

Supportive Services Update

February 2024

Welcome

Many people celebrate Valentine's Day on February 14 by giving gifts and spending time with others. This Valentine's Day and all month long, we also encourage you to practice self-love.

There are a lot of different ways to treat yourself:

- Buy yourself a small gift or your favourite candy.
- Cook or order in your favourite meal.
- Have a movie night and watch your favourite movie.
- Get some rest and relaxation. Have a long bath.
- Indulge in an activity that you enjoy such as painting, dancing or photography.

Don't forget it is just as important to pamper yourself with the same kind of love and kindness that you'd shower on anyone else.

We always love to hear from you so don't hesitate to connect with us at any time:

Laura O'Brien at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre
306-766-2512

Lindsay Kostyniuk at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre
306-655-2672



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Body Image Group

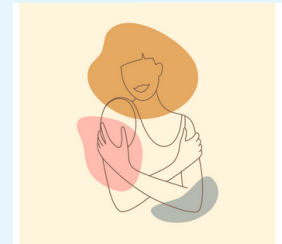
Cancer and its treatment can affect how you look and the way you feel about yourself. Some people have problems eating and gain or lose weight. Many lose their hair or it comes back a different colour or texture. You may have had surgery to remove a part of your body or you may have scars or a stoma. Some people have problems with speaking. Others experience fatigue and memory problems. Any change can be hard to accept and can affect your body image and self-esteem.

The Body Image Group is a 6 week group plus a booster session, which provides you with insight, support, and the tools necessary to guide you on your way to a healthier you.

Topics include:

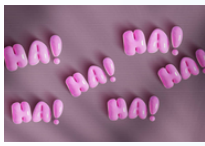
- Self-Compassion
- Transforming Shame
- Sex and Intimacy
- Cognitive Restructuring
- Nutrition and Exercise
- Yoga and Writing

The next group will be offered virtually from April 19 - May 31, 2024 and is open to all patients, no matter where you reside in the province. For more information, contact Lydia Bruse at (306) 766-6219.

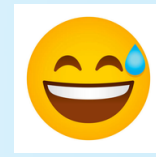


The Look Good Feel Better workshops are another resource to help you feel like yourself again. Available to men and women, the Look Good Feel Better program, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, offers workshops where people with cancer can learn how to manage the appearance-related impact of cancer and its treatment. To learn more, call Laura in Regina at (306) 766-2512 or Cindy in Saskatoon at (306) 655-2688.

Did you know that the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has social workers to support you during your cancer diagnosis? Social workers can assist with personal and relational concerns, emotional support, coping strategies, practical matters, and make referrals to community resources. Ask your healthcare team to refer you to a social worker for support.



The Benefits of Laughter



Babies can start laughing when they're only 3 months old. By the time they're children, they can laugh up to a hundred times a day. But for adults, laughter can get lost in the whirlwind of life's responsibilities and challenges. We often don't feel like laughing when pain and stress demand our attention. But it's exactly then that laughter can pull us through and change our outlook on life.

If you have cancer, life can seem particularly overwhelming. You're juggling appointments and your medication schedule, adjusting to changing treatment plans, and dealing with the side effects of treatments. While your life has been turned upside down, you're probably trying to maintain some semblance of a "normal life." So, where's the laughter in cancer?

Sometimes, allowing yourself the time, and room, to see the humor in some of life's lighter moments can bring levity to the situation. In those moments, choosing to laugh is like a booster shot to your resilience, with no unpleasant side effects and hopefully some unexpectedly pleasant ones.

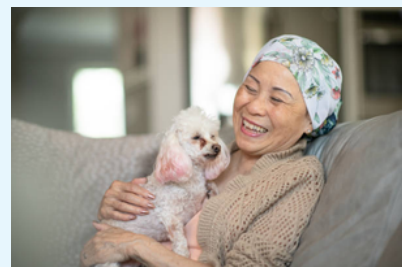
Although laughter may seem like an uncontrolled reaction to something funny, scientists have determined that our bodies can't really tell the difference between authentic laughter and a process behavioral health therapists like to call, "Fake it 'til you make it!" The simple act of laughing can be strong enough to take over your body, and can lead to chemical changes that can actually shift your perspective, even if you're not reacting to something funny but laughing just to laugh.

By moving the muscles in your face to smile, and using your breath and vocal cords to create the sounds of laughter, your brain and body recognize this behavior and work to generate the feelings that are associated with laughter. Research shows that people feel better, lighter, more relaxed and generally clearer-headed after therapeutic laughter. Laughing in an intentional way can program your body for those benefits.

Once you experience how laughter can bring positive changes to your life, you can choose to laugh anytime you feel stressed or even scared. Laughter can alter your perspective on how you define your own healing and how you move through your cancer journey. Laughing with other people can create a safe space for loved ones to come together in an honest and loving way. After all, a family that plays together stays together.

So, the next time you feel overwhelmed by the details and demands of what you're going through, remember that laughter never really leaves you. Simply take a breath, shake your head, find your smile and laugh.

Source: <https://www.cancercenter.com/community/blog/2019/12/power-of-laughter-for-cancer-patients>



Nutrition Topic: Plant-Based Proteins

Animal meats are not the only way to increase your protein intake. Plant-based proteins are an inexpensive and nutritious option to help you increase the amount of protein and fibre you eat. Plant-based proteins include lentils, chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, soy products (such as soy beverage or tofu), nut and seed butters, and other nuts/seeds. Eating plant-based proteins can also help reduce your risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and colon cancer.

Are you new to plant-based proteins? We recommend adding these foods into your diet slowly and drinking plenty of water to help you digest that extra fibre. Not ready to fully commit? Try making the recipe below with ½ lb. ground meat and only one can of beans or lentils.

Note - Some cancer patients are advised to eat a lower fibre diet. Talk to your health care team to find out if a lower fibre diet is recommended for you.

For more information on how to add plant-based proteins to your diet, visit <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Cooking-And-Food/Vegetables-and-Fruit/Benefits-of-Eating-Plant-Based>

Recipe: Meatless Chili

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 1 large onion, diced
 - 1 cup fresh mushrooms, diced
 - 2 bell peppers, diced
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - 1 can (796 mL) diced tomatoes
 - 2 cans (398 mL) tomato sauce
 - 1 can (156 mL) tomato paste
 - 1 can (540 mL) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
 - 1 can (540 mL) lentils, drained and rinsed
- Spices, add to taste: chili powder, cayenne pepper, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot. Sauté onion, mushrooms, peppers, and garlic over medium heat until onions are cooked through.
2. Add canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, beans, and lentils.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 1 ½ hours. Stir frequently to prevent sauce from sticking.
4. Add seasoning to taste.

Makes 8 servings. Each serving provides 222 calories and 13 grams of protein.



Recipe and photo sourced from:
<https://www.nourishonline.ca/wp-content/uploads/NEColorectalEatWell.pdf>

Have you been unintentionally losing weight or eating less than usual? Do you have specific questions about food and nutrition during or after cancer treatments? Ask your health care team to refer you to a cancer centre dietitian for personalized nutrition advice.

In the Library

This Should Not be Happening: Young Adults with Cancer

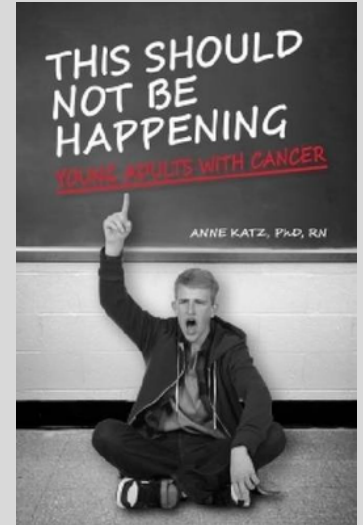
Anne Katz, PhD, RN

No young adult is ever prepared to hear the words "You have cancer." Cancer at this pivotal point in life causes unimaginable disruptions in education, career and relationships as young adults are attempting to establish independence and their own identity.

Based on current research and the author's clinical expertise as well as interviews with 16 young adults and 2 parents of young adults, this book confronts the challenges of cancer head on with frank, pragmatic advice and inspiration on issues unique to young adults dealing with life-changing illness.

Chapters focus on issues related to treatment, emotional effects of living with cancer, survivorship and fear of recurrence, fertility issues, dating and sexuality, dealing with family and friends, returning to work or school, and being your own best advocate.

Find this book and others in the library at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre and Saskatoon Cancer Centre.



Cancer Patient Lodges

The Regina and Saskatoon cancer patient lodges offer a home-away-from-home for patients and their companions. The lodges provide room and board in a supportive environment for out-of-town patients.

The lodges provide guests with a high level of service and comfort. Each of the rooms are designed to feel like home and features a bed, desk, side-chair, towels, extra pillows and blankets, clock radio, and washroom.

The lodges are self-care facilities. Guests are expected to manage their own personal needs, including medications. If assistance is needed, patients are required to have a companion stay to provide these needs.

Guests stay at the lodges for a fee of \$40 per person per night. This includes accommodation, meals and snacks. Parking is available for an additional \$5.00/day.

The lodges accommodate the schedules of the cancer centres. They are open from Sunday at 4:00 p.m. through to Friday at 4:00 p.m. On statutory holidays, the lodge opens at 4:00 p.m. unless the holiday falls on a Friday.

To make a reservation or for more information about the lodges, please contact:

Regina Cancer Patient Lodge
306-359-3166



Saskatoon Cancer Patient Lodge
Located at Parkville Manor
(306) 242-4852

