Article Series Health & Wellness Breast

Why connection and community matter when you have breast cancer

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If you’re living with breast cancer, social support can make a difference — and not just because it feels good.

Research shows that social support and engagement may positively impact breast cancer patients’ quality of life. Support can also play an important role in helping patients manage their mental health.

Breast cancer is a journey, but it’s not one you need to take alone. **Microsteps** are small steps that may be taken to build new habits, and the following **Microsteps** may be helpful in strengthening your social support and feeling more connected. As always, consult with your care team for the practices that are best for you.

Telling one person you trust how they can support you on your cancer journey.

The people closest to you may want to help, but might not know where to begin. Consider letting them know one thing they can do that will make a difference in your life.

Giving yourself permission to ask for what you need.

People in your network want to support you, so try telling them how they can help: for example, asking them to bring you a meal on a certain night of the week, driving you to and from appointments, or picking up your child from school.

Searching online for local breast cancer support groups and asking your healthcare team about local resources.

Chances are, there are other people in your community on a similar journey.

Starting a group text with others who have breast cancer.

They can help cheer you on, support you through setbacks, and talk openly about health matters you might not be comfortable discussing with most people.

Documenting and sharing your breast cancer journey.

Telling your story can be a powerful way to connect with others and build a support network — and there are many ways to do it. Sharing on social media, writing a personal newsletter, or simply opening up to others in conversation can not only help you process your feelings but also invite others into your experience.

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