

# Hello...

Hi! Welcome to our “club.” Sorry you are here—we never thought we would be either. But since you are here, we want to **support you**. Here are some tips we have learned along the way to **help guide you** through this challenging time. We hope this makes it a little easier. Just by walking through these doors, you have gained a whole team of people who are **on your side**—us included!

**What we have learned is...**

**“ No One Fights  
Cancer Alone. ”**

**Sincerely,  
The AYA (Adolescent  
and Young Adult) Council**

AYA patients and former  
patients who get it!





## Tips for Processing Your Diagnosis:

It's ok not to be ok. **Cancer sucks.**



A lot of things are going to **change** – the way you look...your day to day schedule.

Try to keep up with your normal activities as much as you can, but know it will be different for a while.

Take it **day by day** or even moment by moment. It's not a sprint, but a marathon.

Everyone copes in their **own way**. Find ways to cope that work best for you.

The journey is a rollercoaster – you'll have your **ups and downs**. Making it through the bad days make the good days **that much better**.

Remember, your diagnosis is **not your fault**. Don't feel **guilty** about it. If you do, talk with someone on your care team.

Don't isolate yourself. Allow people to **help you**. It's not weak to **ask for help**.

Tell your care team **how much** information you want to know. Some people want **the basics**, others want **every detail**.



**Talking to another AYA with cancer can be really helpful...we get it!**



## Your Inner Circle

### Siblings

Ask your siblings what they want to know about your journey. They may feel out of the loop as your parents may need to focus on you right now. Check in when you can.

### Parent/Caregivers

They are just trying to help (even if it's annoying). They may be very nervous—this is hard on them, too. Tell them how they can help, and tell them what is not as helpful. Let them be the “bad guy” for you if you don't want to do something. Reassure them when you are feeling ok, and don't be afraid to tell them when you're not. When you can, show your appreciation.

### Friends

Your diagnosis will also affect your friends. When you are ready, don't be afraid to ask for what you need from them—friends may want to help, but don't know how. It's ok to tell people you need your space, too! Be patient with your friends...they may not understand what you are going through.



### School or Work

Your peers may be questioning what you are going through and where you have been. Tell your close friends what you would like them to pass along to the larger community.



# Dealing with appointments and hospital stays:



**Don't be afraid to ask for something you really want – there may be a way to make it happen.**



Come to the hospital expecting that you are going to wait. There are great AYA rooms just for us—check them out. The activities in there can help pass the time.



Write down your questions prior to your clinic visits.

Have a good show or series to watch.



Pack a bag and leave it in the car for every clinic visit, just in case you have to stay.

Bring snacks. There are snacks in clinic, but you can bring your own food, too.



Nothing is set in stone. Be prepared to stay longer than expected. Your care team just wants to make sure you are ok before you go home. Better safe than sorry.



The hospital is very different from home, but it gets easier with time. Transitions in and out can be difficult. Sometimes going home is hard, too, because the hospital may become your new normal.



Makes sure you have all the information you need before discharge. Ask questions when you have them.

**There is always a doctor on call 24/7 if urgent questions or concerns come up.**



**You are never alone or without help.**

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