

HOW TO REACH US

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FRIENDS INDEED ARE A NEED!

By Deborah M. Dashko, RN, BA, LPC, OCN, CPDS, CHES, HNC

There is an old saying that goes, "A joy shared is doubled. A sorrow shared is halved." It is so true! Friends can be a buffer to stressful events in our lives.

We are social beings. It is very important for us to have social relationships. Some of us like to have a lot of friends and family, others of us want just a few. The important thing is that these are satisfying relationships, and that we are not alone.

Having a good friend or people to rely on in a time of need can provide comfort and let us know that someone is concerned for us. It can help reduce the effects of stress and help us deal better with stress.

When people have a strong social support network, they are more likely to experience less stress, and they may be able to cope better.

Friends can provide us with information and help us to think more clearly when we are under stress. Friends may be able to provide us with assistance, such as taking care of a child while we go to the doctor or shopping for grocery items. Friends can also give us emotional support, a shoulder to cry on or a hug to make us feel better.

If you continue to experience a great deal of stress that lasts a long period of time, be sure to contact your doctor, nurse or healthcare provider. They will assess you and help you to establish a plan of care that will help you to manage your stress. Remember, that if we carry this heavy burden of stress over a long period of time, it can effect us physically as well as mentally.

Symptoms of prolonged stress include early morning awakening, irritability, increased or decreased appetite, low tolerance for frustration, or body symptoms such as, muscle tightness, teeth clenching or headaches.

So, if you are feeling stressed, call a friend, family member, neighbor, classmate, clergy, or co-worker.

CORAL CALCIUM CONTROVERSY

*By Debbie Gilbert, MS, RD, LD, Dietitian
Allyn Booher, RPH Pharmacist*

Coral calcium over the last few years has become one of the most popular supplements of all times. Infomercials claim coral calcium does everything from preventing diabetes, heart disease, and cancer to allowing you to live to be 120 years old like the Okinawans. Actually there are claims of over 200 diseases that coral calcium prevents or reverses. The truth is there is no medical evidence or clinical studies that show that coral calcium can cure these diseases. Cancer cannot be cured by dietary supplements.

What is coral calcium and where does it come from? Coral calcium is limestone, merely calcium carbonate, with some magnesium and trace amounts of other minerals in it. Calcium carbonate is the same compound found in Tums® and other popular supplements.

Coral calcium supplements can be produced from the coral on the ocean bottom "marine coral calcium" or produced from coral that was washed up on the shore "fossilized coral calcium". Coral that is harvested from the ocean is highly contaminated with industrial pollutants and PCB's (pesticide residues). A recent analysis by Consumer Lab.com found that one heavily advertised brand of coral calcium contains more lead than is considered safe.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken legal action against the marketers of a dietary supplement called Coral Calcium Supreme with making false and unsubstantiated claims about the product's health benefits. The FTC states it is aware of no competent and reliable scientific evidence supporting such claims and that such unsupported claims are unlawful under the FTC Act. A future court trial will determine whether the FTC is successful in permanently barring the ads and obtaining refunds for consumers who purchased the product.

If your doctor recommends a calcium supplement buy, a generic brand of calcium or take Tums® or Rolaids®. There is no need to spend hundreds of dollars when less expensive types are available.



I want freedom for the full expression of my personality.

-Mohandas K. Gandhi

RECIPE FOR MIRACLES

Submitted by Chaplain Jim Melick, D. th, BCC

Life is sometimes like baking bread. The following "Recipe for Miracles" offers encouragement for you today.

Ingredients:

1 part of knowing who you are
1 part of knowing who you aren't
1 part of knowing what you want
1 part of knowing who you wish to be
1 part of knowing what you already have
1 part of choosing wisely from what you have
1 part of loving and thanking for ALL you have

Instructions:

Combine ingredients together gently and carefully, using faith and vision. Mix together with strong belief of the outcome until finely blended.

Use thoughts, words and actions for best results.

Bake until Blessed.
Give thanks again.

Yields: Unlimited servings

THE JOURNEY OF A CAREGIVER

By Deborah M. Dashko, RN, BA, LPC, OCN, CPDS, CHES, HNC

Fear, grief, anger and total helplessness----are not only the emotions of a cancer patient, but of caregivers as well! With an estimated 16 million new cancer cases diagnosed since 1990, there are a comparable number of persons acting as caregivers to family and friends with cancer.

The trauma of a cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment will often rearrange family roles, responsibilities and relationships. Physical appearances, capabilities and personalities can change, too. Navigating these changes takes communication, patience and support.

The real fight when dealing with cancer comes from within. I know that personally. Having a caregiver in your corner means so much! They are the "invisible survivor" and don't get much attention and support. They need to know that they mean the world to a

cancer survivor. They have an extremely important job ---- to be there when they are needed and provide a face of courage and love and an ear for listening.

Here are some tips for those who care:

- Try to be optimistic. Statistics have been proven wrong many times.
- Be a patient's "second set of ears." The word "cancer" seems to have an adverse effect on the patient's comprehension.
- Be an advocate for your loved ones. Make sure his or her needs are met.
- Keep your sense of humor.
- Know about the disease and provide nourishment to the patient in explaining what the doctors have said.
- Be a little bit psychologist, medical practitioner, spiritual guide, nurse, leader and a whole lot unselfish.
- Rephrase the bad news and accentuate the good news.
- Remember when nothing can be said, touching says it all.
- Don't be afraid of emotion.
- Encourage friends and family to be a part of care. Don't be a warden or gatekeeper.
- Don't judge.
- A caregiver must be a positive thinker and a curiosity seeker. The caregiver many times will have to do work for themselves and the patient.
- Get help.....don't do it alone.
- Take a little break. You and the patient need breaks from each other.
- Know that some patients will take as much attention as you'll let them. Don't always fall for it.
- Remember that you can still get mad at the patient.
- Sometimes your positive energy has to be enough for the both of you.
- Respect the self-esteem of the patient. It is hard to accept the fact that one needs to be cared for.
- Respect the need for independence. Patients don't want to feel fragile and helpless. Let them do as much as for themselves.
- Take time for yourself. Eat, sleep and exercise. If you are tired and overburdened, you drag the patient down even further.
- Forgive the patient and yourself if they or you are difficult or unkind. Fear of the unknown can do that to you and the patient.

- Remember to laugh and cry with the patient.
- Be honest with the patient and yourself.

Remember that the two of you are human -----
 you have good days and bad days. Most importantly, you can't do it all yourself. Don't get lost in cancer. Get support!

MAKING THE MOST OF THE DIAGNOSIS

*Written by Mary C. Morris, MEd., LSW, CCM
 Adult Oncology Social Worker, NMC*

In most cases, the diagnosis of Cancer can be overwhelming. There are suddenly new dimensions to life and many people become integral parts of our lives in ways never considered before. Adjustment to treatment may become less stressful if one chooses how they would like to react to the situation.

Choosing a reaction gives a sense of control and brings something normal back to the situation. One of the primary ways to react is to seek knowledge. The healthcare team can provide education, answers, literature, and set to rest fears of unknown symptoms. Become an activist, seek a second opinion, if need be, become a Navigator, a note-taker, join a support group, or volunteer to take your mind off circumstances.

It is important to keep faith not only through your religious beliefs, but also in the Doctors, your self, and in the treatment. Employ humor and a positive attitude in treatment and with the unexpected. Create something such as a garden, craft, journal, or memory. Make healthy choices and focus on controlling only what you can. Let go of those worries that are beyond your control. Lastly, develop positive habits and an attitude of gratitude despite life's changes.

OCTOBER IS HARVEST TIME!

*By Deborah M. Dashko, RN, BA, LPC, OCN,
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October is a fun time. It's harvest time. A time to drink cider, go on hayrides, have Halloween fun, and look at beautiful landscapes of colorful leaves. It is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It is the time when we should harvest a breast health personal action-plan and think about taking responsibility for our health and wellness.

A breast health personal action-plan will help to find breast cancer early, when it is most curable. Here are the facts:

- Breast cancer is one of the most common that you may have to face in your lifetime.
- It can occur at any age, but is most likely to occur after age 40 and as you get older.
- If you are a woman and you are getting older, you should know about breast cancer and how to find it early.
- When found and treated in its earliest stage, the chance for successful treatment is greatest.
- A mammogram can find cancer when it's very small, often several years before a woman or her doctor would be able to feel it.

Knowing these facts and making a plan will help you to enjoy good health and decrease your stress and worry. The following is the blueprint of a plan that can keep you in good breast health.

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Start at age 40 and continue as long as you are alive!

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