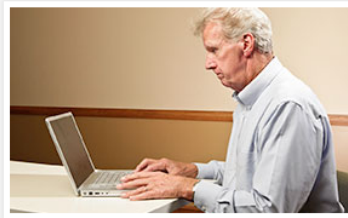


Cancer patients find many layers of support in free websites

CTCA

November 05, 2015



Many challenges come with cancer. One of them, for many, is the driving need to share the journey, and connect with others who can offer help, comfort and resources. A variety of patient support websites are filling the void, offering patients a free, convenient, personalized way to build a network of supporters around them. Popular cancer communication and networking tools like [CaringBridge®](#), [PostHope](#), [GiveForward](#), [MyLifeLine.org](#), [PatientsLikeMe®](#) and [CancerCompass®](#) serve as important online hubs that offer multiple benefits.

The sites can help patients find healthy recipes, for example. Some provide a safe, password-protected arena for sharing their private thoughts, or asking questions that would embarrass patients if posed in a more public setting. A host of websites, including PostHope, GiveForward, and MyLifeLine.org, even offer a venue for raising money to cover health care costs, via a secure portal that also allows patients to view and respond to donor gifts and messages.

They differ in many ways, but these hubs all offer one common benefit: They allow patients a way to update friends and family on the progress of their cancer journey. Most also offer convenient features for sharing posts, photos and videos among an entire network of friends. They can help in many other ways, too, including by:

Facilitating one-stop communication: It is difficult enough to tell your loved ones you have cancer. It is even harder to deliver the news repeatedly, or to update all the supporters in your inner circle about your progress throughout treatment. CaringBridge, PostHope and others make the task easier by letting patients share their story with their circle all at once, in their own way, and if mobile-friendly, while on the run. Share buttons help them spread the message on social media or by email to a chosen group, at the touch of a computer or phone key. Forums on CancerCompass, a [Cancer Treatment Centers of America®-sponsored resource](#), enable patients to share their experiences with and pose questions to others with similar cancers, allowing patients to support one another throughout treatment and other cancer-related challenges.

Welcoming messages of support: Busy treatment schedules, cancer-related side effects and other challenges can sap a patient's energy and ability to socialize. But they may still crave the love and support of friends. Many of these websites offer loved ones a safe place to post inspirational messages, videos, photos and other content.

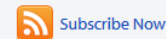
Helping with meal planning: GiveForward's [interactive meal calendar](#) is one example of how meal planning can be simplified for everyone involved. It enables the patient to request meals for specific dates, as well as favorite foods and any dietary preferences or restrictions. Friends or family members then sign up for the community calendar, commit to dates, and specify the foods they'll provide. This helps avoid duplication, and allows for more variety in the types of meals delivered.

Sharing recipes: Among CancerCompass' many popular features is its [recipe sharing portal](#), which allows CTCA® and other cancer patients to post their favorite recipes—and engage in a conversation about them. Swapping ideas for preparing healthy meals is especially important to cancer patients because many find that their [sense of taste, appetite and ability to eat certain foods](#) have been affected by cancer or various treatments. Because nutrition is so important to a cancer patient's health, and because some foods or supplements can interfere with certain treatments, patients should always discuss their diet with their oncology care team.

Offering resources: Navigating the cancer maze can be overwhelming and confusing. Many patients are hungry for reliable information from authorities in cancer care. CancerCompass is one of a number of sites that offer [newsletters](#), [blogs](#) and [news articles](#) on the latest cancer research and treatment developments, as well as [message boards](#) to facilitate a broader discussion. The [Uplift Blog](#) on the CaringBridge site also provides information, [inspiration](#) and [caregiver support](#). Topics include chronic illness, supporting hospitalized friends and healing techniques.

[Learn more about CancerCompass' patient community and how members interact.](#)

Subscribe to our blog



Sign up for the monthly newsletter

Email Address

SIGN UP

How can we help?

[Learn how we treat cancer »](#)

[Explore what makes us different »](#)

[See insurance plans that work with CTCA »](#)

[Discover how we make getting here easy »](#)

[Find tips for managing cancer »](#)

Our 5 most recent blog posts

[Smart travel preparations can help patients stay healthy during holidays »](#)

[Serving up a tasty meal for the cancer patient on your holiday guest list »](#)

[Annual physicals really can be good for your health »](#)

[Cancer patients find many layers of support in free websites »](#)

[Celebrating caregivers in November »](#)