

Where Do I Go From Here?

Now that you have been told that you have breast cancer, you can expect to have many emotions and questions during the next few weeks and months. Initially, you may feel overwhelmed – this is common. Your life will become more normal as time passes and you become more informed about your disease and its treatment. We would like to help you get started on this new chapter in your life. For many women, the seeming calamity of breast cancer becomes a road of new challenges and personal growth. This is our desire for you.

Although the process of breast cancer diagnosis and treatment may seem complex, the important thing to remember is that today there are many treatment options and your medical care will be tailored to your particular needs, preferences and disease dynamics. At Torrance Memorial Medical Center, our staff of highly trained specialists have extensive experience in providing state-of-the-art breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. Breast cancer treatment typically involves being evaluated by a number of physician specialists, including radiologists, medical oncologists, surgical oncologists, pathologists, radiation oncologists and reconstructive surgeons.

It is also important to be aware that wanting to “do something as soon as possible” is a normal reaction to hearing you have breast cancer. Don’t panic. Breast cancer is not a surgical or medical emergency. In fact, it is estimated that a tumor one centimeter (about ½ an inch) in size has been in the breast for several years before it is large enough to be detected by mammography. It is important that you begin the process of deciding on the best course of treatment for you with your medical team, but you have time to learn what you need to know about your cancer so that you can sort through the available treatment options.

We have put together some information to help you get started on this new pathway of your life. Included is:

1. A description of the continuum of care and services you may encounter and utilize during your cancer experience
2. A form to write down the names of the physicians you will be seeing, their addresses, and your appointment dates
3. A form to write down your dates, locations and preparation information for any upcoming tests and procedures
4. A list of breast cancer support groups

Above all, the staff at Torrance Memorial Cancer Center want to make sure that you never feel alone in your fight against cancer. If you need assistance, information, or just encouragement, please call the **Breast Diagnostic Center Breast Health RNs at 310-784-6335** or **one of the Cancer Resource Center Advance Practice Oncology Nurse Educators at 310-517-4665**.



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