get through the day. Consider bringing popsicles, candies, ginger chews, or gum to help with the nausea and metallic taste from chemo. If you're in the hospital for longer than a week, you may want to bring a mini fridge so you can store some of your favorite food and have options besides hospital food every day.
- **Liquids** - Bring water, hot tea, and/or a refillable water bottle.
- **Self-care** - Tissues, scent-free lotion, and lip balm are all important. If you're staying overnight or longer, don't forget your toothbrush, toothpaste, and skin care products. You can also bring pictures of your favorite people, pets, places, and memories.
- **The usual** - Don't forget the boring but important stuff like your wallet, ID, insurance card, and keys.