

Guide to Creating a Cancer Notebook

Many people with cancer end up keeping and referring to notebooks they have put together to help them deal with all of the issues involved in cancer treatment. This guide is intended to help you create such a notebook, and to lessen the frustrations of dealing with information overloads and medical paper chases.

What you will need:

- A 3-ring binder
- A 3-hole punch
- Tab dividers (at least 8)

How to make your notebook:

- Label the tab dividers as follows:
 - Phone numbers
 - Calendar
 - Questions for Physicians
 - Pathology & Labs
 - Templates
 - Medical Care Log
 - Insurance
 - Miscellaneous
 - Journal
- Use the templates included here to begin filling your notebook.
- Take your notebook with you to all of your appointments. Use it to record anything you want to remember.
- Ask your physicians for copies of all of your lab results and keep them in the notebook.
- Put some blank, lined paper behind the journal tab, and use it to write or draw whatever you like. Many cancer patients benefit from recording their experiences and feelings. In fact, researchers have found that cancer patients who take the time to reflect and write tend to do better emotionally.

Month:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Dates:						
Dates:						
Dates:						
Dates:						
Dates:						

- How will each treatment option affect my life?

- How long will treatment take?

- Will there be any long-term consequences of my treatment?

- What about pain control?

- How often should I schedule appointments with you?

- Can my cancer still be cured if it comes back after I am treated?

- Are there any clinical trials and/or supplements for my kind of cancer treatment?

- Is there anything I should or should not be eating or drinking?

- How will we know if the cancer comes back?

- For how long will I need to come back for tests after my treatment has finished?

- Can I get help dealing with my feelings?

- How do I find out what my insurance coverage will be?

- What practical help can I get?

- What if I need help with money?

- How should I talk about the cancer with my family and friends?

What symptoms or problems should I report right away?

What can I do to be ready for treatment?

What should I do in an emergency? If I just have a question?

Before I go, may I please have copies of all my pathology reports and lab tests?

Pathology and Lab Reports

Keep copies of all your pathology and lab reports behind this tab.
That way you will have them on hand to show your physicians.

Templates

The templates in this section are helpful for streamlining your interactions with insurers and care providers.

- Sign a copy of the template titled “Please Send Copies of Results to All of the Following” and give it to any lab, hospital, or physician that performs tests for you.
- Keep the Drug History updated and take it to each appointment.

Please Send Copies of Results to All of the Following

<p>Patient: _____ Address: _____ _____ Contact Numbers: _____ Signature _____ Date _____</p>	<p>Primary Care Physician: _____ Address: _____ _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____</p>
<p>Specialist Physician: _____ Address: _____ _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____</p>	<p>Specialist Physician: _____ Address: _____ _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____</p>
<p>Specialist Physician: _____ Address: _____ _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____</p>	<p>Specialist Physician: _____ Address: _____ _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____</p>

Medical Care Log

The Medical Care Log helps you keep track of covered medical care and co-pays.

Insurance

- The Claim Log helps you track your reimbursement from your insurance company. Remember: it never hurts to re-submit claims that get rejected.
- The Medical Care Costs Log is designed for tracking tax deductible medical costs, such as prescription co-pays.
- The Billing Contacts list helps you stay in touch with the billing and insurance specialists in your providers' offices.

