



ChallengeME MONTHLY MINUTE

VOL 02 ISSUE 10 / OCTOBER 2019 • mainedot.gov/challengeme

Monthly topic:

Cancer Awareness

What should you expect when someone you know has cancer? A person with cancer may (or may not) experience any of the following physical or emotional changes.

Physical changes:

Cancer itself can cause some of these changes, and others are the result of side effects of cancer treatment. Keep in mind that each cancer journey is different.

- Hair loss • Weight loss or gain • Appetite loss or increase • Changes in how things taste or smell • Extreme fatigue • Pale skin and lips • Disfigurement (for example, the loss of a limb or a breast after cancer surgery) • Nausea and vomiting • Problems with sleep • Poor concentration

Emotional changes:

Each person reacts in their own way to cancer and its treatment. It's normal to feel sad and grieve over the changes that a cancer diagnosis brings. The person's mood and emotions can change from day to day, even from hour to hour. This is normal. A person with cancer may go through any or all of the following emotions and thoughts:

- Uncertainty • Anger • A sense of lack of control • Sadness • Fear • Frustration • Guilt • Mood swings • Much stronger and more intense feelings • A sense of being disconnected or isolated from others • Loneliness • Resentment • Grief

Try to be patient and understanding and expect that this person will have good days and bad days. Do your best to be supportive without being overbearing.

"I don't know what to say"

It's okay to be uncertain when talking to someone who has cancer, but it's better to say "I don't know what to say" than to stop calling or visiting out of fear. Here are some things you can say to help show your care and support:

- I'm sorry this has happened to you.
- If you ever feel like talking, I'm here to listen.
- What are you thinking of doing, and how can I help?
- I care about you.
- I'm thinking about you.

And here are some phrases that are **not** helpful:

- I know just how you feel.
- I know just what you should do.
- I'm sure you'll be fine.
- How long do you have?



October is Pink Month

One in eight women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime, making breast cancer the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women.

Each year, an estimated 252,710 women in the US will be diagnosed with breast cancer and more than 40,500 will die of breast cancer.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women.

Although breast cancer in men is rare, an estimated 2,470 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and approximately 460 will die of breast cancer each year.

Over 3.3 million breast cancer survivors are alive in the US today.

So, what can you do to lower your risk?

- Exercising 10-19 hours per week can lower your risk up to 30%.
- Limiting alcohol intake can reduce your risk.
- Know the signs and tell your doctor of changes.
- Perform monthly self-exams, which can help detect breast cancer early.
- Be your own advocate, create a prevention and treatment plan with your doctor.
- Get an annual mammogram. Most women begin getting annual mammograms between the ages of 45 and 50.



This Month

- 1-6: Fryeburg Fair
- 1-30: Way 2 GO MAINE Challenge | Marathon in a Month
- 4-6: Freeport Fall Festival
- 5-6: Living History Days, Bradley
- 12th: MaineGeneral Walk for Hope, Augusta
- 14th: Indigenous Peoples Day
- 18-19: Fright Night at the Fort, Fort Knox | Night Maze, Levant
- 19th: York Harvestfest | Augusta Fall Holiday Craft Show
- 24th: MSECCA Soup, Stew, & Chowder Cookoff
- 25-26: Night Maze, Levant
- 25-27: Ogunquitfest | UMaine Orono Homecoming
- 31st: Halloween

Making Strides Against Cancer Walks happening 10/6 in Brunswick, 10/20 in Cape Elizabeth, and 10/27 in Damariscotta.

Coming Up November: Stress Less

Comments, questions, ideas, or submissions?
Please email: kara.a.aguilar@maine.gov