

HELPFUL RESOURCES

WEB SITES

CANCER ORGANIZATIONS AND INFORMATION

American Cancer Society - www.cancer.org
CancerCare - www.cancercare.org
Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation - www.preventcancer.org
Colon Cancer Alliance - www.ccalliance.org
Lung Cancer Alliance - www.alcase.org
National Cancer Institute - www.cancer.gov
National Cervical Cancer Coalition - www.nccc-online.org
Oral Chemo Advisor - www.oralchemoadvisor.com
PanCAN - www.pancan.org
Susan G. Komen for the Cure - www.komen.org
WebMD - www.webmd.com

SUPPORT

Cancer Hope Network - www.cancerhopenetwork.org
Caring Connections - www.caringinfo.org
Gilda's Club - www.gildasclub.org
Imerman Angels - www.imermanangels.org
Lance Armstrong Foundation - www.livestrong.org
Living Beyond Breast Cancer - www.lbbc.org
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship - www.canceradvocacy.org
The Wellness Community - www.thewellnesscommunity.org
Young Survival Coalition - www.youngsurvival.com

WORK

Cancer and Careers - www.cancerandcareers.org
Job Accommodation Network - www.jan.wvu.edu
Workplace Fairness - www.workplacefairness.org

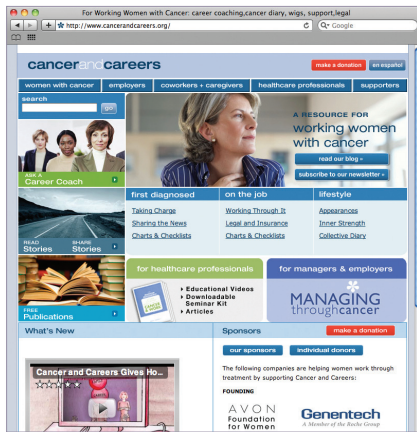
LEGAL

(INCLUDING AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT)

Cancer Legal Resource Center - www.cancerlegalresourcecenter.org
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission - www.eeoc.gov/facts/cancer.html
Patient Advocate - www.patientadvocate.org
U.S. Department of Justice - www.dol.gov



ADVICE FOR EMPLOYEES WITH CANCER WORKING THROUGH TREATMENT



Work life doesn't necessarily stop once you have been diagnosed with cancer. Many people have to, and want to, work during and after treatment.

If you plan to continue working while undergoing cancer treatment, you can make the process easier for yourself, as well as your employer and coworkers, through planning, preparation and communication.

UNDERSTAND THE LAW

It is important to know your legal rights and those of your employer. The best way to prevent any misunderstandings is to be aware of the laws you both need to follow.

KNOW YOUR DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Before you approach colleagues, talk to your doctor specifically about how your illness can affect your career.

- Tell your doctor exactly what your job is and any unique circumstances you'll be coping with.
- Ask for general ideas of how your diagnosis, medication or treatment could affect your job.
- Know the specific details on all treatments and medicine. See if you can be flexible with the time you take your meds, in order to minimize any side effects at work.
- Ask about other new therapeutic options that might be less disruptive to your work schedule.

KNOW YOUR COMPANY

Check with the human resources department to find out how your company has handled situations like yours in the past. If there is no history, you could make some suggestions, such as:

- A schedule with flexible hours
- A temporary shift in duties or even a whole new role within the company
- Working from home on a temporary basis

CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION

You may want to approach your manager and come prepared with suggestions and solutions to your work circumstances. This will help to demonstrate your commitment to your job and the company.

- Stick with clear, concise, factual information and suggestions for handling your course of treatment.

- Use the same professional skills they hired you for—organization, planning, research—to develop and present your plan of action.
- While you should know your legal rights, tread carefully when mentioning them, alarmist supervisors could feel threatened.

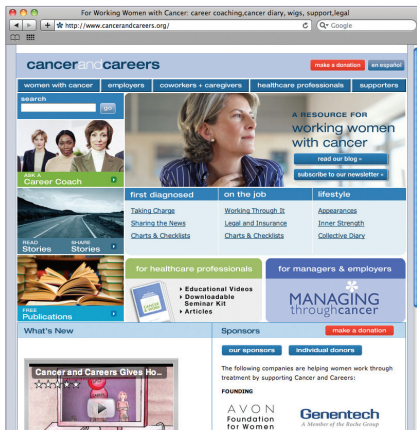
COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

Like it or not, your treatment will affect your job performance in some way. It may be possible to garner support from colleagues by letting them know what to expect. For example, cancer fatigue is very common and can affect your ability to perform, as well as your moods, emotions and concentration. Let them know this can happen, but reiterate your plan of action to cope with it.



ADVICE FOR MANAGERS OF EMPLOYEES WITH CANCER

CREATING A CLIMATE OF SUPPORT



As a manager, at some point, you may have an employee diagnosed with cancer. Your employee with cancer could feel it is an important part of his/her treatment to have support from you. Some will be direct in expressing their needs and others may just need a simple question from you, such as “Am I doing all I can for you?”

Below are some helpful insights from HR experts on developing strategies to have a more engaged employee while they go through treatment for their cancer:

KEEP THE EMPLOYEE FEELING “IN THE LOOP”

If you and the employee feel it is appropriate, arrange for someone to send the employee newsletters or newsy emails if he/she has been off on medical leave. And hopefully you, as a manager, have been able to stay in touch by phone or email once a week, the standard advice offered by HR experts.

When your employee comes back to the office full time, it could be helpful to take some time to sit down with he/she and get him/her back up to speed on what’s been happening during his/her absence.

You might call a brief meeting or do a one-on-one session. Welcome the employee back and fill him/her in on current events at the office.

SUGGEST A PRIVATE AREA FOR THE EMPLOYEE TO MAKE CALLS TO HIS/HER DOCTOR

Getting the results of tests isn’t easy. An employee may be ecstatic if it’s good news but may be tearful if it’s bad. Either way, it could be comforting to hear such news in private.

WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYEE TO MAKE SURE HIS/HER WISHES ON DISCUSSING THEIR HEALTH ARE RESPECTED

Some employees will come back eager to share personal war stories and triumph over cancer. Others will be close-lipped and just want to get on with a normal work life. If you can’t read your employee—whether he/she wants to divulge details or be discreet—you may want to ask.

PROVIDE AN OUTLET FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE TO TALK

Acknowledging that an employee with cancer has an ongoing need to talk to someone is vital, too. An employee may not be comfortable talking to you, his/her manager, so be prepared to link him/her up with someone in HR or another coworker with whom he/she has a trusting relationship.

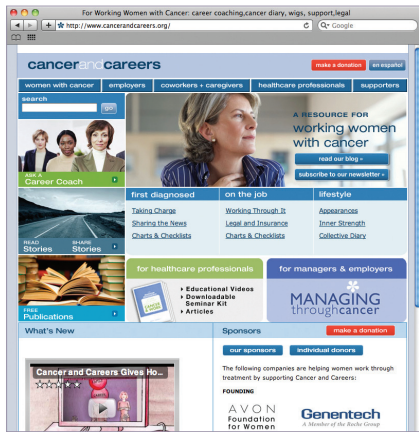
COMMUNICATE YOUR EMPLOYEE’S WISHES TO THE REST OF THE STAFF

Talk to your other employees so they can help make it a smooth transition. If you have an employee who doesn’t want to be asked about his/her medical status, help other employees understand this. It could be as plain and simple as: “This person doesn’t want to be asked every day, ‘How are you doing?’”



ADVICE FOR COWORKERS OF EMPLOYEES WITH CANCER

BEING AN EFFECTIVE POINT PERSON



One way to help a coworker who has to take time off for a cancer-related surgery or treatment is by being their “point person” or liaison. You’ll be the link between your coworker and others in the office.

“When a point person is designated, the person taking leave doesn’t have to communicate frequently with a dozen different people,” says Anne Pasley-Stuart, president and CEO of Pasley-Stuart HR Consultants in Boise, Idaho. “That’s important because it’s essential for the person who’s ill to conserve energy. Energy becomes a precious commodity when someone is recovering from surgery or undergoing treatment for cancer.”

According to Pasley-Stuart, the role of a point person is frequently assigned by a supervisor or manager. “It’s not unusual, however, for a member of someone’s department or work team to volunteer for the role,” she notes. “Often, it’s someone who has been touched by the same problem in his/her own life, who understands the challenges and difficulties his/her coworker is facing.”

If you have some advance warning before your coworker goes on leave, be sure to ask several questions:

- **WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL ISSUES ON YOUR PLATE RIGHT NOW?**
- **WHERE ARE WE IN TERMS OF WORKFLOW?**
- **WHO ARE THE PROBLEM CUSTOMERS OR CLIENTS?**

“You need to know who, what and when,” says Pasley-Stuart. “You have to know where, too—where the files you’re going to need are kept, so you don’t waste time looking for them. If you need to represent your coworker on certain issues, you need to be thoroughly briefed.”

EASING THE TRANSITION

When your coworker comes back to work, he/she will probably want to jump right in and demonstrate he/she can do everything he/she did previously. To ease the transition make a list of things to go over and schedule a debriefing session upon the person’s return to get them up to speed. Realistically, though, it may take a while for your coworker to get back into the swing of things.

CONSIDER YOUR LIMITS

Finally, before volunteering to be a point person, ask yourself if you’re willing to commit to the job for as long as necessary. It’s important work helping someone at a catastrophic time in their lives, but don’t take on more than you can handle. The role you’re assuming may last quite some time—or at least longer than you may have initially envisioned—and you’ve got to be willing to hang in there.



WORKING WITH CANCER

10 WAYS TO MAKE LIFE AND WORK EASIER

1.

Arm yourself with facts.

For example, 80% of those diagnosed with cancer return to work.

2.

Work with your doctor — to work better.

Talk to your doctor about treatment options that may be less disruptive to your work schedule. Ask about drugs and other methods for alleviating side effects.

3.

What they don't know can hurt you.

The Americans with Disabilities Act applies only if your employer knows of your disease.

4.

Study your options.

Know your company's policies on medical conditions, ex time, telecommuting, etc. before you share your news.

5.

Be thoughtful about your message.

Share your news calmly. People will react accordingly.

6.

People want to help, but don't know how. Tell them.

Your boss, co-workers, and human resources team can be a source of support. Encourage them.

7.

Present your manager with your plan of action.

Be proactive. That way, both of you know the work will get done.

8.

Reasonable requests get reasonable responses.

Communicate clearly. Work with your employer to make sure everyone's needs are met.

9.

Do your best to put your health first.

Determine what requires your personal attention. Delegate the rest.

10.

Log on to cancerandcareers.org, an information resource for people working with cancer, their employers, co-workers and caregivers.

