



spotlight on health

Teaming Up To Face Cancer

(NAPSA)—Facing a cancer diagnosis and its many treatment options can be overwhelming for many cancer patients. But teaming up with family and friends to face chemotherapy, the use of drugs that destroy cancer cells, can provide much needed support to the 1.3 million Americans who undergo this type of cancer treatment each year. For those with a loved one going through this difficult time, it is important to know what you can do to help.

Educate yourself about cancer and chemotherapy. Familiarize yourself with the disease and the different treatment options that are available. There are many different types of chemotherapy, so it is important to listen to the doctor's recommendations to ensure your loved one receives the best possible treatment for his or her type of cancer.

Learn what potential side effects your loved one may face. While most people are aware that chemotherapy can cause hair loss, nausea and vomiting, many may not know about the impact of blood-related complications, which are among the most common—and serious—side effects of chemotherapy. For example, approximately half of patients with cancer receiving strong chemotherapy are at

Thoughtful Suggestions

- Help your loved one write out a list of questions before visiting the doctor. Make them specific and ask the most important questions first.
- Accompany your loved one to the doctor. It is always helpful to have support, a second set of ears and another person to think of questions.
- Help to write down information the doctor provides. Writing down useful information will help you and your loved one remember the doctor's instructions and will help you to understand everything after the visit.



risk for developing a low white blood cell count with fever (a condition known as febrile neutropenia). Using a white blood cell booster such as Neulasta® (pegfilgrastim) administered in the first and subsequent cycles of chemotherapy may help protect patients from the complications of febrile neutropenia and significantly reduce the risk of infection and incidence of hospitalization related to a low white blood cell count with fever. You and your loved one should discuss preparing for treatment right from the start.

Offer to help your loved one as he or she copes with chemo-

therapy. Providing clear suggestions, such as “May I walk your dog every morning?” or “Let me take you to your doctor’s appointment on Tuesday,” instead of a general suggestion such as “Call me if you need something,” can prevent your loved one from feeling like he or she is asking too much of you.

Join a support group or access resources online. Many support groups exist for cancer patients and their loved ones. Being surrounded by people who are facing similar problems can help you cope with the disease and how it is affecting you and your loved one. Also, utilizing online resources such as www.Neulasta.com can provide additional information about treatment that can be accessed in the comfort of your own home.

Neulasta is prescribed to reduce the risk of infection (initially marked by fever) in patients with some tumors receiving chemotherapy that may decrease the number of infection-fighting white blood cells. Rare cases of splenic rupture and allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, have been reported in post-marketing experience. Rarely, these allergic reactions recurred within days after discontinuing anti-allergic treatment.