FOR CAREGIVERS: Managing Diagnosis, Treatment & Logistics

Receiving an advanced breast cancer (ABC) diagnosis is difficult for the patient as well as family and friends in the patient’s life. There may be an initial period of shock or anger, or feelings of being overwhelmed. Educate yourself on your loved one’s specific diagnosis and treatment options, create a personal plan and enlist others to help you both receive the logistical support you need.

✔ MANAGING A DIAGNOSIS:
Most people find they want and need three things above all as they struggle to process the news:

• **Information:** They want good information that will help guide next steps and lead to the best possible medical care

• **Support:** They need support from those they love and from others who are living with the disease to understand what it’s been like for them

• **Hope:** They want to learn about research and new treatments that hold the promise for extending the lives of those living with ABC

✔ HELP YOUR LOVED ONE COPE WITH THEIR DIAGNOSIS:

• Become informed about their specific type of ABC and treatment options

• Get a second opinion

• Find an online or in-person support group that supports people living with ABC

✔ MAKING TREATMENT DECISIONS:

There are more treatment options than ever for ABC patients. Consider the following when making decisions about your loved one’s treatment plan:

• **Make treatment decisions**

• **Determine treatment options by stage**

• **Make the most of appointments**

• **Report side effects**

• **Understand the importance of taking the right medicine at the right time**

✔ ENLISTING LOGISTICAL SUPPORT:

Daily tasks like family meals, household chores or getting their loved one to and from doctor’s appointments can become a full-time job for caregivers. There are resources to help you manage these logistical responsibilities:

• Obtain help with medical tasks, such as administering medication, and know who to call when you have questions

• Ask friends and family to pitch in

• Use online resources to help you organize support from others

  » Lotsa Helping Hands
  » CaringBridge
  » Care Pages

Sources: http://advancedBC.org/  |  http://www.cancercare.org/publications/47-caring_advice_for_caregivers_how_can_you_help_yourself