10 TIPS TO GET YOU THROUGH CHEMO

The following tips have been provided by the SHARE helpline volunteers and collected by SHARE helpline blogger Megan Rutherford. Need assistance now? Call our helpline and talk to someone who’s been there 844-ASK-SHARE.

1. KEEP PERSPECTIVE
   Remind yourself: this is not forever. Keep track of your progress. If you are having 6 treatments, after 2, you’re already one third of the way done.

2. ASK QUESTIONS
   Ask your doctor about the newest chemo drugs: many have fewer and less severe side effects.

3. ADJUST AS NEEDED
   Alertside effects with anti-nausea and anti-inflammatory drugs. Ask your doctor if you have to change medication if the drugs are not working or if you have chemo dosage adjusted.

4. MAKE A SCHEDULE
   Plan the day of treatments you have your treatment. Schedule your treatments for a Thursday or Friday so you’ll have the weekend to recuperate.

5. LEARN TO SAY "NO"
   Put yourself first. Pace yourself. Don’t overcommit. Learn to say “no” and set limits to avoid getting run down.

6. PREPARE FOR SETBACKS
   Don’t let setbacks get you down. Blood counts fall, complications arise, a treatment may have to be postponed. Just do whatever you need to do to resolve the problem.

7. BRING A FRIEND
   Bring a friend along to keep you company during a treatment. But no drama queens, no weepers. Watch a movie together or read junk magazines. Sometimes regimens are complicated and a friend can help you figure out your schedule.

8. TAKE CARE
   Try alternative therapies like massage, hypnotherapy and acupuncture to reduce anxiety and stress. Don’t forget moderate exercise and drink lots of water to help flush out the poisons.

9. WRITE THINGS DOWN
   Keep a notebook of questions that arise between treatments so that you can get the answers on your follow-up visit with your medical team.

10. GET SUPPORT
    Join a support group. All these suggestions came from women who have participated in SHARE's breast- and ovarian cancer support programs.

www.sharecancersupport.org