

Making More Informed Treatment Decisions

(NAPSA)—Being diagnosed with breast cancer can be a frightening experience. Added to the stress of the diagnosis is the burden of trying to make the best, most educated health treatment decisions. Doing so is not often an easy task because breast cancer is a complex disease and treatment discussions may include confusing terms such as “carcinoma in situ,” “nodal status,” and “adjuvant therapy.”

To help patients with breast cancer and their families make more informed treatment decisions, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and the American Cancer Society have teamed to produce *Breast Cancer Treatment Guidelines for Patients*.

“The collaboration between the NCCN and the American Cancer Society provides patients with direct access to the guidelines and information that oncologists use. We are committed to providing the most-up-to-date, scientifically valid information to help better inform decision-making,” said William T. McGivney, PhD, chief executive officer of NCCN.

These reliable, easy-to-understand booklets are based on the NCCN clinical practice guidelines used by doctors nationwide. Among the topics covered are: types of breast cancer, tests and exams, types of treatment, clinical trials information, and a helpful glossary of breast cancer terms.

Patients are also provided with “decision trees” written in lay language, similar to the ones used by their doctors in making treatment recommendations. These flow-chart algorithms represent the appropriate course of treatment for each stage of breast cancer. These charts are invaluable in determining the most effective course of treatment, helping women take a more active role in the decision-making process with their healthcare provider.

“Not all women with breast cancer should have the same treatment, and these patient



New treatment guidelines make it easier for breast cancer patients to make informed decisions about their care.

guidelines will help women better understand their cancer treatment options,” said Robert C. Young, M.D., national volunteer president of the American Cancer Society and president of Fox Chase Cancer Center, a founding member of the NCCN. “This information will facilitate the process of informed decision-making and help make sure women select the best possible treatment of them.”

The *Breast Cancer Treatment Guidelines for Patients* are part of a series to help patients and their families make more informed decisions regarding their treatment. The series covers supportive care topics such as nausea and vomiting; fever and neutropenia; cancer-related fatigue; and cancer pain, and provides information on cancers of the prostate, lung, colon and rectum, and ovaries. Many titles are available in Spanish as well as English.

These materials are all available free of charge online at www.nccn.org. Treatment Guidelines for Patients may also be ordered by calling 1-888-909-NCCN.

For more information about cancer, call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit the Web site at www.cancer.org.