

#### 4. Simplify your life and work

Let other people help you out. Don't be afraid to ask ..... or delegate. Trying to carry the whole load yourself leads to burn out. Don't try to be super-human – slow down.

#### 5. Don't be overly serious

See the funny side of things. Keep your sense of humour. Enjoy life. Have fun. You can get work done and enjoy yourself too.

#### 6. Adopt a more healthy life-style and feel better

List life-style changes that would improve your health and sense of well-being, such as being more active. List your goals in order of priority, keeping in mind what you feel is realistic and attainable. Make changes that you can integrate into your life-style.

#### 7. Make enjoying life a priority

What do you enjoy in life? Ask yourself what you can do to experience more pleasure. If you make enjoying life a priority and take action, you will notice a big difference.

#### 8. Do you have a sense of purpose? What part does faith play in your life?

Many people gain strength, peace of mind, joy, and meaning in life through faith or by developing a sense of purpose. How would faith and purpose affect your life?

#### 9. Give more to your relationships

Where would you place your relationships on a prioritized list of what matters most to you? We all need other people. Even loners can learn to reach out and in doing so will add greatly to their lives. Even if you have great relationships, you can make them better.

#### 10. Develop a more positive attitude

Have a positive attitude doesn't mean always having to be up, having to be happy. It means facing life as it is and trying your best, even under difficult circumstances.

#### 11. Treat yourself better

How well do you treat yourself – with love and compassion, or are you one of the many who are their own worst enemy? Try making a list of nice things you can do for yourself – things you really enjoy. Then make it a priority to do more of these things more often.

#### 12. Develop an attitude of discovery

Try new things. Set small, attainable goals and enjoy your achievements. Discover your areas of creativity – take up a hobby. Start focusing on what you have-not on what you think you need-to make yourself happy.

You should know and remember these

## 7 Health Safeguards

**C**HANGE in bowel or bladder habits

**A**SORE that does not heal

**U**NUSUAL bleeding or discharge

**T**HICKENING or lump in breast or elsewhere

**I**NDIGESTION or difficulty in swallowing

**O**BVIOUS change in wart or mole

**N**AGGING cough or hoarseness which persists.

*Adapted from*

**The Alpha Book on Cancer and Living**

The Alpha Institute, P. O. Box 2463, Alameda, CA 94501 U.S.A.  
and Florida Center for Human Development

**A REMINDER:** “Do you have proper medical insurance coverage?”



This publication was made possible by  
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### The Cancer Society of The Bahamas

**Headquarters:** East Terrace, Centreville  
P.O. Box SS-6539 • Nassau, Bahamas  
Telephones: (242) 323-4441 or 323-4482  
Fax: (242) 323-4475

#### Family Island Branches:

- **Central Eleuthera Branch**  
Governor's Harbour, Eleuthera
- **Abaco Branch**  
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- **Long Island Branch**  
Deadman's Cay, Long Island
- **Mangrove Cay Branch**  
Mangrove Cay Andros
- **Berry Island Branch**  
Bullocks Harbour, Berry Island

**E-mail:** [cancersociety@hotmail.com](mailto:cancersociety@hotmail.com)

**Website:** [www.cancersocietybahamas.org](http://www.cancersocietybahamas.org)

**a**

12 Keys to  
Reduce The  
Risk of Cancer

**b**

How To  
Support  
Someone  
with Cancer

**c**

Improving  
Your Quality  
of Life

The Cancer Society of The Bahamas

**TIPS AGAINST CANCER**

# **a** 12 Keys to Reduce The Risk of Cancer

## **1. Ask yourself what changes you need to make in your life in order to be healthier and feel better**

What is most important in your life? How important is your health to you? Set your priorities and establish short-and long-term goals.

## **2. Learn how to make those changes: overcome resistance and take action**

Start with a plan of action. Observe the results and be willing to alter your strategy. Realize that every small change is a win.

## **3. Early detection is the best protection**

Know your body, know cancer's seven health safeguards, and make self and professional exams a part of your lifestyle. Breast cancer caught early has a 90% cure rate. Prostate cancer caught early has an 88% cure rate.

## **4. Achieve a healthier diet without feeling deprived**

Find out what works for you. It's not all or nothing. An apple a day is a step in the right direction. So is one less cheeseburger.

## **5. Add exercise to your life**

Find an activity you enjoy. Whether it's a daily walk, more time gardening, or working out in a gym, the key is discovering what works best for you.

## **6. Smoking is suicide**

You may have tried to quit before. Don't give up! There are many tools available to help you to make this critically important life-style change. Remember that secondhand smoke also kills.

## **7. Cut out or down on alcohol**

More than an ounce or two, and you're poisoning yourself. To cut down on alcohol or quit drinking completely is an excellent investment in your future health and well-being.

## **8. Guard against environmental hazards**

Learn all you can about suspected carcinogens and remove as many of them as possible from your own environment. Even one change helps, and a few changes can make a big difference.

## **9. The deadly sun**

The sun's UV rays cause skin cells to mutate, leading to cancer. At best, stay out of the sun or wear a sunblock. At least, use a sunscreen and don't let yourself develop a burn.

## **10. Set priorities - strive for balance in your life**

Ask yourself what is really important in your life. Do you have a healthy balance between work and play, or between TV and your relationships?

## **11. Reduce stress**

There are countless ways to reduce stress. The key is to find the ways that are best for you. Brainstorm a list of possible ways, develop a plan of action, then explore.

## **12. Do whatever you can to increase your sense of control**

Asking the right questions concerning your priorities, making healthy life-style changes, improving your relationships-all these increase your sense of control, improve your health, and improve your quality of life.

# **b** How To Support Someone with Cancer

## **1. Don't play the cheerleader role**

If you always act cheerful and positive, you make it harder for the patient to express her fears and concerns.

## **2. Honor the patient's wishes, even if you don't agree with them**

It's fine to supply information and give your opinion, but it's up to the patient to decide what to do. Honoring the patient's beliefs and decisions is a true act of love.

## **3. What is the first thing to say or do when someone you care about tells you that he has cancer?**

Show that you care and will be there to support him. Your presence may be all he really needs.

## **4. Know what not to say**

It hurts to be told, "I know how you feel" or "Don't worry; everything will be ok." Don't feel that you must say something. Just let the patient know that you care.

## **5. Help your loved one to develop a pleasure list**

Help her to list things she finds refreshing and enjoyable. This puts her focus on what she can do-and on what enhances her life.

## **6. List practical ways you can help**

Rent the patient's favorite movies; cook meals and freeze them for later; go on errands; babysit the children-the list is endless.

## **7. Improve your communication and listening skills**

Learn to listen actively. Learn to sense when the patient wants to talk and when he wants silence. Silent times are natural, and you don't need to fill them in with small talk.

## **8. Realize the effect the patient's illness can have on you; take care of yourself**

Set up your own support program. Develop your own pleasure list. When you take care of yourself, the patient will benefit.

## **9. Get other people to stay in touch with the patient**

Set up a plan of action. Get the patient's friends to call and send cards on a regular basis.

## **10. Help the patient to start a journal**

He can use it to record practical information, such as when he takes his pills; or to develop and articulate goals; or to express his thoughts and feelings.

## **11. Help the patient to set up a coping strategy**

Support the patient in developing an attitude of discovery. This will help her to find better ways to solve problems and to make positive changes in her life. Contact the Cancer Society Support Group - they have lots of coping and support tips to assist the patient and their loved ones either on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting.

# **c** Improving Your Quality of Life

## **1. Address your problem areas, such as handling emotions, decision making, or communication**

A very important first step to solving a problem is to face it, and then to decide to do something about it. Then initiate a plan of action, and you can improve your life.

## **2. Treat other people the way you want to be treated**

Kindness begets kindness. Negativity begets negativity. Do whatever you can to break a negative thought cycle. Distract yourself - get your mind on something else.

## **3. Reduce stress**

List every conceivable way you can imagine to reduce stress. State the pros and cons of each option; then prioritize them. Try several methods, observe the results, and find what works best and is most pleasurable for you.