

Health Awareness



Helping Cancer Patients Get The Care They Want

(NAPSA)—A new booklet may help patients talk to their doctors about getting the kind of care they want.

For patients who have a terminal illness such as advanced cancer, this is especially important. Making treatment and care decisions can be difficult and it may be hard for patients to talk to their doctors about the kind of care they prefer.

Fortunately, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) has a free booklet to help patients with advanced or late-stage cancer talk about personal preferences for care based on their own individual circumstances, desires and beliefs.

“Advanced Cancer Care Planning,” available on ASCO’s patient information website www.Cancer.net, has practical information on what patients and families need to know about planning for end-stage or terminal disease.

The booklet is designed to help guide discussions about the range, risks and benefits of all available treatment options once chemotherapy or surgery is no longer effective.

ASCO’s patient booklet includes information on advanced cancer care treatment options, including standard care, clinical trials, palliative care and hospice care; the role of family and caregivers in treatment decisions; guiding principles on evaluating care choices; ways to cope and find support; as well as questions to ask the doctor.

“Identifying all of the available care options helps patients to understand, consider and develop a plan that takes their personal



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needs, goals and preferences into account. Having a plan in place can ease the emotional burden for patients and their loved ones alike,” said Michael P. Link, M.D., and president of ASCO.

Studies have shown that patients who talked with their physicians about their preferences for end-of-life care:

- Had less fear and anxiety;
- Felt they had more ability to influence and direct their medical care;
- Believed that their physicians had a better understanding of their wishes.

Palliative or end-of-life care is not to be confused with hospice, which is an end-of-life option for people with a terminal illness who are expected to live six months or less. Palliative care is about improving quality of life, providing an extra layer of support and having a team to focus on patient care, which can be provided at any stage in serious illness.

For a copy of the booklet and more physician-approved information, visit www.cancer.net/advancedcancer.