



# Your Guide to Help You Understand Cancer & Heal

*Toon Liivr chi Nishitoohtamun li Kaansayr*

FOR MÉTIS CANCER PATIENTS







*Tannayki pi mina taanishi chi apaachihtaahk*

# Purpose & How To Use This Guide

## **The purpose of this Guide is to:**

- Bring you hope
- Explain cancer
- Share words from Métis cancer patients, survivors and caregivers
- Help you prepare for your cancer appointments
- Help you speak with your cancer care team
- Help you take care of your body, spirit, mind and emotions during treatment and healing
- List services that are available to support you throughout your experience with cancer

You can use the Table of Contents to find what you are looking for, such as transportation support in the 'Financial Support' section, how to talk to family and friends about your cancer diagnosis in the 'Sharing Your Diagnosis with Loved Ones' section, or definitions for unfamiliar words in the 'Common Terms' section. For print copies, you can also find these sections using the tabs that stick out on the side of the Guide. Remember that there is also a Cancer Journal and Planner available to you to help you keep track of medical contact information, medical appointments, medications and your emotions or feelings during the treatment and healing process.



# *Kaykwy Kaa Taashihtaamihk*

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# Your Guide to Help You Understand Cancer & Heal



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*Book Cover Illustration by Victoria Beahm*

# ***Li Boon Jheu, Manitou Ki Pishkaymikoonaan: Kaa Kiikaan***

*Manito Li Boon Jheu, Maarsii ditwaan akoota ki taayaan  
miina tapitow. Sil voo play wiichihin chi nishitohtamaan pi  
miina chi ootinamaan pi chi niikaaniishtamooyen ooma li  
shmaen kaa kiikayhk.*





# God Takes Care of Us: You Will Heal

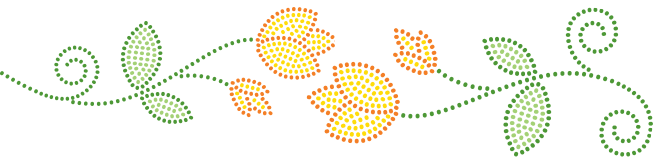
God our Creator, we thank you for being here at this time and always. Please help us to accept, understand and guide us on this path of healing.



**Michif Elder Norman Fleury**

*Elder Norman Fleury is a gifted Michif storyteller and knowledge keeper who has contributed to many language and cultural resources over many decades. He was born on a small farm near the Métis community of St. Lazare, Manitoba.*





*Lii Zistwayr dii Michif kaa Wiihtamihk li Kaansayr*

# Métis Cancer Diagnosis Stories

Being diagnosed with cancer can be overwhelming, and you are likely to experience a range of emotions. Shock, disbelief, anger, fear, anxiety, sadness, and loneliness are all completely normal. Your close family and friends will likely experience these feelings as well. Some may need more time than others to process the diagnosis you have shared with them, so try to be patient. Everyone reacts to things in different ways.

Know that everyone's diagnosis story is different, and whatever you may be feeling is valid. Diagnosis is the first step in your cancer journey and your feelings, as well as the feelings of your family and friends, will change over time. You may have good days and bad days, easy days and difficult days, and that is okay. Never feel like you must hide what you are feeling. Although every journey is unique, you are not alone in your cancer diagnosis experience.





*Photo: Terri Skafel*

“I think when somebody tells you something like that and you’re not expecting it — and I was young — I just thought it was an immediate death sentence, quite frankly from what you hear, right? And being that I don’t really have a lot of experience, anybody I know when you hear about cancer you always hear the bad stories and not the good stories. So, that was my experience with getting diagnosed.”

Terri Skafel, Métis cancer survivor

“He felt okay about it. Doctor told us it’s curable, so he felt okay about it, in time, because he couldn’t help it. He was emotional and everything, but there’s family. We have a big family, and they help him out. Five boys, three girls. Everybody was supporting, and the grandchildren.”

Blanche Woodward,  
Métis caregiver



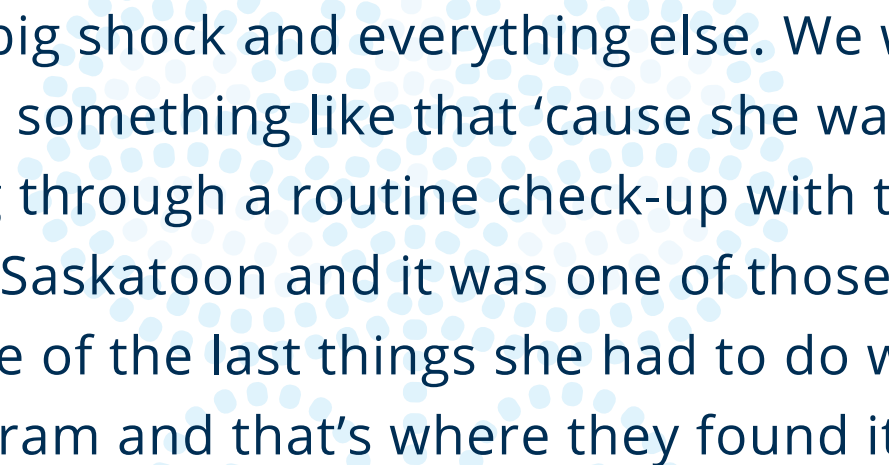
*Photo: Jon and Blanche Woodward and grandson*

“The first appointment was so overwhelming I just kind of shut down. I heard things but I didn’t retain it, so I made another appointment because I lost all the information just trying to grasp and process what he was telling me. So, I made another appointment and I returned with a notepad and paper and pen and questions, and I asked a million questions and he responded to my questions, and I wrote them down so that I could have my answers and if I didn’t remember I could at least go back and check them.”

Nickie Therens, Métis cancer survivor



*Photo: Cindy & Ed Blondeau*



“It was a big shock and everything else. We weren’t expecting something like that ‘cause she was just going through a routine check-up with the doctor in Saskatoon and it was one of those deals where one of the last things she had to do was a mammogram and that’s where they found it.”

Ed Blondeau, Métis caregiver

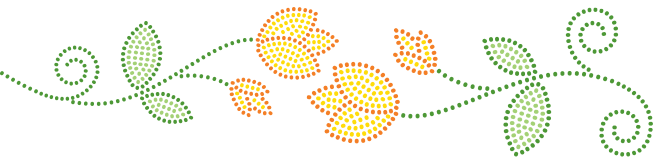
“Stay strong. Have hope and do the best you can to pull through.”

Jon Woodward, Métis cancer survivor



*Photo: Jon Woodward filleting a fish*





*Aen Kishkayhtamihk li Kaansyr dann too Korr*

# Learning About Cancer in Your Body

## **“Why me?”**

You just heard you have cancer; you may feel afraid and alone. Everyone reacts to a cancer diagnosis differently. Your emotions are yours and it’s okay to feel them, it’s okay to cry.

Cancer does not mean “the end.” Cancer is not “death.” Many people survive cancer, you can survive this.

Cancer is an imbalance in your physical body that impacts your cells, but it also affects your emotions, your mental wellbeing, your relationships and so much more. You may feel shocked, in denial, devastated, overwhelmed, numb or angry. These emotions can change frequently and that is okay—allow your emotions to come forward. Everyone copes differently and in their own time. All these feelings are normal, and it is also normal for these feelings to come up again throughout your cancer journey.

You may feel alone even though you have family and friends around. Ask for support and care from your family and friends when you need to. Talk to your family about the support you need and how they can help you. Cancer can become a family disease and uniting makes you stronger.

Do not be afraid to ask your health care team for any support you need. There are many resources available and as a patient it is impossible to know about everything that is out there.



## *Tii Drway* **Your Rights**

**Whatever decision you make, it's your body. Whatever journey you choose, it's yours.**

Your rights are things that every person is allowed to have and should have. You know yourself better than anyone else. Here is a list of ideas that may help you speak up for yourself as you get healthcare and treatment.

“You must advocate for yourself and not be afraid to push. And be somewhat aggressive. Because this is your body and your life is in their hands, so you have a right to be pushy.”

Tami, Métis cancer survivor

## YOUR RIGHTS DURING HEALTH APPOINTMENTS

- **I have the right** to be treated with dignity and respect.
- **I have the right** to request another nurse or oncologist if I do not feel comfortable with the ones assigned to me.
- **I have the right** to have a support person with me.
- **I have the right** to ask for clarification.
- **I have the right** to request a second opinion from another doctor.
- **I have the right** to ask questions and get answers in my own language.
- **I have the right** to speak up for myself or have someone speak up for me.
- **I have the right** to ask a medical professional to clearly explain my health situation and all treatment options available to me.
- **I have the right** to ask for what I want.

## YOUR RIGHTS RELATED TO TREATMENT

- **I have the right** to actively participate in decisions about my care.
- **I have the right** to know the risks and benefits of a procedure or treatment.
- **I have the right** to give or refuse consent for any procedure or treatment and for any reason, at any time.
- **I have the right** to practice my spiritual beliefs, including ceremony and prayer alongside receiving medical cancer treatment.
- **I have the right** to use traditional medicines and forms of treatment alongside Western medicine.
- **I have the right** to change my mind.
- **I have the right** to not have to justify my decisions.
- **I have the right** to say that I am not ready.

## YOUR RIGHTS RELATED TO THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

- **I have the right** to privacy about my cancer diagnosis, treatment and results.
- **I have the right** to receive copies of anything that I sign.
- **I have the right** to see or receive a copy of any of my medical records.

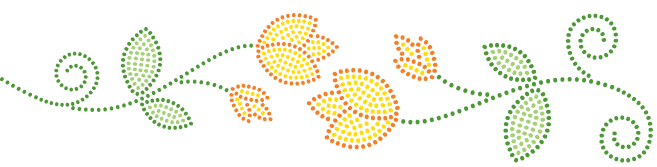


*Photo: Linda and Ron Sopp*



“Stay strong. Listen to your body and yes, don’t take no for an answer by anybody. If you know your body is not feeling right and no one wants to listen, you keep going.”

Linda Sopp, Métis cancer survivor



*Li Kaansayr daan toon Korr Kaykwy Miina*

# **Cancer In Your Body, Next Steps**

You may be hearing a lot of unfamiliar words and terms. Here, you will find an explanation of common cancer terms, tests you may need to do, different cancer types (page 24), how cancer doctors measure cancer (page 26), as well as options for cancer treatment (page 30).

There are a lot of other medical terms (page 87), for a list of common medical terms and definitions to learn what these words mean.



## *Aen Nishitoohtamihk li Kaansayr* **Understanding Cancer**

When seeking information online, be sure to only use credible and reputable information sources, like the websites listed below.

**Saskatchewan Cancer Agency:** [saskcancer.ca](http://saskcancer.ca)

**Canadian Cancer Society:** [cancer.ca](http://cancer.ca)

**eHealth Saskatchewan:** [ehealthsask.ca](http://ehealthsask.ca)

**BC Cancer Agency:** [bccancer.bc.ca](http://bccancer.bc.ca)

**Cancer Care Ontario:** [cancercareontario.ca/en](http://cancercareontario.ca/en)

### **CANCER IS AN IMBALANCE IN YOUR BODY THAT IMPACTS YOUR CELLS**

#### **CANCER STARTS SMALL**

Every cancer starts in a cell. Some cells change from healthy cells to cancer cells. Cancer can affect any part of the body.

#### **LIFE OF A HEALTHY CELL**

Healthy cells are your body's building blocks. Each body has trillions of cells. Cells form our bones, blood and tissue. They run the complicated systems that keep us alive. For example, some cells turn food into energy. Others protect us from illness. Each cell has special instructions (called DNA) to help it do its job. Over time, your cells wear out. Your body constantly replaces old or damaged cells. For example, skin cells wear out and are replaced by new skin cells. This is part of the growing, living and healing process. Your body makes new cells by dividing healthy cells. Each new "daughter" cell should have exactly the same DNA instructions as the "mother" cell.



## CANCER CELLS ARE DIFFERENT

When a cell is damaged, your body tries to repair it. If repairs don't work, the damaged cell is removed. Sometimes damaged cells divide and copy themselves. Cancer develops when a damaged cell grows and makes more damaged cell copies. These bad copies may be missing some DNA instructions or they can have the wrong information. Cancer cells do not behave like healthy cells. Without proper instructions they keep dividing and ignore signals from normal cells. They clump together and can spread to other parts of the body. There are more than 200 kinds of cancer.

## HOW ARE CELLS DAMAGED?

Normal “wear and tear” damages cells. Other causes of cell damage include, but are not limited to, inherited factors, living an unhealthy lifestyle and exposure to environmental contaminants. These other causes or risk factors can act together to increase cancer risk. For example, a smoker's chance of lung cancer increases by at least 50 times if they are exposed to asbestos.

## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF CANCER?

There are five main types of cancer:

1. **Carcinomas** are the most common cancers. They begin in skin or tissues that line the internal organs. These include prostate cancer, breast cancer, lung cancer and colon cancer.
2. **Sarcomas** start in bone, fat, muscle, joint, nerve, blood vessel or deep skin tissues.
3. **Lymphomas** and myeloma are cancers of the lymphatic system, which includes the lymph nodes and plasma cells (part of the body's immune system).
4. **Leukemias** are cancers of the white blood cells, and can be either acute (symptoms which appear and change or worsen rapidly) or chronic (symptoms which develop and worsen over an extended period)
5. **Melanomas** are malignant cancers that start in the cells that colour your skin or eyes.



Remember—there are over 200 types of cancer. Every cancer develops differently. Some advance quickly. Others grow slowly or rarely spread. Each diagnosis is unique. It is important to understand the cancer in your body because it is unique to you.

### **NOT ALL TUMOURS ARE CANCER**

Tumours can be either non-spreading (benign) or spreading (malignant). Benign tumours are not cancer. They do not spread to other parts of the body and are usually harmless. Malignant tumours are cancer. They grow and spread to other parts of your body. When a malignant cancer spreads to another part of the body, it is called **metastasis**.

### **HOW COMMON IS CANCER?**

About half of Canadians will develop cancer in their lifetime, but remember, many survive and cancer is not a death sentence. The most common cancers in women are:

- Breast cancer
- Lung cancer
- Colon cancer

The most common cancers in men are:

- Prostate cancer
- Lung cancer
- Colon cancer

The most common cancers in children are leukemias, which are cancers of the bone marrow and blood. They account for about 30% of all cancers in children.

## STAGES OF CANCER

When you are diagnosed with cancer, your health team needs to figure out the “stage” of the cancer. The stage describes where a cancer is located and if it has spread. In most cases, testing is required to determine a cancer’s stage. Knowing the stage helps the doctor:

- Plan treatment (such as surgery, chemotherapy or radiation therapy)
- Predict whether the cancer might come back after treatment
- Predict your chance of recovery/survival

The first step in defining many cancers is to classify it with the “TNM” system.

## THE “TNM” SYSTEM

The TNM system is used to classify cancers such as breast, colon, and lung cancers that form solid tumours. Cancers of the blood (such as leukemia), central nervous system tumours (such as brain cancers), and childhood cancers have different staging systems.

**T:** The letter “T” plus a number (0 to 4) describes the size and location of the tumour, including how far the tumour has grown into nearby tissues.

**N:** The letter “N” plus a number (0 to 3) describes whether cancer is in the lymph nodes and, in some types of cancer, how many lymph nodes contain cancer.

**M:** The letter “M” plus a number (0 or 1) indicates whether the cancer has metastasized (spread) to other parts of the body

## CANCER STAGE GROUPING

Doctors determine the stage of a cancer by combining the T, N and M classifications.

Most cancers have 4 stages: stages I (one) to IV (four). Some cancers also have a stage 0 (zero), which refers to a 'precancer'. This stage of cancer is often highly curable, usually by removing the entire tumour with surgery.

**Stage I** is usually a small cancer or tumour that has not grown deeply into nearby tissues and has not spread to the lymph nodes or other parts of the body. It is often called early-stage cancer.

**Stage II and III** cancers or tumours are larger in size, have grown more deeply into nearby tissue, and may have spread to lymph nodes, but not to other parts of the body. Stage II cancer is often considered early-stage, while Stage III is usually considered advanced stage cancer.

**Stage IV** cancer has spread to other organs or parts of the body. It may also be called advanced or metastatic cancer.

Doctors sometimes use lower case letters to further define cancer characteristics. Doctors use other factors to decide on treatment and predict how the disease will progress:

- **"Grade"** which describes how different the cells look compared to healthy cells
- **"Tumour markers"** which are substances particular to certain types of cancer
- **"Genetic markers"** which relate to genes (the basic physical and functional unit of heredity) involved in a cancer



## ***Aen li Soondiihk aen Kishkayhtamihk apray li Kaansayr***

# **Tests After Cancer Diagnosis**

**You will likely need to do follow-up tests to better understand the cancer in your body. These tests may include the ones listed below; however, they are specific to your own type of cancer.**

### **PET SCAN**

A positron emission tomography (PET) scan is an imaging test that allows your doctor to see where cancer cells may be and helps determine where and how much the cancer has spread.

### **MAMMAPRINT + BLUEPRINT® TEST**

The Mammaprint® 70-Gene Breast Cancer Recurrence Assay may be used to determine the risk that a patient's cancer will return. A high-risk score means the cancer has a three-in-10 chance of returning.

### **ONCOTYPE DX® TEST**

The Oncotype DX lab test is used to determine whether chemotherapy is likely to benefit patients with early-stage breast cancer. It also helps evaluate the likelihood of disease recurrence.

### **CA-125 TEST**

A CA-125 test measures the amount of the cancer antigen 125 (CA-125) in a person's blood. CA-125 is a protein that is a biomarker or tumor marker.

### **PROSTATE-SPECIFIC ANTIGEN TEST**

A prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test measures the level of PSA in the blood. PSA is a protein produced in the prostate by both healthy and cancerous cells. High levels can indicate the presence of cancer, but may also be the result of non-cancerous conditions.





## *Lii Traytmaan di Kaansayr* **Treating Cancer**

Once a diagnosis is made and cancer is confirmed, the next step is treatment to re-balance the imbalance in your body. There are four main ways to treat cancer:

- Surgery
- Cancer drugs (chemotherapy, immunotherapy)
- Radiation therapy
- Hormone therapy (common for breast cancer)

Surgery removes cancer cells from your body; cancer drugs are used to attack and kill cancer cells internally; radiation therapy uses intense energy rays targeted directly at the cancer cells to kill them; and hormone therapy disrupts the body's natural hormones to deprive cancer that uses hormones to grow.

A CA-125 test measures the amount of the cancer antigen 125 (CA-125) in a person's blood. CA-125 is a protein that is a biomarker or tumor marker.

Other treatment types include:

- Biological Therapy
- Focal Tumour Ablation
- Kyphoplasty & Vertebroplasty
- Palliative Care
- Psychosocial Interventions
- Stem Cell Transplant
- Clinical trials

## CLINICAL TRIALS

Clinical trials are research studies that test new ways to prevent, detect, treat or manage cancer or other diseases. Participation in clinical trials is voluntary, and you should never feel pressure to participate.

For a current list of clinical trials, consult the following websites:

***Saskatchewan Cancer Agency***

*saskcancer.ca/research-article/clinical-trials*

***Canadian Cancer Trials***

*canadiancancertrials.ca*

(Clinical trials in all Canadian provinces)

***National Cancer Institute***

*cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/clinical-trials/advanced-search*

(Clinical trials in Canada, United States and around the world)

Clinical trials websites are often developed for researchers. If you find it hard to understand the medical language used, your doctor should be able to help. You may also want to ask your doctor about trials that are funded privately, or trials funded by drug companies – these trials may not be listed on these websites.

If you do not have access to the Internet or have questions about clinical trials currently being done in Canada, contact the Cancer Information Service toll-free at 1-888-939-3333.



# Lii Plaan poor lii Traytmaan di Kaansayr

## Cancer Treatment Plans

The way that you decide to get rid of the cancer is unique to you, so the type and order of treatments will vary from patient to patient. Some may undergo one type of treatment, others a combination. Some might join clinical drug trials. The treatment plan is determined by your type and stage of cancer, and by the treatments and services you and your healthcare team choose together. Treatment options may be impacted by other health related conditions you may have. You can track your treatment plan and appointments using the Journal and Planner for Métis Cancer Patients.

**VISIT SCHEDULE**  
Tuesday April 19, 2022 to Tuesday May 31, 2022

<b>Patient</b>	<b>Sask Health Care #</b>
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>Patient ID</b>	

**Address**

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**Institution** Saskatoon Cancer Centre  
**Telephone** (306) 655-2662  
**Address** 20 Campus Drive  
 Saskatoon Saskatchewan Canada S7N 4H4

**Date** Monday May 09, 2022  
**Visit Provider** Dr. V  
**Time/Event** 09:35 AM Chest RT-Mirage  
 RT - Mirage location: Radiation Oncology

**Date** Tuesday May 10, 2022  
**Visit Provider** Dr. A  
**Time/Event** 12:30 PM Carboplatin/Etoposid 03  
 Bed 03 location: Chemotherapy

**Date** Tuesday May 10, 2022  
**Visit Provider** Dr. V  
**Time/Event** 03:00 PM Chest RT-Mirage  
 03:20 PM RT Review RT-Reviews Dr. V  
 RT-Mirage location: Radiation Oncology  
 RT-Reviews location: Radiation Oncology

**Date** Tuesday May 11, 2022  
**Visit Provider** Dr. V  
**Time/Event** 08:20 AM Chest RT-Mirage  
 RT-Mirage location: Radiation Oncology

**Date** Tuesday May 11, 2022  
**Visit Provider** Dr. A  
**Time/Event** 10:30 AM Etoposide-90 Chair 08  
 Chair 08 location: Chemotherapy

## Radiation Therapy

### My Radiation Treatment Plan

My Treatment Area:

My Radiation Oncologist

See Radiation Oncologist

↓

CT Simulation

↓

Radiation Treatments

↓

→

Weekly Appointments  
(with a doctor, nurse  
or radiation therapist)

Follow-up Instructions

↓

Discharged  
(to care of family doctor or specialist)

Please bring this plan to your first CT Simulation appointment and radiation therapy treatment appointment.





Photo: Alfred Tinker

“I didn’t have any bad experiences with the doctors and nurses, none whatsoever, it was just a beautiful experience. What I’ve experienced is, they were really considerate of people from the North. They gave me my own timetable to choose when I want the dates - do I want them in the mornings, because I have to travel home, and it’s five and a half hours drive.”

Alfred Tinker, Métis cancer patient



## ***Toon Korr Kaa Atooshkaatamun*** **Physical Activity**

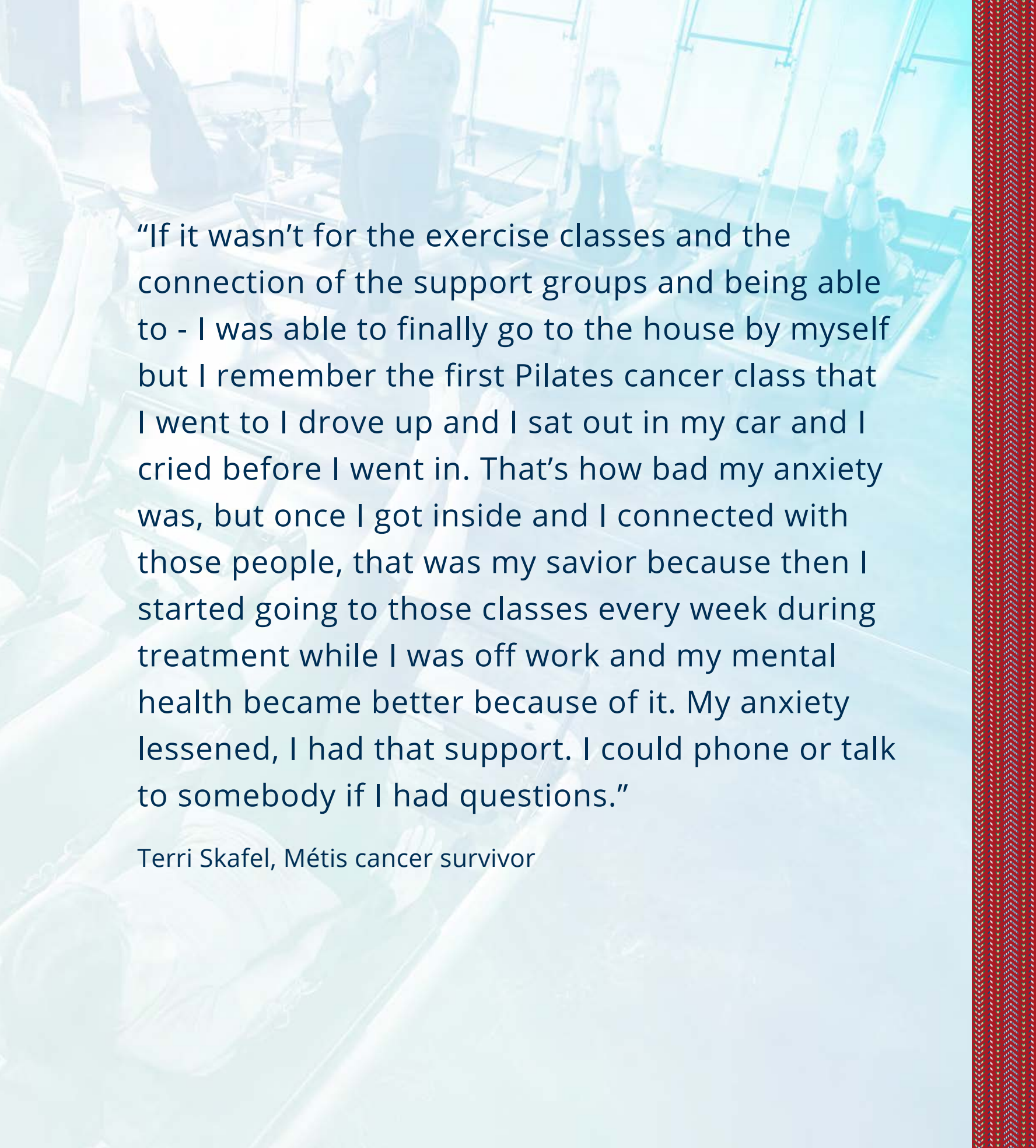
Staying active during and after cancer treatment can be greatly beneficial to your health. Being active during treatments can help relieve some fatigue that is often felt during cancer treatments. Physical activity may also help with anxiety, stress and fatigue and may impact your appetite.

The amount of exercise that you can do during your cancer treatment depends on your overall health and is different for everyone. Factors that may affect the amount of physical activity include how you're coping with treatments and the side effects.

Always check with your doctor before starting an exercise program even if you were active before your cancer diagnosis.

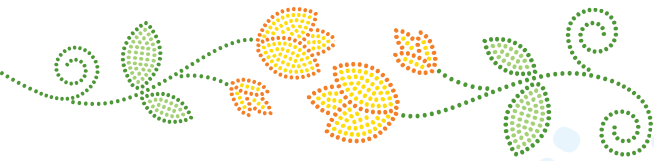
### **Some tips to exercising during treatment are:**

- Remember everyone is different, and exercise should be unique to you and what you are able to do safely.
- Start slow. Exercise, like walking, can be increased slowly depending on what you're able to do.
- Exercise when you have the most energy or feel the best.
- Try to exercise every day. Even if you're feeling unwell, something small like gentle stretching for a few minutes can help.
- Make exercise fun, include a pet, friend or a loved one.
- Listen to music.
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep yourself hydrated.  
*maskihkiwapoy minihkwe* (Plains Cree: have some tea)

A group of people are participating in a Pilates class on a boat. The participants are lying on their backs on mats, performing exercises. A woman in the foreground is lying on her back with her arms raised. In the background, a woman is standing and demonstrating an exercise. The boat has large windows and a wooden deck. The overall scene is bright and airy.

“If it wasn’t for the exercise classes and the connection of the support groups and being able to - I was able to finally go to the house by myself but I remember the first Pilates cancer class that I went to I drove up and I sat out in my car and I cried before I went in. That’s how bad my anxiety was, but once I got inside and I connected with those people, that was my savior because then I started going to those classes every week during treatment while I was off work and my mental health became better because of it. My anxiety lessened, I had that support. I could phone or talk to somebody if I had questions.”

Terri Skafel, Métis cancer survivor



*Taanishi Kayaash Pishkaapamishooyen pi Kaa Kiikayen*

**“La bonne Michin”**

**It's Good Medicine: Traditional W**

All cultures hold traditional wellness knowledge and practices, including the Métis. There are many different traditional healing methods that are still in use and have been used successfully with medical cancer treatment. Western medical treatment can be complemented with Indigenous Traditional and holistic practices that address the disease. The best way to connect the two streams of healing is to have an open discussion with your health care team. Sometimes traditional or alternative healing methods can be unfamiliar, so it is important to learn from each other. See page 11 of the Journal and Planner for Métis Cancer Patients for questions to ask yourself about Traditional healing options.

It is up to you to decide what you need for your journey. Stay informed and make sure your choices are safe. Speak with your doctor about having Traditional healing added to your treatment options. Your care team may be opposed to non-Western forms of healing. If this is the case, remember to stand your ground. This decision is your right and impacts your body.

To prevent dangerous side effects, speak with your doctor before ingesting plant medicines or participating in Traditional healing practices. You can also talk to pharmacists in the Cancer Centre about using Traditional or alternative medicines alongside Western medical treatment. **The Canadian Cancer Society website has more information about Traditional healing and cancer:**

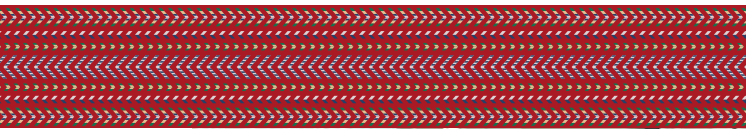
Visit [cancer.ca](http://cancer.ca) - search 'Aboriginal traditional healing' in the search tab



# Wellness and Healing

Traditional medicine is an oral knowledge and practice. There are a few ways to access those who are trained in Traditional medicines and healing:

- Ask to speak to an Elder at the Cancer Centre: [\(639\) 625-2010](tel:6396252010) or [info@saskcancer.ca](mailto:info@saskcancer.ca)
- Contact the University of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal Student Centre and ask to connect with an Elder: [\(306\) 966-5790](tel:3069665790) or [asc@usask.ca](mailto:asc@usask.ca).
- Ask your local Friendship Centre, Regional Director and Local President if you can speak to an Elder or community Knowledge Keeper.
- If you are in Saskatoon, the Saskatoon Tribal Council may be able to connect you with an Elder: [\(306\) 956-6100](tel:3069566100).
- Contact the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Ministry of Health who can put you in touch with a Traditional Healer or Medicine Knowledge Keeper: [\(306\) 292-7480](tel:3062927480) or [healthprograms@mns.work](mailto:healthprograms@mns.work)



## TEACHING ON INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

“There’s no such thing as Métis medicine, it’s Indian medicine because it comes from the First Nations originally, but the Michif used them.

My grandmother was a medicine woman. A well-respected medicine woman who brought many babies into the world, healed many people.

This lady that my grandmother learned from to be a medicine woman, she learned it from a Plains Cree lady that was a medicine woman. That lady was a doctor in medicine and taught my grandma, who was interested. My grandmother was not that Cree woman, she was herself, but she learned through that knowledge. There’s not one doctor that’s the same, which is good! Creator, God, made us special. There will never be another like me, like you.

Traditional Indigenous medicine is an oral knowledge, it’s not written. Historically, because of colonization and cultural genocide, a lot of our people didn’t want to share with others because they were abusing it. And not only that, the customs, they were all spiritual. It’s not a written thing, it’s not like the Bible, this is world teachings.

My grandma and others were doctors in our culture, in our own way. They were respected by the Western doctors. The medicines are land-based. They were life-giving and involved lifelong learning. Today, there’s Western medicine and there’s Traditional medicine so how do we infuse them? I think that’s what we’re trying to do here.”

**Michif Elder Norman Fleury**

*Taanishi chi Tootamiihk Avaan kaa  
Pishkaapamikawiyen kaa Piihtikwayin poor li Kaansayr*

## Preparing to Enter Cancer Care

It can be uncomfortable and unfamiliar going to the hospital or the Cancer Centre. Remember that underneath their uniforms, the doctors and nurses are people just like you—they are relatives, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, daughters and sons. Your appointments may be less scary if you build a good relationship with them.



**TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**



**CULTURAL OR FAITH SUPPORTS**



**SOCIAL WORKER SUPPORT**



**NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION**



## *Maashakoonachik Aniki chi Wiichihishkik* **Gathering Supports**

Having support during your healing journey is important. Think about the kind of support you need from your family or friends. Think about someone that you can bring as your support person as you begin navigating through your cancer journey. Some things to keep in mind when choosing this person is finding someone who:

- You trust.
- Makes you laugh.
- Is reliable and will stick to scheduled appointments.
- You can open up to and speak freely about your fears or concerns.
- Will be honest about translating what your healthcare team has said.
- Understands your beliefs and culture.
- Will advocate for you.
- Can ask your healthcare team questions on your behalf.
- Can take notes for you during your appointments.





“Find somebody positive in your life that can come over and have coffee with you. My aunt used to come over and have coffee with me every week. Surround yourself with positive people.”

Nickie Therens, Métis cancer survivor



## ***Avaan ta Praamyayr Vizit*** **Before Your First Visit**

Before you visit your health care provider, write your questions down on a piece of paper and ask all the questions you may have. Use the journal and planner associated with this Guide to write your questions down and track the answers, or audio-record your conversations with your health care provider using your cell phone. If you need help doing this, ask a family member. The audio recording of your visit may help you remember the answers to your questions if you forget. The journal has a lot of great suggestions for questions to ask your care team.

Bring a family member, friend, Elder or support person to your appointments to help you ask questions. They can also help you remember what was said by the health care provider. A social worker from the Cancer Centre can be asked to sit in and take notes during your appointment if you would like.

A Patient Navigator will try to contact you by phone before your first visit. This is a social worker who will make sure you have the information you need to prepare for your first visit; they can help you make transportation and accommodation plans so you can get to your appointment at the clinic. The Patient Navigator can connect you with helpful resources both within the Cancer Centre and in your community while you wait for your appointment.

You will be assigned a number to identify you in the cancer system. Try not to be offended by being asked for your number as it is your patient record number used to protect your confidentiality. All your medical information is tied to this number and the Cancer Centre will ask for it regularly.




“Find the bossiest relative and drag them along with you.”

Cindy Blondeau, cancer patient

**HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO PREPARE FOR YOUR FIRST VISIT TO THE CANCER CENTRE:**

- Think about what is important to you.
- Be prepared to stay near the Cancer Centre if you are travelling far from home. There are cancer patient lodges in both Saskatoon and Regina located near the Cancer Centres. The lodges offer very affordable rates and include three meals per day and snacks. A support person can also stay with you at the lodge.
- If you do not want to stay at a cancer patient lodge, many hotels in Saskatoon and Regina offer a ‘medical stay’ discount. Call the hotel directly to request this. You will need information from your appointment letters to confirm the discount.
- Contact the Patient Navigator or your social worker at the Cancer Agency if you need assistance with travel arrangements.
- See page 51 for financial assistance options.
- Speak with your community health centre about support services.
- Speak to an Elder or healer if you are looking for traditional supports.
- If you do not feel comfortable with your oncologist, you can ask to see a new oncologist at the Cancer Centre. You might not communicate well with them, or maybe your personalities do not fit well together. Know that you can request a different one and that you have the right to feel comfortable with your oncologist. If you would like to see a different oncologist, speak with your nurse, social worker or any member of your care team that you feel comfortable with.
- You can also get a second opinion from another oncologist about your treatment options if you are unsure about the plan of care or anything else related to your care. Again, speak with your nurse, social worker or another trusted member of your care team.



“Stay positive, ask questions if you don’t understand. Don’t just say ‘yes’. If you don’t understand, ask questions. Have a support person with you to help you decipher that conversation afterwards, and just stay positive. There’s lots of help, lots of things out there. You’re not the only person going through it. And we’re a strong group of people.”

Anita N. Smith, Métis cancer patient



*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Anita N Smith*



*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Tami Bekolay*



## *Kaa ishi Nishtoohtamihk la Laang* **Language Interpretation**

You can call the Cancer Centre to arrange language interpretation services ahead of your appointment. Availability of interpretation services may be limited in some languages, so you are encouraged to bring a trusted support person who can help if these services are not available.

“Find laughter, that was how I got through, was lots of laughter. And know there’s a light at the end of the tunnel. You must think that you’re gonna beat it, you have to believe that. And don’t be afraid to ask someone to make a meal for you.”

Tami Bekolay, Métis cancer survivor



## *Taanishi chi Wiihtamwaachik ta Faamii*

# Sharing Your Diagnosis with Loved Ones

One of the biggest and sometimes scariest challenges you will face is telling your friends and family that there is cancer in your body. You may feel scared to tell them, and nervous about their reaction. You may also still be in shock yourself. Hearing a cancer diagnosis brings up different feelings for everyone, and everyone processes things differently. Some people may need more time to cope with the news and to accept the diagnosis, and that's okay. Sometimes it may feel like a better idea to keep the information to yourself to avoid hurt, pain and worry. Your loved ones will eventually realize something is wrong. Your loved ones can be your medicine in a difficult time. Sharing your diagnosis is important for both of you. **Here are some helpful tips when having this discussion:**

- Be as honest as possible about your situation and how you are feeling. It's okay if you don't feel brave and strong, and you don't need to pretend to be happy.
- Prepare yourself for the conversation. Remember that it may not go as you plan since everyone responds differently. Everyone thinks differently, acts differently and responds to stressful news in different ways. Remember that some people may need extra time to process the news you're telling them.
- It may be beneficial to gather more information for yourself and your loved ones about your diagnosis. Be truthful about your diagnosis and your prognosis (likelihood of recovery).
- Share your news in a place where you are calm and relaxed. A place of privacy may be the most appropriate so everyone can feel safe when expressing their feelings and emotions.
- Have some extra support available when you're sharing the diagnosis. This can be another friend that already knows, an Elder, or a social worker that you're comfortable with.
- Give the information in small amounts. This gives people time to process, to understand and to think of questions they may have.
- Understand that people react to the news differently. It's okay to sit in silence; this is often a sign of processing the information.
- Only answer the questions that you are comfortable answering.



## HERE ARE TIPS FOR DISCUSSING YOUR CANCER DIAGNOSIS WITH CHILDREN:

- Have a plan about what you want to discuss with your children; ask a support person to join.
- Discuss the basics and use words that the child can understand.
- Information can be given in steps, and it is an evolving conversation.
- Find out what the child already knows about cancer, and clear up any misleading information or myths they may have.
- Be clear about the name of the cancer, the part of the body that has the cancer, and how it will be treated.
- Let the child know that it is okay to ask questions, and that feeling worried is a normal reaction to hearing a loved one has cancer. Normalize how they are feeling.
- Don't assume children will have the same fears as you. Ask them what they want to know and try to only answer questions they ask.
- Tell children when you don't know the answer to a question and let them know you will find out the answer for them.
- Continue to create opportunities for children to ask questions as they come up.

Ask your social worker for suggestions, or search for these resources:

### **"Reaching out to your child when cancer comes into your family: A guide for parents"**

BC Cancer Agency Website at [bccancer.bc.ca](http://bccancer.bc.ca)

### **"Speaking Frankly About Cancer- What do I tell the Kids?"**

Cancer Support Community at <https://orders.cancersupportcommunity.org/>  
(see "Cancer topics" > "Talking About Cancer")

### **"When your parent has cancer- A Guide for Teens"**

National Cancer Institute at <https://www.cancer.gov/publications>





## *Taanday Laarzhaan chi Mishkawut*

# Financial Support

Traveling to your cancer appointments can be a burden. The costs of transportation and accommodation can add up. If you are struggling with the cost of getting to your appointments, know that there are financial support options available to you. Your social worker at the Cancer Centre can connect you with financial and other supports.

### TRANSPORTATION

- Speak with your social worker to explore options if transportation is a barrier.
- Métis Nation–Saskatchewan’s Medical Travel Assistance Program offers financial reimbursement to registered Métis citizens for travel to medical appointments outside their home community. An application can be found on the MN–S website at [metisnationsk.com/medical-travel-assistance-program](http://metisnationsk.com/medical-travel-assistance-program) or contact the Health Support Worker at 306-292-7480 or [healthprograms@mns.work](mailto:healthprograms@mns.work) for more information.
- The ride-sharing app “Uber” is available in Saskatoon and Regina.
- Canadian Cancer Society “Wheels of Hope Program” is available in Saskatchewan. Call 1-888-939-3333 or 1-866-786-3934 or visit [cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help/transportation](http://cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help/transportation)
- Many medical expenses, including travel, can be deducted from your or your partner/spouse’s income tax. Travel expenses can only be claimed as a medical expense if you traveled **more than 40 km (one way)** from your home to get medical services, whether it is by private vehicle or public transportation. For over 80 km, accommodations and meals may, in some instances, also be claimed. The following conditions must be met to claim transportation and travel expenses:
  - Substantially equivalent medical services were not available near your home.
  - You took a reasonably direct travelling route.
  - Under the circumstances, it is reasonable for you to travel to that place for those medical services.

If a medical practitioner writes that you were not able to travel alone, you can also claim the transportation and travel expenses of an attendant. See ‘Income Tax Deductions’ header on page 55 for more information.

## Financial Support



### TAXI SERVICES IN SASKATOON:

- Riide YXE - (306) 652-2222 (Wheelchair accessibility available upon request)
- Golden Mobility (306) 242-9060 or (877) 825-7542 (Wheelchair accessible)
- Quality Cabs - (306) 651-8888
- Blue Line Taxi - (306) 653-3333
- YXE City Cabs - (306) 444-3333

### TAXI SERVICES IN REGINA:

- Riide - (306) 652-2222
- Van De's Accessible Transit (306) 531-6623 (Wheelchair Accessible)
- Capital Cabs - (306) 791-2222
- Co-op Taxi Regina - (306) 525-2727
- Driven With Care (306) 541-7433 (Wheelchair Accessible)
- Regina Cabs - (306) 992-2543

### ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT IN SASKATOON

Access Transit provides on demand services to those who cannot take fixed-route transit due to physical or cognitive disabilities. You must apply to use this service and pay standard transit fees. Call (306) 975-3555 to receive an application form, or go to [transit.saskatoon.ca/access-transit/how-apply](http://transit.saskatoon.ca/access-transit/how-apply)

### ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT IN REGINA

Regina Paratransit is a scheduled, door-to-door shared ride transportation service for those experiencing a disability. You must register to use this service and pay standard transit fees. Call (306) 777-7007 to request an application

form or search 'paratransit' in the search tab at [www.regina.ca](http://www.regina.ca)

### HOSPITAL PARKING

- You will receive a parking pass that allows you to park near the Cancer Centre.
- You still need to pay for parking during your appointments at the hospital/Cancer Centre.
- Speak with your social worker at the Cancer Centre if you have concerns about parking fees.

### ACCOMMODATION

- Cancer lodges in Saskatoon and Regina have an affordable rate. This includes meals.
- Some hotels offer a medical stay discount. It is a good idea to call ahead and ask when you book hotel rooms.
- Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Medical Travel Assistance Program may be able to provide or reimburse medical accommodation costs in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert when traveling for appointments. An application can be found on the MN–S website at [metisnationsk.com/medical-travel-assistance-program](http://metisnationsk.com/medical-travel-assistance-program) or contact the Health Support Worker at (306) 292-7480 for more information.

### HOTELS IN SASKATOON NEAR CANCER CENTRE/ROYAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL:

- College Park Bed and Breakfast  
181 Carleton Dr., Saskatoon  
(306) 653-9449
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Saskatoon East-University 1838 College Dr., Bldg #2, Saskatoon  
1-877-660-8550 or (306) 954-1250

- Inn on College  
1020 College Dr., Saskatoon  
(306) 665-9111
- Netty's Nest Visitor Lodge  
1024 College Dr., Saskatoon  
(306) 979-6378
- Ronald McDonald House  
1011 University Dr., Saskatoon  
(306) 244-5700 (patient must be under 18)
- Saskatoon Cancer Patient Lodge/Parkville Manor  
625-25th St. East, Saskatoon  
(306) 242-4852

#### **HOTELS IN REGINA NEAR ALLAN BLAIR CANCER CENTRE**

- Days Inn by Wyndham Regina Airport West  
4899 Harbour Landing Dr., Regina  
(306) 584-3297
- Home Inn & Suites – Regina Airport  
4801 Harbour Landing Dr., Regina  
1-844-754-4663 or (306) 546-4663
- Regina Cancer Patient Lodge  
4104 Dewdney Ave., Regina  
(306) 359-3166
- Residence Inn by Marriott  
1506 Pasqua St., Regina  
(639) 739-3010 (Medical Discount)
- Seven Oaks Hotel  
777 Albert St., Regina  
(306) 757-0121 (Medical Discount)

#### **HOTELS IN REGINA NEAR REGINA GENERAL HOSPITAL:**

- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Regina Downtown  
1907 11th Ave., Regina  
1-877-660-8550 (Medical Discount)

- Ramada Plaza Hotel  
1818 Victoria Ave., Regina  
1-800-870-3911 (medical discount)
- The Wingate by Wyndham Regina  
1700 Broad St., Regina  
1-800-228-1000 or (306) 584-7400  
(medical discount)

#### **FOOD**

Uber Eats (a food delivery service) is available in Saskatoon and Regina. You can download the app, or go to [ubereats.com/saskatoon-sk](https://ubereats.com/saskatoon-sk) (Saskatoon) or [ubereats.com/ca/city/regina-sk](https://ubereats.com/ca/city/regina-sk) (Regina)

#### **EATING IN SASKATOON:**

##### ***Places to eat near the Cancer Centre in Saskatoon:***

- Louis' Loft (\$\$) (306) 966-6903 [ussu.ca/louisloft/](https://ussu.ca/louisloft/)
- Filosphi Wise Cuisine (\$\$) (306) 956-7777 [filosphi.ca](https://filosphi.ca)
- Harveys (\$) (306) 956-0264 [harveys.ca](https://harveys.ca)
- Subway (\$) (306) 955-3455 [subway.com](https://subway.com)
- Wow Pizza (\$) (306) 665-6666  
[wowpizza-collegedrive-saskatoon](https://wowpizza-collegedrive-saskatoon)
- Extreme Pita (\$) (306) 384-5555 [extremepita.com](https://extremepita.com)

##### ***Accessible Food Options in Saskatoon:***

- Friendship Inn, Open Daily, Breakfast @ 8:00 am – 9:30 am, Lunch @ 11:30 am – 1:30 pm
- The Bridge, Open Monday-Friday, Breakfast @ 8:30 am – 11:30 am, Lunch @ 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
- Saskatoon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre, Open Monday – Friday, Breakfast @ 10:00am – 12:00pm, Supper @ 3:00pm – 5:00pm
- SWITCH, Open Monday & Wednesday, Bagged Meals 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

## Financial Support



- Riversdale Fridge, Open 24/7, First Come First Served
- Lighthouse Supported Living, Open Monday & Friday, Supper @ 5:30 pm
- Salvation Army, Open Monday-Friday, \$2 Supper @ 5:30 pm
- Bannock Express, Open Tuesday – Sunday 11:00 am – 7:00 pm, Call-in program for a hot meal @ (306) 954-6317

### **Other healthy choices in Saskatoon:**

- Freshii (\$) (306) 700-2944 [freshii.com](http://freshii.com)
- BarBurrito (\$) (306) 683-0541 [barburrito.ca](http://barburrito.ca)
- Hometown Diner (\$\$) (306) 665-1565 [hometowndiner306.com](http://hometowndiner306.com)
- Poached Breakfast Bistro (\$\$) (306) 651-2255 [flintsaloon.com](http://flintsaloon.com)
- Living Sky Café (\$\$) (306) 933-3021 [livingskycafe.com](http://livingskycafe.com)
- Olive Garden Italian Restaurant (\$\$) (306) 668-0088 [olivegarden.com](http://olivegarden.com)
- Citizen Café and Bakery (\$\$) (306) 343-1403 [citizencafeandbakery.ca](http://citizencafeandbakery.ca)
- Press'd Sandwich Shop (\$) (306) 954-9955 [pressdsandwiches.ca](http://pressdsandwiches.ca)
- D'Lish by Tish Café (\$\$) (306) 371-3574 [lifeisdlish.com](http://lifeisdlish.com)

### **EATING IN REGINA:**

#### **Places to eat near Allan Blair Cancer Centre in Regina:**

- Tim Horton's, next door to Cancer Centre
- Cora Breakfast and Lunch (\$) (306) 585-2672

- The Chopped Leaf (\$\$) (306) 789-5323
- The Canadian Brewhouse (\$\$) (306) 522-2246
- Meltwhich Food Co. (\$\$) (306) 586-5692
- The Meating Room (\$) (306) 559-0244
- Olive Garden Italian Restaurant (\$\$) (306) 525-0661
- Five Guys (\$\$) (306) 352-5545
- The Lancaster Taphouse (\$\$) (306) 570-2323
- McDonald's (\$) (306) 525-0057

#### **Places to eat near Regina General Hospital:**

- Western Pizza (\$\$) (306) 791-0201 [westernpizzaexpress.ca](http://westernpizzaexpress.ca)
- Trifon's Pizza & Spaghetti House (\$\$) (306) 525-2188 [trifons.com](http://trifons.com)
- Wild Sage Kitchen & Bar (\$\$) (306) 525-7570

#### **Accessible Food Options in Regina:**

- The Salvation Army, Open Thursday, Lunch @ 11:00 am (various baked goods available Monday-Friday starting @ 1:00 pm)
- Indigenous Christian Fellowship, \$2 Soup & Bannock Wednesday @ 12:00 pm, \$1 Breakfast Saturday @ 10:00 am
- Souls Harbour, Open Monday – Friday, Supper @ 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm
- Carmichael Outreach Center, Open Monday – Friday, Lunch @ 1:00pm – 3:00 pm

These websites are good resources for food and travel if you are new to Saskatoon and Regina:

- [tourismsaskatoon.com](http://tourismsaskatoon.com)
- [tourismregina.com](http://tourismregina.com)

## TREATMENT/MEDICATION

- The Allan Blair Cancer Centre and the Saskatoon Cancer Centre Pharmacy provide prescription drugs free to registered cancer patients by either the Allan Blair Cancer Centre Pharmacy in Regina (306) 766-2816 or the Saskatoon Cancer Centre Pharmacy (306) 655-2680.
- For working individuals with low incomes and high medical expenses there is a refundable medical expense supplement. This is put on line 452 of your income tax forms; more information is available from the Canada Revenue Agency [www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html)

## OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

- TeleMiracle/Kinsmen Foundation Saskatchewan.
- Other charities available to provide support – speak with your social worker.
- Track yours and your caregiver’s mileage and meals for tax returns.

## INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS

A full list of medical travel deductions is available at the Government of Canada Revenue Agency website, for lines 330 and 331 deductions. You can claim eligible medical expenses on your tax return if you or your spouse or common-law partner:

- paid for the medical expenses in any 12-month period ending in that tax year.
- did not claim them in the year prior.

It may be better for the spouse or common-law partner with the lower net income (line 236) to claim the eligible medical expenses. Generally, you can claim all amounts paid, even if they were not paid in Canada.

For all expenses, you can only claim the part of the expense that has not been, or will not be, reimbursed. You will need to keep receipts for these expenses in case they are requested by the Canada Revenue Agency. Some expenses also require a prescription from a physician, so it is best to check.

## CAREGIVER BENEFITS

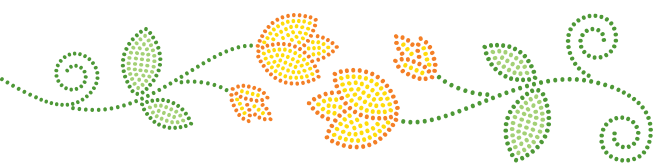
There are both Compassionate Care Benefits and Family Caregiver Benefits available for those who care for someone who is critically ill. See this Government of Canada website for details: [canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving](http://canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving)

**If you are currently on social supports, be sure to check with a social worker to ensure using these financial supports won't interfere with your original payments.**



*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Candice Waite*





*Mishchayt Taanishi chi Kiikayhk*

## Many Ways of Healing

Alongside medical procedures to target your cancer, it is equally important to tend to other parts of yourself during your treatment, including your spiritual, emotional, mental and physical self. It is okay to want more during your cancer treatment. Spending time with those you love, tending to your spirituality, keeping up physical activity and nurturing your mental health are all aspects of healthy living and are just as important as the treatment from the Cancer Centre.

“We drove all the way to Hobbema to do a sweat, to get the medicine, and it was at that time when I felt like I needed more for my spirit. I was taking all the meds they wanted me to, I was trying to exercise as much as I could too.”

Candice Waite, Métis cancer survivor



## Chi Pishkaapimishooyen Caring for Yourself

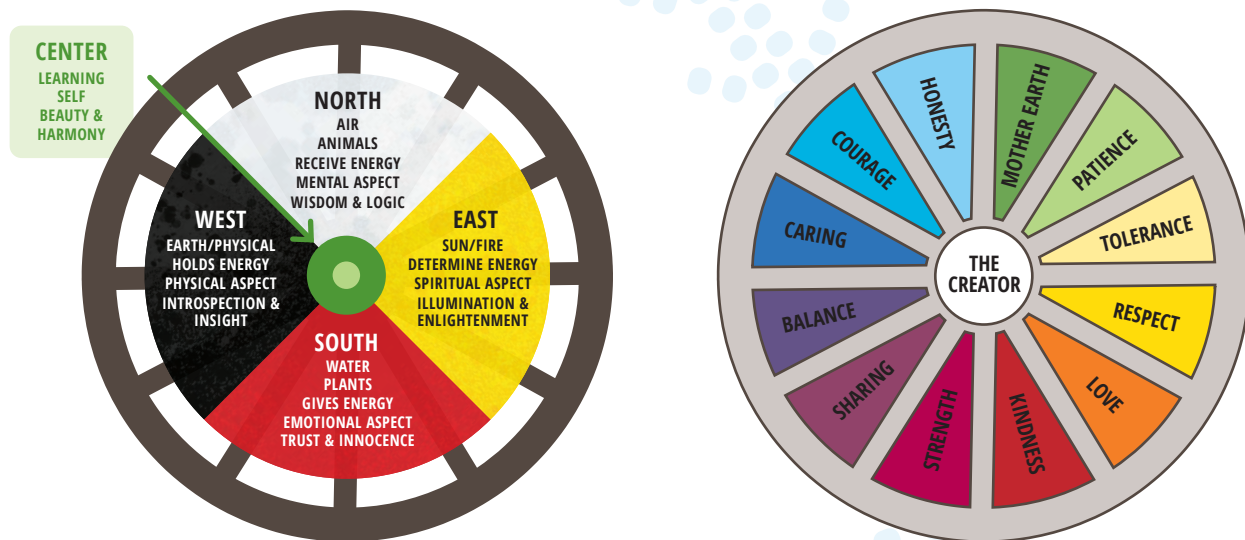
### CARING FOR YOUR WHOLE SELF

In Métis culture there are four aspects of the self: physical, mental, spiritual and emotional or heart. A cancer journey may seem like it is about the physical journey but there is much more to it than that. It's important to care for all aspects of yourself when going through this journey. Remember that each aspect of yourself influences the next.

Think about what makes you **feel good**. Ask yourself these questions and then do the things you come up with:

- What do you like to do?
- What are your hobbies?
- What is your favourite food? Your favourite comfort food?
- Do you like watching movies? Playing games? Gardening or reading?  
Spending time with your loved ones? Playing or walking with your pets?

Focusing on the things that make you feel good can help you keep a positive mindset and feel healthy in your body, spirit and emotions.



Your **physical** health is your physical body. Ways to care for your physical health are:

- Move your body. This is important for your physical health and your mental health during your cancer journey. Some days may be easier than others, and each cancer experience is different. Only do what you feel comfortable with.
- Find an exercise class suited to cancer care. Look on social media for online groups, ask friends who have gone through their own journey. Ask your health care team or social worker where you can find these classes.
- Stretch or do gentle yoga.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Patients have access to a registered dietitian at the Cancer Centres who specialize in Oncology Nutrition.
- Spend time connecting with nature.
- See page 34 (Physical Activity) for more tips on exercising during treatment.

Your **mental** health is your knowledge, your thoughts, your attitudes. Living with and caring for loved ones with a life-threatening disease is difficult and will bring up a lot of different thoughts and emotions. Normal feelings that will come and go may be feelings of hopelessness or helplessness. Shock and numbness may come with any change in condition. It's normal to feel constant worry and yearning for things to be the way they used to be. Other feelings like anxiety, stress, loneliness, irritability and fatigue may also come up. It can help to share these feelings with people you trust. Let them know how you're feeling and how they can support you. Sometimes just saying them out loud and talking about them makes them a little less powerful.

People often get caught up caring for physical health throughout their cancer journey. It's important to remember that caring for your mental health can be just as important as your physical health.

Every Saskatchewan cancer patient and their family/support people have access to psychosocial support—this means supporting the health of your mind and your relationships. Nurses and social workers at the cancer clinic can help you advocate for what you need, provide counselling services, and provide resources and support on how to talk to your family and children about the cancer imbalance in your body. Nurses and social workers can also review and identify supports and resources in your community that may help meet your needs.



*Photo: Michif Elder Norman Fleury*

“We each have skills, but there’s something we possess that nobody else does. That’s a special gift, what we have are gifts, talents. Recognize that and ask yourself, “What are my gifts?””

Michif Elder Norman Fleury



## Many Ways of Healing



### SOME WAYS TO MANAGE AND BALANCE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MAY LOOK LIKE:

- Moving your body can help reduce feelings of anxiety. Body movement can also improve your mood.
- Yoga can be beneficial for reducing stress. Check YouTube for free beginner yoga classes and only do what your body is comfortable with.
- Self-care is an important component of mental health. This can look like taking time for yourself, journaling, drawing, watching a TV show you enjoy, reading a book, or going for a walk outside.
- Beading and other forms of art can benefit your mental health as well.
- A social worker is assigned to work with you and your care team. Ask to speak with your social worker or a counsellor if you would like support.

Your heart or **emotional** health is just that, your emotions. Balancing your emotional health can look like:

- Spending time with people you love. Loved ones are our medicine.
- Spending time on the land or in natural spaces—the land can be healing.
- Finding laughter. Laughing is one of the best medicines for our hearts.
- Calling a friend or a family member that makes you feel loved.
- Spending time with your cat or dog. Snuggle, play or go for a walk with them.
- Writing about your feelings, whether they are good or bad. See the journal that complements this guide for a place to write down your thoughts and feelings.
- Remember that it's okay to say no to people when you need time to rest.

**Spirituality** (Aen ish taapwayhtamihk aan Nisprii) is an important component of health to many Métis people. Spirituality provides protection for people going through their cancer journey. Everyone's spiritual practice and beliefs are unique, and there is no right or wrong way to do it. Some ways to balance your spiritual self are to:

- Have tea with an Elder.
- Smudge with intention.
- Attend church.



- Pray. Anywhere, anytime, in whatever way is comfortable to you.
- Practice meditation and mindfulness.
- Picking medicines can help grow your spiritual connection. For your own safety, remember to consult with your doctor before ingesting anything while undergoing treatment.
- Participate in ceremonies and feasts with loved ones.

### **ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE AND HEALING OPTIONS**

There are many non-medical options to help ease some side effects of cancer treatments. Talk to your cancer care team about options that may be best for you. Alternative medicine and healing options include:

- Medical marijuana products
- CBD oil
- Homeopathy
- Naturopathy
- Massage therapy
- Physiotherapist
- Acupuncture
- Mental health counselling


### **SUGGESTIONS FOR BALANCING TREATMENT & WORK**

- If possible, explore flexible working options such as working from home some days. This can help reduce fatigue and allow you to take care of yourself more easily.
- Keep your employer up to date on your schedule or other work-related changes.
- Getting help at home can mean more energy for work. Explore the idea of sharing daily chores amongst friends and family members who have offered to help.
- Where possible, adapt your work schedule to accommodate your treatment plan. This may look like extra days off, working part-time, working from home, or changing your office or desk location to be closer to the bathroom.



*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Candice Waite*





“I am quite spiritual, and so I do believe in higher God, all kinds of gods, and faith really did pull through for me, as well. Along with modern medicine and doing what my doctors wanted me to do. I also had to seek counselling and started to meditate a bit more and work on myself, too, and not just put my life at the hands of others.”

Candice Waite, Métis cancer survivor





## *Li Maanjii ka Miyoshkaakooyen* **Nutrition**

Good nutrition can help you feel better and stronger before, during and after cancer treatment. Eating well during treatments can help you maintain your body weight, improve your strength and energy, help your body heal and recover. Poor appetite and loss of muscle mass are commonly a result of malnutrition. During treatment, how you respond to food can change from day to day. On some days you may have a good appetite. On others, you may feel you just cannot eat much or cannot resist an unhealthy craving. All these responses are normal.

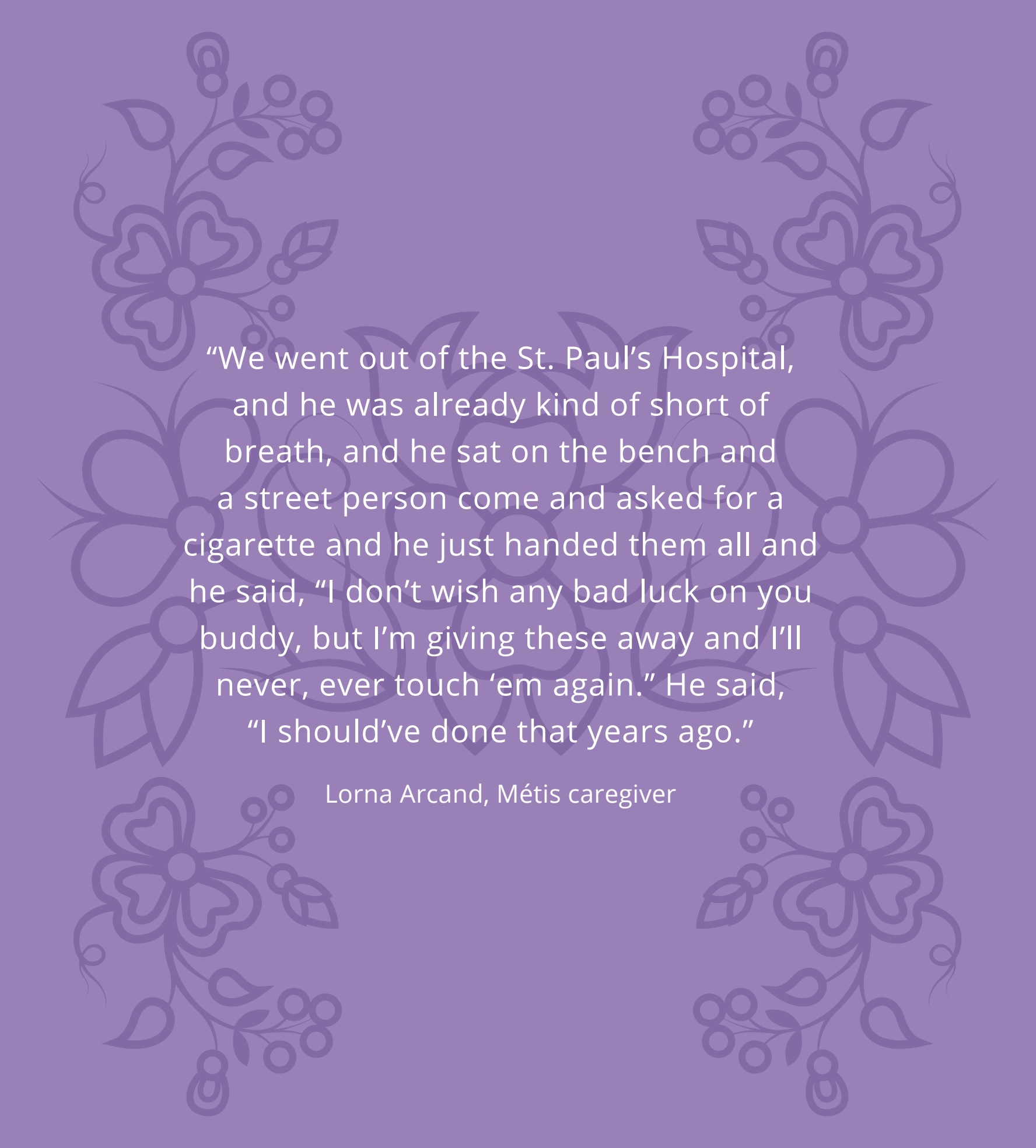
People that are well-nourished often have higher chances of recovery and quality of life. A healthy diet includes eating foods and drinking liquids that contain nutrients and minerals needed by your body. Traditional foods can be part of your nutrition. This includes foods like berries, wild game, fish, bannock and soups. Patients have access to a registered dietitian at the Cancer Centres who specialize in Oncology Nutrition. Ask to speak with a registered dietitian if you have questions or would like some more information. You can also visit the Dietitians of Canada website at [dietitians.ca](http://dietitians.ca) to find out more about healthy eating and how to find a dietitian.

Sometimes you may not feel well enough to eat. You may feel weak, or food may not be appealing to you. If this is the case, it may be tough to get the proper nutrients into your body from foods and drinks. If this occurs, speak with your health care team.



*Photo by Marcel Petit*





“We went out of the St. Paul’s Hospital,  
and he was already kind of short of  
breath, and he sat on the bench and  
a street person come and asked for a  
cigarette and he just handed them all and  
he said, “I don’t wish any bad luck on you  
buddy, but I’m giving these away and I’ll  
never, ever touch ‘em again.” He said,  
“I should’ve done that years ago.”

Lorna Arcand, Métis caregiver



## *Li Tabaa ka Ataawayhk* **Using Commercial Tobacco**

If you smoke or chew tobacco, quitting often takes numerous tries and can be a difficult journey. However, there are many important benefits to quitting smoking after receiving a cancer diagnosis including improving your overall health, but also improving the way your body reacts to treatment. Some of the benefits from quitting smoking during treatment include fewer side effects, faster recovery, lower risk of infection and decreased risk of cancer coming back. Here are some options available to you:

Talk to your community pharmacist who may provide PACT (Partnership to Assist with Cessation of Tobacco) counselling and/or prescribe tobacco cessation aids: [skpharmacists.ca/site/quit-smoking](https://skpharmacists.ca/site/quit-smoking)

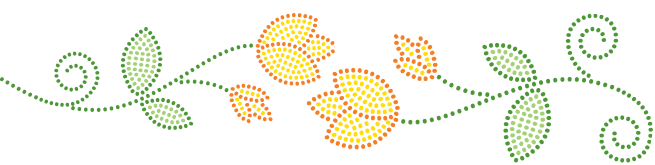
Call the Smokers' Helpline: 1-877-513-5333; [smokershelpline.ca](https://smokershelpline.ca)

Talk Tobacco is a free service to help you quit smoking: [smokershelpline.ca/talktobacco](https://smokershelpline.ca/talktobacco)

## *La Bwaasoon kaa Minihkwayhk* **Consuming Alcohol**

You may wonder if it's okay to drink alcohol during treatment. Talk to your healthcare team first. Alcohol can interfere with some medications, treatments (such as chemotherapy) and certain health conditions. Alcohol also increases the risk of developing certain types of cancer.

Online therapy to learn skills to change your alcohol consumption is available: [onlinetherapyuser.ca/acc](https://onlinetherapyuser.ca/acc)



***Namooya ni Payaakoon: Aen Wiihtamaakayen  
toon Shmayn kaa Aahkooshiyen avik li Zootr***

## **“I am not alone”: Sharing Your Journey with Others**

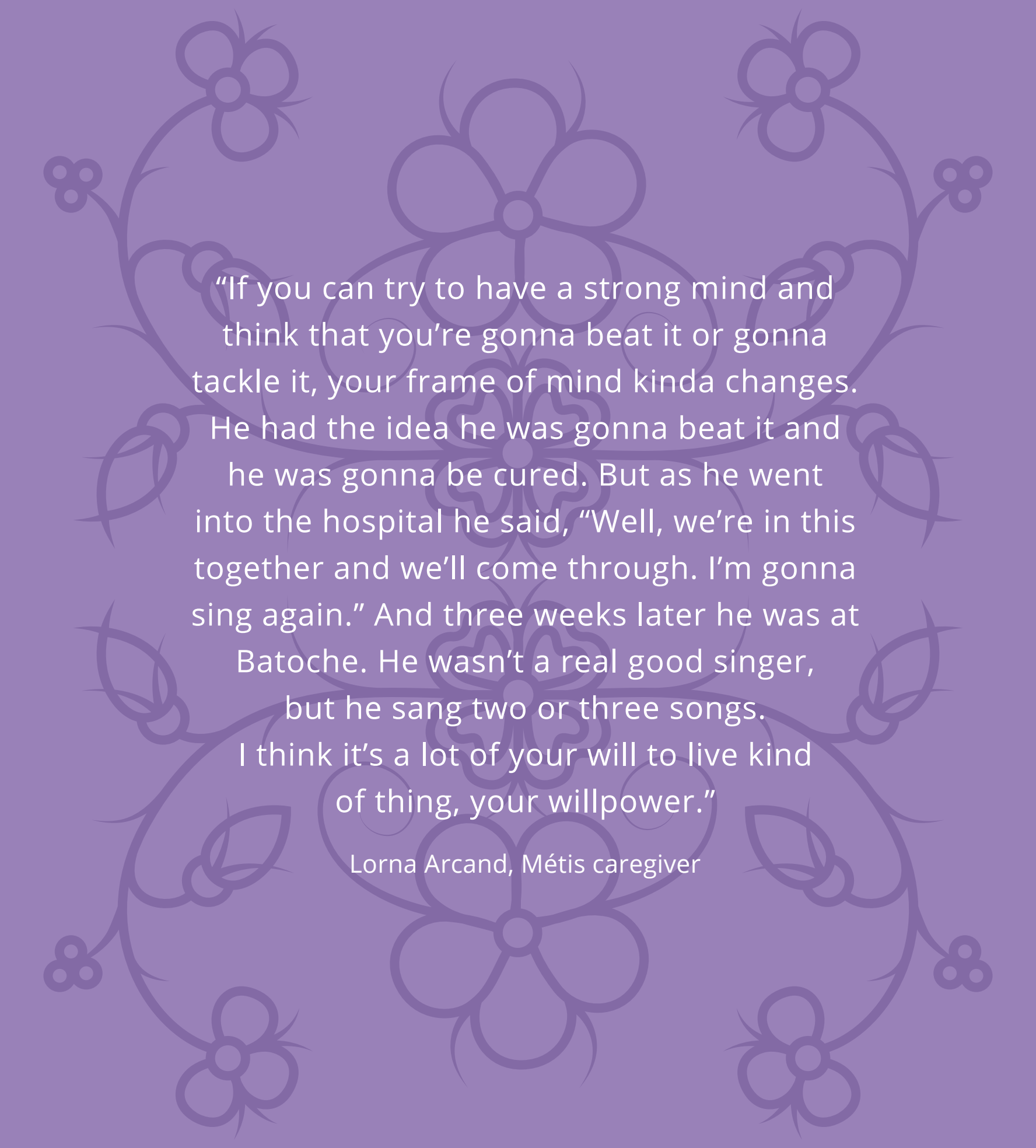
Cancer is a disease that takes a toll on the whole family and close friends. You may feel isolated even when you’re around those that care about you. These are all normal responses, however it is important to remember that you’re not alone in this journey.

***Kaaya kooshta awiiyuk ki shaakihik*** (Michif: Do not be scared, somebody loves you)

Fighting isolation can be tough but talking about your journey with others and being open about what you are feeling can help. Sometimes it’s hard to talk about parts of your experience or feelings such as denial, anger, sadness, and fear. Find ways to express these feelings whether it’s through journaling, talking, art or prayer. If you’re feeling down, call someone you care about. Métis Nation–Saskatchewan runs a peer network for citizens impacted by cancer. If you are interested in joining, email [healthprograms@mns.work](mailto:healthprograms@mns.work) or [reception@mns.work](mailto:reception@mns.work).

It’s important to walk this journey with those who care about you, instead of walking on your own or walking away from them. Help family and friends understand your journey more by explaining thoughts and feelings.

If you do not feel like your family supports you in the right way, or you would like further support, talk to your health care team about what options are available to you. There are cancer support groups with people that have walked similar journeys, as well as social workers, Elders, and other supports readily available. You can also ask for a social worker and your family members and caregivers can ask to speak to a social worker as well.



“If you can try to have a strong mind and think that you’re gonna beat it or gonna tackle it, your frame of mind kinda changes. He had the idea he was gonna beat it and he was gonna be cured. But as he went into the hospital he said, “Well, we’re in this together and we’ll come through. I’m gonna sing again.” And three weeks later he was at Batoche. He wasn’t a real good singer, but he sang two or three songs. I think it’s a lot of your will to live kind of thing, your willpower.”

Lorna Arcand, Métis caregiver

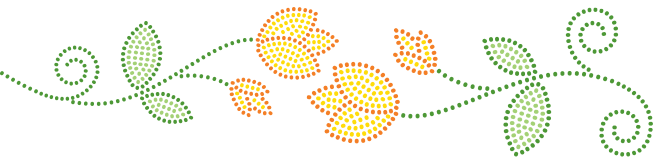


*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Tami Bekolay*

“Let your family be scared for you, because this is not just you, this affects everybody in your family. Yeah, it’s not just you, it’s your whole family that’s affected by this, and you have to recognize that they need help, too, or they’re afraid, too. It’s not all about you, necessarily, all the time.”

Tami Bekolay, Métis cancer survivor





## *Wichihiwayhk Aniki kaa Wiichihaayahkook*

# Support for Caregivers

Cancer is a family disease and takes a toll on close family members and friends. Encourage your loved ones to take care of themselves, especially those who are helping to care for you. Sometimes caregivers give so much of themselves when caring for someone who is healing that they neglect themselves and get sick. Here is important information for them that you can share:

- Take good physical and emotional care of yourself. Eat regular, balanced meals. Get enough rest, even though you may not sleep.
- Take time for prayers, meditations, or just being quiet.
- **Ask for help** if you need it. We seem to forget to do this. Others want to help - they often don't know how. Tell others what you need (making meals, mowing the lawn, groceries, phone calls, driving to appointments).
- Caregivers can take an unpaid Compassionate Care Leave from their jobs to help care for loved ones who have a serious medical condition. See this Government of Canada website for details: [canada.ca/en/services/jobs/workplace/federal-labour-standards/leaves](https://canada.ca/en/services/jobs/workplace/federal-labour-standards/leaves)
- There are both Compassionate Care Benefits and Family Caregiver Benefits available for those who care for someone who is critically ill. See this Government of Canada website for details: [canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving](https://canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving)
- Caregivers are welcome to speak to a social worker as well if they need emotional support. Ask any member of your care team if you would like to speak with the social worker.
- Travel and accommodation costs for caregivers to attend cancer appointments are eligible for tax credits. Save your mileage and hotel receipts to use for your taxes when filing your income tax returns.



*Photo by Tenille Campbell: Candice Waite*

“I know that cancer brings a lot of other burdens – stress on a marriage, my family – I didn’t understand the toll. So, I mean, it’s not just the effects on one person. At the time you can’t help but worry about yourself, but I didn’t realize the effects it had on my husband, my parents, my only sister. It is a whole family issue.”

Candice Waite, Métis cancer survivor



## *Lii Saarviss pi Iii Proograam*

# Services and Programs

### **CULTURAL & SPIRITUAL SUPPORT:**

[saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations\\_services/Services/Spiritual-Cultural](https://saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Spiritual-Cultural)

#### **Humboldt Hospital - Spiritual and Cultural Care**

Spiritual Care: (306) 682-8139

Chaplain: (306) 682-826

#### **Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon - Spiritual and Cultural Care**

Elder: (306) 655-1251

Cultural Worker: (306) 655-2684

#### **Saskatoon City Hospital - Spiritual and Cultural Care**

Call Switchboard and ask for Security: (306) 655-8000

#### **St. Paul's Hospital, Saskatoon - Spiritual and Cultural Care**

Spiritual Care: (306) 655-5880

Call Switchboard and ask for Spiritual Care: (306) 655-5000

#### **Parkridge Centre, Saskatoon - Spiritual and Cultural Care**

Call Switchboard and ask for Security: (306) 655-1000

#### **Canadian Virtual Hospice - Living My Culture Online Spiritual and Cultural Resources for Métis Peoples**

[livingmyculture.ca/culture/métis](https://livingmyculture.ca/culture/métis)

## Services and Programs



### **PEER SUPPORT GROUPS**

#### **Canadian Cancer Society - Online Cancer Community**

[cancerconnection.ca/home](http://cancerconnection.ca/home)

#### **Canadian Cancer Society - Child, Youth and Young Adult Supports**

[cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help](http://cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help)

#### **Breast Cancer Support Saskatoon - Support Group (breast cancer)**

[breastcancersupportsaskatoon.com](http://breastcancersupportsaskatoon.com)

#### **Lung Association, Saskatchewan - Support Group (lung cancer)**

[facebook.com/groups/SKLungCancerSupportGroup](https://facebook.com/groups/SKLungCancerSupportGroup)

#### **Colorectal Cancer Canada - Cancer Information/ Support Groups (colorectal cancer)**

[colorectalcancerCanada.com/support/support-groups](http://colorectalcancerCanada.com/support/support-groups)

#### **Saskatchewan Cancer Agency - Various Support Groups**

[saskcancer.ca/patients-and-families-articles/support-services-calendars](http://saskcancer.ca/patients-and-families-articles/support-services-calendars)

#### **Saskatoon Prostate Cancer Support Group - Support Group (prostate cancer)**

(306) 260-0088

Email: [murray@SPCSG.ca](mailto:murray@SPCSG.ca)

[spcsg.ca](http://spcsg.ca)

#### **PCCN Regina Prostate Cancer Support Group - Support Group (prostate cancer)**

(306) 543-8215

[www.pccnregina.ca](http://www.pccnregina.ca)

#### **Saskatchewan Brain Tumour Support Group - Online Support Group**

[braintumour.ca/events/saskatoon-support-group](http://braintumour.ca/events/saskatoon-support-group)

#### **Saskatoon Multiple Myeloma Support Group - Support Group (multiple Myeloma)**

Email: [saskatoonsupport@myeloma.ca](mailto:saskatoonsupport@myeloma.ca)

[myelomacanada.ca/en/saskatoon-multiple-myeloma-support-group](http://myelomacanada.ca/en/saskatoon-multiple-myeloma-support-group)

#### **Regina Multiple Myeloma Support Group - Support Group (multiple Myeloma)**

Email: [reginasupport@myeloma.ca](mailto:reginasupport@myeloma.ca)

[myelomacanada.ca/en/regina-myeloma-support-group](http://myelomacanada.ca/en/regina-myeloma-support-group)

#### **Regina Ovarian Cancer Support Group - Support Group (ovarian cancer)**

Email: [d.chase@accesscomm.ca](mailto:d.chase@accesscomm.ca)

[ovarianCanada.org/events-support/find-local-support-groups](http://ovarianCanada.org/events-support/find-local-support-groups)

#### **Saskatoon Ovarian Cancer Support Group - Support Group (ovarian cancer)**

Email: [joannerae@shaw.ca](mailto:joannerae@shaw.ca)

[ovarianCanada.org/events-support/find-local-support-groups](http://ovarianCanada.org/events-support/find-local-support-groups)



## **ONLINE COUNSELING PROGRAMS**

### **Online Therapy Unit, through University of Regina - Chronic Health Conditions Course Including Chronic Pain**

Helps to manage symptoms related to cancer, including anxiety and depression.

[onlinetherapyuser.ca/chronic-conditions](http://onlinetherapyuser.ca/chronic-conditions)

### **Saskatchewan Cancer Agency - Counseling**

[saskcancer.ca/patients-and-families-articles/counseling](http://saskcancer.ca/patients-and-families-articles/counseling)

## **WIGS & PROSTHETICS**

### **Cancer Care Society - Wig and Breast Accessory Programs**

This is a service that is available across Canada for those who cannot afford them. To order online:

[action.cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help](http://action.cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/how-we-can-help)

Or call toll-free at 1-888-939-3333.

### **Saskatchewan Cancer Agency Patient Support Centres - Turban and Wig Program in Saskatoon & Regina**

The Saskatoon and Allan Blair Cancer Centres have a selection of donated wigs that are available for patients when they come in for treatment.

To book a fitting in Saskatoon call (306) 655-2688

To book a fitting in Regina call (306) 766-2512

There is no current provincial health care coverage for wigs. If you have private health insurance, some plans cover a portion of the cost.

### **Pink Tree Shop, Saskatoon & Regina - Bras, Mastectomy supplies, support & compression, hats & coverings, wigs, swimwear, bracing, orthotic recovery, UV protection, accessories**

Saskatoon location: 1-701 2nd Ave. N. Saskatoon SK (306) 665-6544

Regina location: 3819 Albert St., Regina, SK (306) 757-9000

[pinktree.ca](http://pinktree.ca)

### **Lots of Looks Specialty, Saskatoon - Wigs, wig care (washing, styling, trimming and thinning to customize), breast forms.**

Staff may be available to come to you if you are unable to make it into their location. Contact them for further information.

#47 – 2105 – 8th St. E. Grosvenor Park Centre 8th St. & Preston Ave. Saskatoon, SK

(306) 931-1011

[lotsoflooks.ca](http://lotsoflooks.ca)

### **Lots of Looks Essential, Regina - Wigs, mastectomy breast forms, bras, compression stockings and sleeves**

4248 Albert St., Regina, SK

(306) 789-1011

## Services and Programs



### **PALLIATIVE CARE SUPPORT**

#### **Advanced Care Planning in Canada and Saskatchewan - Planning in Advance for Health Care Choices**

Canada: [advancecareplanning.ca](http://advancecareplanning.ca)

Saskatchewan: [rqhealth.ca/rqhr-central/files/ceac\\_1042.pdf](http://rqhealth.ca/rqhr-central/files/ceac_1042.pdf)

#### **Saskatchewan Patient Guide to Supportive Care - Palliative Care Information**

Palliative care is a type of health care for patients and families facing life-limiting illness. Palliative care helps patients to achieve the best possible quality of life right up until the end of life.

Contact the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Health Office for information about palliative care in Saskatchewan: (306) 343-8285 or email [healthprograms@mns.work](mailto:healthprograms@mns.work)

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS FOR CANCER**

#### **Saskatoon Cancer Centre - Free restorative yoga for cancer patients**

(306) 655-2672

#### **Allan Blair Cancer Centre - Free restorative yoga for cancer patients**

(306) 766-2344

#### **LEAD Pilates, Saskatoon - Free restorative yoga for cancer patients**

(306) 382-7447

[leadpilates.com/fitness/classes/empower](http://leadpilates.com/fitness/classes/empower)

#### **Bodhi Tree Renew Yoga, Regina - Free yoga for cancer patients**

(306) 522-9642

Email: [sarah@bodhitreeyoga.com](mailto:sarah@bodhitreeyoga.com)

[bodhitreeyoga.com/renew-yoga-for-cancer](http://bodhitreeyoga.com/renew-yoga-for-cancer)

### **TREATMENT**

#### **Canadian Cancer Society - Treatment types**

[cancer.ca/en/treatments/treatment-types](http://cancer.ca/en/treatments/treatment-types)

#### **Canadian Cancer Society - Feeling your best during and after treatment**

[cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/coping-with-changes](http://cancer.ca/en/living-with-cancer/coping-with-changes)

#### **Canadian Cancer Society - Complementary therapies**

[cancer.ca/en/treatments/complementary-therapies](http://cancer.ca/en/treatments/complementary-therapies)



“I belong to a couple really good online support groups for metastatic breast cancer in Canada and a couple that are a little broader in scope that are global and that’s where I find most of my information. If there’s something that I can’t figure out or I don’t get an answer for, I’ll put it on there and that’s where I get an answer.”

Cindy Blondeau, cancer patient







## *Iita kaa Wiichihiwayhk daan Ia Lway*

# Legal Resources

After receiving a cancer diagnosis, there are a lot of questions and many things to know. Planning and preparing can be a difficult thing to do as there are a lot of unknowns following your cancer journey. Sometimes talking about plans to make can be painful, difficult and confusing. A few important things to remember are:

- Keep your receipts during treatment for income tax.
- If you have a companion or someone caring for you, ensure they are keeping their receipts for income tax purposes.
- Make sure you have proper documentation to ensure you are making choices for your own best interest, including health care directives, power of attorney, and your will.

### Preparing for End of Life

This may feel scary and overwhelming but preparing for end of life ensures your wishes are honoured and your loved ones have the information they need to take care of your affairs when you are unable to.

#### Have you thought of...?

- Writing your will and naming your executor
- Naming your attorney
- Creating your health care directive
- Documenting life insurance policies & beneficiaries
- Creating a password list for your heirs



## *Awiyuk kaa Wiichihish chi Pishkaapamish* **Health Care Directive**

A health care directive is used when you cannot make your own decisions or when you cannot tell people what treatment you want or do not want. A health care directive must be prepared in advance, while you are still competent to make health care decisions and able to communicate those decisions.

### **A health care directive can cover decisions about matters like:**

- diagnostic testing
- blood transfusions
- resuscitation
- life support
- feeding tubes
- antibiotics or other medication
- surgical procedures
- palliative or comfort measures

## *Awiiyuk kaa piskapahtuhk ta Business* **Power of Attorney**

A power of attorney is a legal document that allows you to give someone else the authority to act for you. Someone you appoint as your attorney has a duty to act in your best interests. Attorneys are also required to account for any money they have handled for you.



## *Ka Maykihk* **Your Will**

A will may be changed as often as you want during your lifetime to reflect changes in your personal life if you continue to be of sound mind. A will gives you the opportunity to decide who inherits things you own. Without a will the law will determine this. It also allows you to name an executor to handle your estate. Otherwise, someone would need to apply to court to be able to do this.

## *Lii Income iita kaa Tipahaamun* **Income Tax Deductions**

See page 55 for information about tracking your medical expenses to claim on your income tax.

If your loved one has passed on, you may be able to claim the Death benefit.

Go to [canada.ca/en/services/benefits](https://canada.ca/en/services/benefits), type "Death benefit" in the search box and press 'Enter' to find more information, or call: 1-800-622-6232



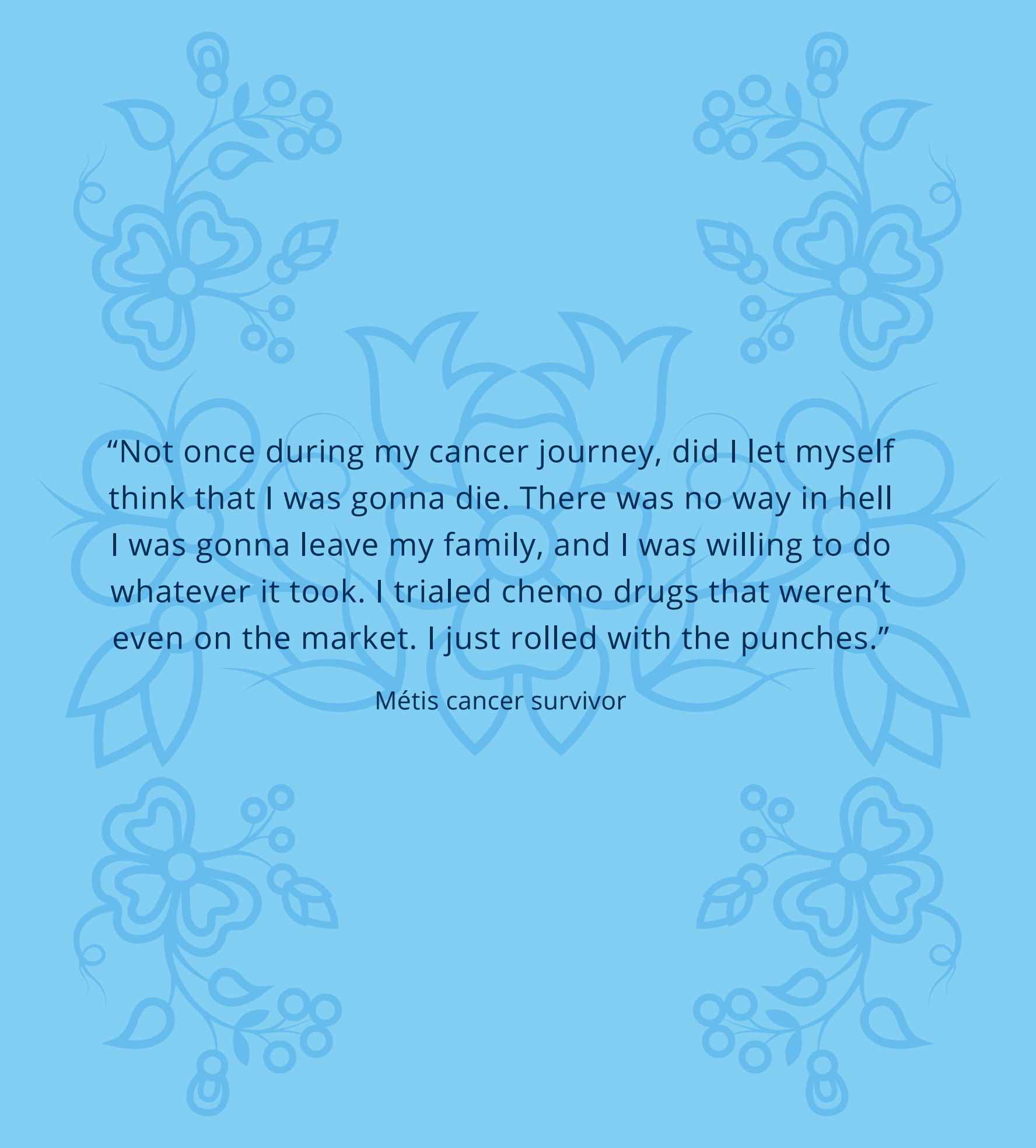
## *Wiiput kaa Noohtay Nakataashkwayk* **Wanting to Leave This World Sooner**

It is not uncommon to have thoughts around wanting to die or wanting to kill ourselves at times in our lives. It often comes out of sadness, frustration, depression, shame, and many other feelings. Thinking about this from time to time or having a feeling about this is not necessarily the same as being depressed. If the thought or feeling is distressing to you, is it because of a particular situation (eg. pain)? If it is frequent, talk to a healthcare professional. Physician assisted death, or medical assistance in death, is legal in Canada. It is okay to talk to health care professionals about this,

*Kaa Wiichihikaashooyen Kaayaa kaa Kishkayhtamun*

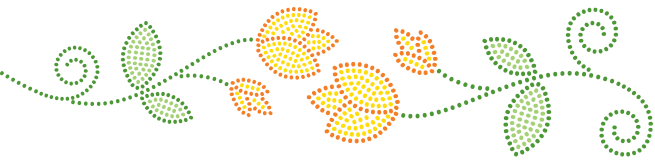
# Helpful Things You Might Not Think Of

- Drink lots of water.
- It's okay to ask for help. Friends, family and neighbours often want to help. Think about things that will make your day a little easier—maybe they can make a meal, help clean the house, do yard work or care for kids sometimes.
- You may find support groups that are well-suited to you by searching on Facebook. They may be in your area, online or specific to the cancer in your body.
- Caregivers may be eligible to take a paid leave to help care for you.
- Caregivers can speak to social workers at the Cancer Centres if they need support themselves.
- Keep your medical travel receipts, including those for caregivers, to file with your income taxes.
- Download the MN-S and Canadian Geographic podcast “Paykiiwikay”.
- Learn about Métis culture and arts. The Gabriel Dumont Institute has lots of great books available and two Michif language apps.
- Michif To Go: Google Play Store, Apple App Store
- Northern Michif To Go: Google Play Store, Apple App Store
- Michif Lessons: Google Play Store, Apple App Store



“Not once during my cancer journey, did I let myself think that I was gonna die. There was no way in hell I was gonna leave my family, and I was willing to do whatever it took. I trialed chemo drugs that weren’t even on the market. I just rolled with the punches.”

Métis cancer survivor



## *Lii moo kaa Apaachishtaak kaa Aahkooshihk* **Common Medical Terms**

**Ablation** - Removing or destroying cells, tissues or organs.

**Active Surveillance** - Using tests and exams on a regular basis to watch for changes in a person's health.

**Adjuvant Therapy** - A treatment used after the standard treatment to reduce the risk of cancer coming back.

**Allergic Reaction** - The body's immune response to something that enters the body, such as pollen, dust or certain drugs.

**Alternative Therapy** - A treatment used instead of the currently accepted and widely used treatment.

**Amputation** - An operation to remove all or part of a limb or other body part.

**Analgesic** - A drug that makes pain go away.

**Anaphylaxis** - A very bad, possibly deadly, allergic reaction.

**Anesthesia** - The loss of feeling or numbing pain in some or all of the body, often artificially induced by the use of gases or the injection of drugs before surgical operations.

**Antibiotic** - A drug that fights infection.

**Antibody** - Something made by the immune system to fight disease.

**Anti-emetic** - A drug that prevents or stops vomiting.

**Antigen** - Anything, such as bacteria or a virus, that triggers the body's immune system to make an antibody.

**Anti-inflammatory** - Something, such as a drug, that prevents or stops inflammation.

**Benign** - Not cancer.

## Common Medical Terms



**Biological Therapy** - A treatment that uses natural or artificial materials to kill, control or change the way cells behave.

**Biopsy, tissue sample** - A biopsy removes a small piece of tissue from a part of the body. The sample of tissue is then examined under the microscope to look for abnormal cells.

**Biopsy, blood sample** - Blood for a blood test is taken from your arm with a small needle. The blood is checked in a laboratory. The results tell your doctor how well your body is working.

**Cancer** - A group of more than 200 diseases that can affect any part of the body. Cancer cannot be caught from someone else. It is a disease caused by damaged cells

**Cell** - The most basic, smallest unit of all living things.

**Chemoradiation Therapy** - A treatment that gives chemotherapy during the same time period as radiation therapy.

**Chemotherapy** - A treatment that uses drugs to kill or destroy cancer cells.

**Clinical Trial** - A research study that tests new ways to prevent, detect, treat or manage a disease in people.

**Combination Therapy** - A treatment that uses more than one type of treatment at the same time.

**Colonoscopy** - A test where a doctor or nurse looks through your rectum into your colon or gut to check your large intestine.

**Colorectal Cancer** - Colorectal means the colon and rectum, which are parts of the gut located at the end of the digestive tract. If someone with colorectal cancer is diagnosed and treated when the disease is at an early stage, there is a good chance of him or her being cured.

**Colostomy** - An operation to make an opening from the colon to the outside of the body through the belly.

**Conventional Therapy** - The currently accepted and widely used treatment for a disease.



**CAT/CT scan** - This special X-ray makes very detailed pictures of soft tissues in the body that do not show on ordinary X-ray pictures. CT means computerized tomography. CAT means computed axial tomography.

**Diagnosis** - The process of finding out the cause of a person's health problem.

**Donor** - Someone who gives blood, cells, tissues or an organ to be used in another person.

**Dose** - The amount of a drug or radiation given at one time.

**Drug Therapy** - A treatment that uses medical drugs to treat a disease.

**Dysplasia/ hyperplasia** - Hyperplasia is an abnormal increase in the number of cells, causing enlargement of the affected part. Dysplasia refers to the replacement of a mature cell with a less mature cell type. Both are reversible if treated.

**Environmental Contaminants** - Chemicals, gases or radiation in food, air, earth, water or other surroundings that are harmful to human beings

**Experimental Drug** - A drug that is being tested to find out if it works and is safe, but that is not yet approved for use.

**False-negative** - A test result that says a person does not have a certain disease when the person does have the disease.

**False-positive** - A test result that says a person has a certain disease when the person does not have the disease.

**Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)** - The FIT test detects small amounts of blood in your poop, which you would not normally see. Taken every two years, it can help find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is most effective.

**Genes, genetics, DNA** - Genes are the instructions for making the human body. Each gene controls a particular feature (such as eye colour) or has a particular function in your body. Gene instructions are written in DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid).

## Common Medical Terms



**Gene Mutation** - A permanent change in a gene.

**Genetic Testing** - Looking at someone's DNA to see if there is a permanent change in a gene that may mean the person has a higher risk for getting a disease.

**Grade** - Describing a tumour based on how different the cancer cells look from normal cells, how quickly the cancer cells are growing and dividing, and how likely they are to spread.

**Hereditary** - Passed from parent to child through information in genes.

**HIV/AIDS** - HIV, or the human immunodeficiency virus, weakens the immune system. HIV can develop into AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) infections and illnesses (including cancer) that result from HIV infection. Medication called PrEP can be taken daily to prevent HIV if you are at higher risk.

**Hormones** - Chemicals made by your body to regulate how it works.

**Hormonal Therapy** - A treatment that adds, blocks or removes hormones in the body to treat a disease.

**Immune System** - The cells and organs that defend the body against infection, disease and other materials that enter the body.

**Inflammation** - The body's way of protecting itself from injury or infection.

**Informed Consent** - When a person learns the potential risks, benefits and limits of procedure, treatment, clinical trial or test before deciding to participate.

**Inoperable** - A disease or tumour that cannot be treated with an operation.

**In-Situ** - In the original site or place.

**Intravenous (IV)** - Within or into a vein.

**Invasive** - A test or tool that breaks the skin or enters a body cavity. A disease that grows into surrounding tissue.



**Lumpectomy** - An operation to remove a breast lump or tumour along with a very small amount of healthy tissue around it.

**Malignant** - The spread of cancer from where it started to other parts of the body.

**Mammogram** - A screening test that takes special X-ray pictures of each breast to check for abnormal tissue or lumps. The test can be a bit painful but only lasts a few seconds

**Mastectomy** - An operation to remove a breast.

**Metastasis** - The spread of cancer from where it started to other parts of the body. As cancer cells multiply, some may break off into the lymph channels or bloodstream. This lets cancer spread (metastasize) to lymph nodes nearby or to other areas of the body.

**Moderately active** - Being physically active enough to get warm, mildly out of breath and mildly sweaty.

**MRI Scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scan)** - A safe and painless test that uses a strong magnetic field and radio waves to create detailed computer pictures of tissues, organs and other parts inside your body. MRI stands for magnetic resonance imagery.

**Nausea** - Feeling sick to the stomach or the need to vomit.

**Narcotic** - A drug that makes very bad pain go away.

**Occult Blood** - Blood that is hidden or invisible to the eye.

**Oncology** - The study of cancers, including development, diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

**Operable** - A disease or tumour that can be treated with an operation.

**Pain Diary** - A record that people with chronic pain use to track when pain is greatest during the day and the amount of medicine or other treatments that make the pain go away.

## Common Medical Terms



**Palliative Care** - Treatment and support to relieve symptoms and improve quality of life for people with a serious illness that cannot be cured.

**Pancreatic Cancer** - The pancreas is a gland that helps regulate blood sugar levels and insulin in the body. Pancreatic cancer is cancer of the pancreas.

**Pap Test** - A routine test for women to check the cervix (entry to the uterus, where babies grow). During the test, some cells are removed gently with a plastic brush. The cells are checked under a microscope for early signs of cancer.

**Pathology** - The study of disease, including causes, development and effects on the body.

**Phlebitis** - Inflammation of a vein causing redness, swelling and pain.

**Physiotherapy** - A treatment that uses special exercises, activities and massage to treat pain, disease or injury.

**Platelets** - A type of blood cell that helps blood to clot.

**Polyp** - A small growth on the lining of an organ or body part, such as the colon, bladder, uterus, vocal cords or nose.

**Precancerous** - Can become cancer or is likely to become cancer.

**PrEP** - Medicine that can help prevent HIV when taken daily.

**Prognosis** - The chance of recovery or of a disease coming back.

**Prostate Cancer** - Only men have a prostate gland. It lies just beneath the bladder and is normally about the size of a chestnut. The prostate produces fluid to protect and enrich sperm. The prostate often gets bigger after the age of about 50.

**Radiation Therapy** - A treatment that uses high-energy rays or particles, such as X-rays, to damage or destroy cancer cells.



**Recurrence** - A disease that has come back after a period of time when there were no signs or symptoms of disease.

**Remission** - A period when the signs and symptoms of a disease get better or go away.

**Risk Factors** - Facts about you that affect whether you have a higher or lower chance of getting a disease.

**Side Effects** - Unintended and undesirable effects of a drug or medical treatment.

**Sigmoidoscopy** - A check of the lower part of your gut using a sigmoidoscope, which is a small tube with an attached light source about the thickness of your finger. This is not usually painful, but it may be a little uncomfortable.

**Stage** - The amount of cancer in the body, including the size of the tumour, whether there are cancer cells in the lymph nodes and whether the disease has spread from where it started to other parts of the body.

**Stem Cells** - Special cells that could develop into many different cell types (for example a brain cell or a blood cell).

**Steroid** - A drug or a substance made by the body, such as a hormone, that affects how the body works.

**Surgery** - An operation to look for disease or to remove or repair tissues, an organ or a part of the body.

**Survival Rates** - A measurement of how many people who have had a disease and are still alive a given number of years later. For example, 96% of people diagnosed with prostate cancer are alive five years later, but only 17% of people diagnosed with lung cancer are alive five years later.

**Targeted Therapy** - Any treatment that mainly kills cancer cells with little or no effect on normal cells.

**Toxin** - A poison made by something living, such as a plant, bacteria, animal, fungus, virus or other micro-organism.

## Common Medical Terms



**Transfusion** - Putting blood or blood products into the body through a vein.

**Transplant** - Moving tissues from one place in a person's body to another. Moving tissue or an organ from a donor to another person.

**Tumour** - A "swelling" or "mass" of disorganized new cells that have no useful purpose in the body.

**Ultrasound Scan** - A painless test that uses sound waves to create images of organs and other parts inside the body.

**Vaccine Therapy** - A treatment that uses an antigen to trigger the immune system to make antibodies that fight a disease.

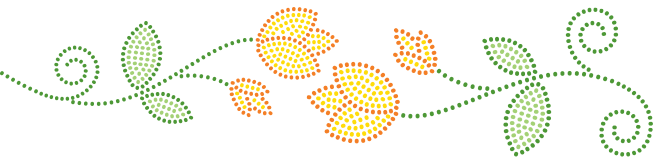
**Virus** - A micro-organism that can infect cells and cause disease.

**X-ray** - A type of high-energy radiation. A picture of the bones and other structures inside the body.

"You have to keep positive and keep praying, I think. Keep resting. A lot of people just keep "go-go-go" and think if I continue running it's gonna go away, you can't. You just will end up being sick. You have to give your body time to rest."

Sandy, Métis cancer survivor





*Lii Zaasaasyii pi lii Maarshii*

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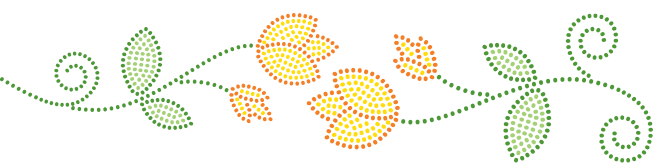
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