



# Health Hints



## Program Helps Caregivers Provide Support To Loved Ones With Cancer

(NAPSA)—Model Cindy Crawford, a dedicated cancer advocate who understands firsthand the toll that cancer caregiving can take on individuals and families, is teaming with Ortho Biotech Products, L.P., to encourage participation in *Strength for Caring*<sup>™</sup>, a national education and support program for cancer caregivers.

The *Strength for Caring* program offers workshops across the country in conjunction with local hospitals, healthcare facilities and cancer centers; a toll-free number for more information (1-888-I-CARE-80); and online resources at [www.StrengthForCaring.com](http://www.StrengthForCaring.com).

"It was extremely difficult for my entire family when my younger brother was suffering from leukemia," says Crawford, who ultimately lost her brother to the disease. "My mother was his primary caregiver, but we all were deeply affected by the emotional and physical tolls of cancer caregiving."

"My family was not fortunate enough to have the support of a program like *Strength for Caring* when my little brother was ill—we faced the tough challenge of caregiving alone," she continues. "Now caregivers can get the help they need from the *Strength for Caring* program, which provides support, empowerment and practical coping mechanisms for cancer caregivers."

Crawford, the national spokesperson for *Strength for Caring*, will raise awareness of the program and caregiving issues through a variety of activities. In addition to her participation in a national media campaign, Crawford's story will be highlighted on the campaign web site, and she will be provide the voice greeting for the toll-free number. She also will be featured on a *Strength for Caring* campaign poster that will be distributed to doctors' offices, healthcare facilities, community centers and advocacy organizations.

*Strength for Caring* workshops are conducted by accredited nurses and social workers who undergo formal training to facilitate the programs and are attended by people with family members or loved

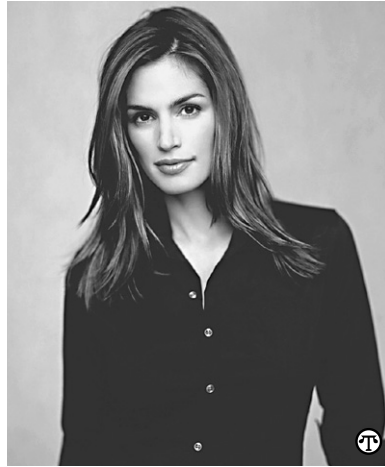


photo courtesy of Patrik Andersson/jbgarc.com

**Model Cindy Crawford is spreading the word about *Strength for Caring*, an education and support program for cancer caregivers.**

ones with cancer. The program curriculum includes a range of topics and addresses the needs of caregivers by helping them to:

- understand cancer and its treatment;
- manage common symptoms such as fatigue and pain;
- meet the physical/emotional needs of patients with cancer;
- deal with changing family roles; and
- improve their own physical and mental health.

*Strength for Caring* sessions focus on ways to improve care at home and teach valuable problem-solving and communication skills. During the workshops, caregivers are encouraged to share their experiences in order to learn from each other, and sessions are tailored to address the concerns of the group. In addition, facilitators provide a variety of local and national resources to ease the challenges of caregiving. With an enhanced understanding of cancer and knowledge of available resources, caregivers are able to provide better care to the patient, themselves and their families.

"I urge families and friends of loved ones with cancer to visit the *Strength for Caring* web site,

[www.StrengthForCaring.com](http://www.StrengthForCaring.com), to find out more about the program and local event information," says Crawford.

Nearly 1.3 million new cases of cancer are expected to be diagnosed in 2002. Since 1990, about 16 million new cancer cases have been diagnosed. These statistics are an unfortunate, but real reminder that this year alone, millions of families will be thrust into the unrehearsed role of cancer caregiver.

Over the years, the role of the family caregiver has changed significantly to include providing advanced care in the home. In fact, after discharge from the hospital, many patients continue to receive complex treatments, such as home-administered chemotherapy, intravenous therapies and elaborate post-surgical care.

According to a study conducted by the National Family Caregivers Association, 54 million adults, or 26.6 percent of the U.S. adult population, provide care for an elderly, disabled or chronically ill relative or friend. Caregivers often risk their own health status while dedicating themselves to the health and well-being of another. Community-based education and support for caregivers helps to relieve the stress of this demanding role.

Ortho Biotech Products, L.P., a leading biotechnology company that markets treatments for cancer patients, has supported *Strength for Caring* since 1998. The program previously had been administered by the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. In 2002, Ortho Biotech plans to expand the *Strength for Caring* program beyond its current reach to cancer caregivers. In May, the company launched *Strength for Caring* for HIV/AIDS caregivers, and tailored the program to provide education and resources that address the unique needs of this community.

For more information on *Strength for Caring*, or to find out about local events, caregivers can call the toll-free hotline—1-888-I-CARE-80 or visit the web site at [www.StrengthForCaring.com](http://www.StrengthForCaring.com).