



Support For Families Facing Cancer

(NAPSA)—Some basic information may help make a diagnosis of cancer a little easier to deal with. That's the advice of doctors, caregivers and cancer survivors.

"When my husband Walter was diagnosed in 1997, we wondered how to tell our children and what to ask, or not ask, of friends," says Connie Payton, wife of late football great Walter Payton. She recently authored a book called *Stronger than Cancer: Treasured Insights from the Hearts and Homes of Families Fighting Cancer* to help people in similar situations deal with their grief and fear.

According to Katherine Puckett, the director of Mind Body Medicine for Cancer Treatment Centers of America, such advice is badly needed.

"Friends and families are often unsure how to give effective support, but there are some simple ways to help. For example, a familiar routine. Daily activities can help a person with cancer retain his sense of normalcy." Puckett offers these additional tips:

- **Make Room for All Feelings**—The person with cancer may be sad, angry, fearful, or confused, and, at times, he may even cry. Be open to it, and respond with compassion.

- **Give Your Loved One a Sense of Control**—People with cancer often feel anxious about the loss of control a diagnosis brings. Combat those feelings by letting the person



There are ways to make cancer a more manageable condition.

make decisions. If your wife wants to cook despite feeling a little weak, let her. The sense of control she gains can outweigh the physical distress she might experience.

- **Listen, But Don't Push the Person to Talk**—Let her decide when it's time to talk and what she wants to talk about. Simply be available, and watch for cues.

- **Take Care of Yourself**—Families can be more effective caregivers if they eat well, get enough sleep, and exercise. Also, remember that emotional support is just as important for caretakers as it is for those with cancer. You can find it through friends, coworkers, support groups, etc.

For additional cancer support information, call 1-800-234-0509 or visit www.cancercenter.com.