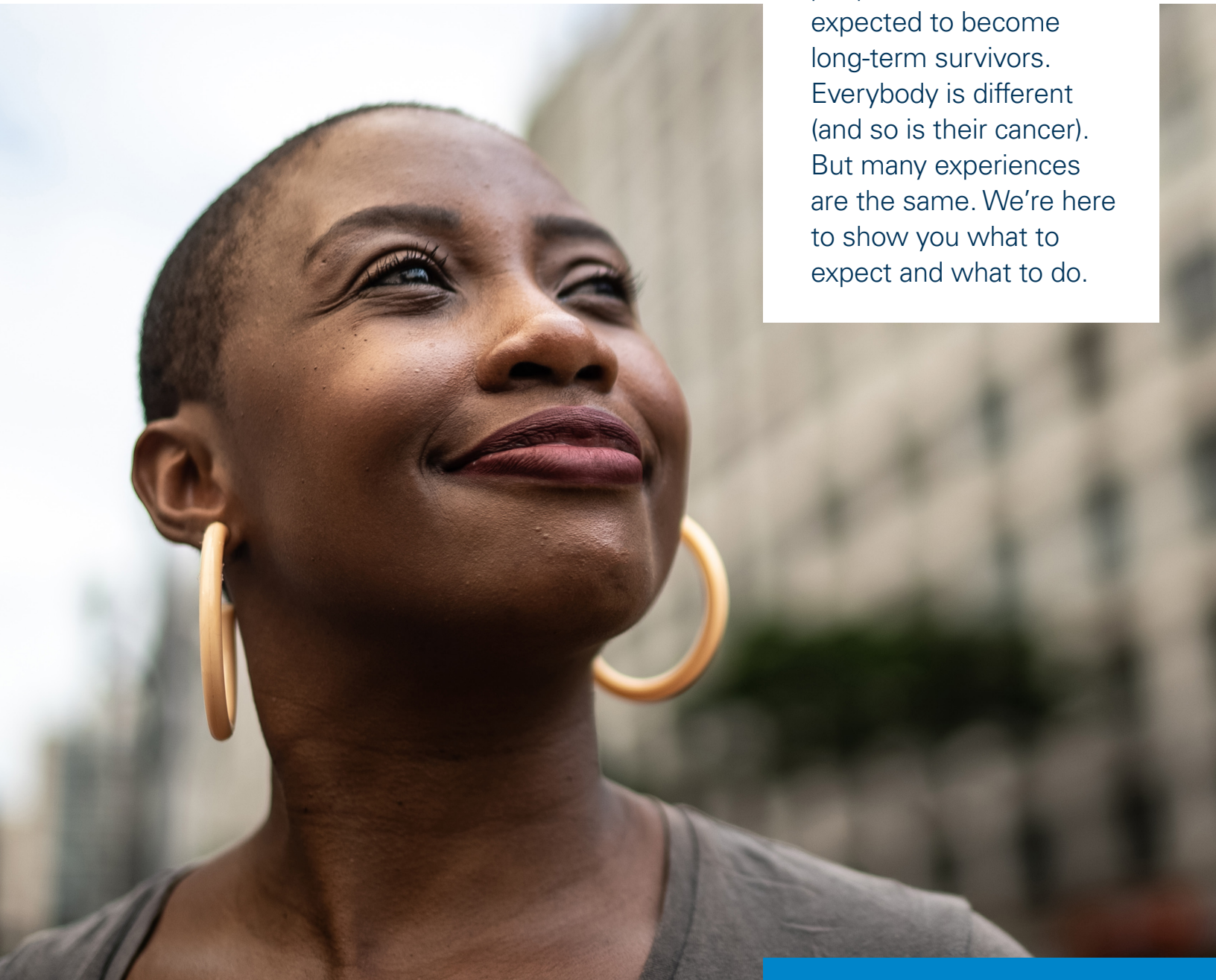




Kansas City

You've been diagnosed with cancer: **YOUR STAY-CALM GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEXT**

First, take a deep breath. You can do this. A cancer diagnosis is scary, but there's also hope. There are more than 18 million cancer survivors in the United States. And over the next 10 years, more people than ever are expected to become long-term survivors. Everybody is different (and so is their cancer). But many experiences are the same. We're here to show you what to expect and what to do.





Step 1:

Let yourself feel whatever you feel

When you learn you have cancer, you may feel lots of emotions: shock, fear, anger, sadness. Give yourself permission to feel them all. Negative feelings don't mean you're weak. They just mean you're human. These tips can help you start to make sense of it all:

Talk it out. If your worries are keeping you up at night, don't hold them in. Find someone to talk to. Seek out a trusted friend or relative. Or ask your doctor or nurse to recommend a therapist.

Connect with others. Consider joining a cancer support group that meets in person or online. It helps to share your concerns with people who know what you're going through. Members can help you find solutions to practical problems, like coping with

side effects. Ask your care team for recommendations.

Support groups and services I'm interested in:

Learn all you can. Knowledge really is power. Research shows that the more you know about your cancer, the more likely you are to feel in control and have a better quality of life.

If you research online, try to stick with sites run by the government (.gov),

universities (.edu), or professional organizations (.org and sometimes .net).

Some trusted sources include American Cancer Society (cancer.org); National Cancer Institute (cancer.gov); and American Society of Clinical Oncologists (cancer.net).

Here are some important questions to ask your doctor and space to jot down the answers:

What kind of cancer do I have?

How advanced is my cancer?

Does this cancer have a genetic link?

What are the treatment options?

What side effects should I expect?

We're here to help
The free Blue KC Care Management app makes it easy to access cancer support. Download it from the App Store or Google Play, and use the access code *kclinksupport* to get started. Prefer to talk? Call **816-395-2060**. Calls will be returned no later than the next business day.



Step 2:

Get to know your cancer care team

You don't have to navigate this journey alone. You'll have a whole team to help guide you. These are a few of the medical experts you'll have on your side:

Doctors. Your oncologist (a doctor who specializes in cancer) will head up your medical team. Depending on the type of cancer you have, other doctors on the team might include surgeons and radiation oncologists (they're in charge of your radiation treatments).

Social workers. They can help with everything from financial issues to insurance questions. They may be able to set up transportation to your appointments or childcare for your kids.

Patient navigator. Confused about your treatments? Having trouble making appointments? Looking for your test results? Your navigator will take you step by step through the process.

Mental health providers. Cancer treatment can be challenging. One recent study showed that nearly 30 percent of patients who had radiation, chemotherapy, and surgery experienced depression. A psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker can help.

Registered dietitian. It's key to stay strong during your treatment, so healthy eating is important. Plus, some treatments come with side effects, like appetite loss, nausea, and swallowing issues. A dietitian can recommend the right foods.

Oncology nurse. They may do your physical exams, give you chemotherapy or other medications, teach you about your treatments, and help you with side effects.

My cancer team

Write down the names and phone numbers of the people on your care team. Keep this list handy in case you need to get in touch with any of them.

My oncologist:

My oncology nurses:

My social worker:

My patient navigator:

My mental health provider:

My registered dietitian:



Step 3:

Learn about your treatment options

Once your care team is in place, the next step will be deciding on the best treatment for your type of cancer. Your doctors will make a recommendation based on where your cancer is, how advanced it may be, and your age and overall health. Here are some options:

Surgery: This is an operation to take out a tumor and some nearby tissue.

zap your cancer cells, killing them or keeping them from growing more.

Chemotherapy: This medicine helps kill cancer cells. You might receive it in a clinic, through a needle in your arm. Or you might get pills to take at home.

Immunotherapy: This treatment works by boosting your immune system, which fights off disease. It helps your body find and kill the cancer cells that are attacking your body. You may receive immunotherapy through needles, medicine on your skin, or pills that you take by mouth.

Radiation therapy: Technicians direct high-energy beams to the part of your body where your cancer is. Those beams

My treatment plan: _____

The power of a second opinion

Not sure about your diagnosis? Wondering if your treatment plan is right for you? A second opinion can give you peace of mind. And don't worry. Your doctor won't be offended. Second opinions happen all the time. The new doctor will either confirm what you've been told or suggest a different diagnosis or treatment. And you'll have more information to make the best decision. To find another doctor, ask your oncologist or contact your Blue KC Care Management Team at **816-395-2060**.

Who I can contact for a second opinion: _____

Cancer support at your fingertips
Download the free Blue KC Care Management app to stay connected with your care team. Available from the App Store or Google Play. Use access code *kclinksupport* to get started. Prefer to talk? Call **816-395-2060**. Calls will be returned no later than the next business day.

Step 4:

Try these good-for-you habits

When you have cancer, a healthy routine is more important than ever. It can help you cope with the side effects you might experience from your treatments. Plus, you'll just feel better. Talk to your care team about these healthy-living ideas:

1 Try to exercise regularly

A cancer diagnosis can bring on feelings of anxiety and depression. Keeping up with a fitness routine can help lift your mood, and it may help ease symptoms like fatigue. In some cases, it can even lower the chances of cancer coming back, according to the American Cancer Society. Try an easy movement plan, like walking or yoga. Ask your care team what kind of physical activity is right for you.

My moves: _____

2 Power up with healthy foods

Cancer treatment can be hard on your body. So good nutrition is important to build your strength. For now, you may need more high-protein, high-calorie foods if you've been losing weight. Thick, cool foods like ice cream can help relieve mouth sores that your treatment might cause. Talk with your care team about the best eating plan.

My foods: _____

3 Consider complementary therapies

These are treatments you can use in addition to your regular cancer treatments. Strategies like acupuncture, meditation, massage, or art therapy can help with side effects, improve your mood, and even speed your recovery. Ask your care team about which complementary therapies might be a good fit.

Therapies I'd like to try: _____

4 Keep family and friends close

Staying connected with others is healthy for everybody. But it's extra important if you have cancer. Studies have found that those with strong emotional ties adjust better to cancer and have a better quality of life. So call a friend, send a text, hop on a video call.

My circle: _____
