



THE WHO, WHAT,  
WHERE, WHEN AND  
SOMETIMES, WHY.

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## COPING WITH STRESS

People diagnosed with breast cancer have many unique sources of stress.

Here, we discuss some healthy ways to help deal with this stress.

### Social support

#### Co-survivors

Social support is the emotional support, practical help and advice you get from your co-survivors.

Co-survivors may include:

- Spouses or partners
- Family members
- Friends
- Spiritual advisors
- Spiritual communities (such as churches, synagogues and mosques)
- Co-workers and supervisors

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- [Online or e-mail discussion groups](#)

Learn more about [co-survivors](#).

## Support groups

Many people diagnosed with breast cancer expand and strengthen their emotional support systems by joining a breast cancer support group.

Learn more about [support groups](#).

## Benefits of social support

Research shows social support can benefit people diagnosed with breast cancer.

Whether it's informal support from family and friends, or more formal support from group or individual therapy, social support can improve your quality of life [15,121].

People diagnosed with breast cancer who have more social support tend to cope better emotionally than those with little support [15,121].

Learn more about [the benefits of social support](#).

Learn more about [quality of life during breast cancer treatment](#) and [quality of life after breast cancer treatment](#).

## Counseling (psychotherapy)

Talking with a trained mental health provider (such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor or clinical social worker) can reduce distress and improve mental well-being and quality of life for people diagnosed with breast cancer [122].

Some people prefer one-on-one counseling. Others prefer counseling in a group setting.

Mental health counseling may combine techniques such as coping skills training and [relaxation exercises](#) to help reduce stress.

Learn more about [psychotherapy](#).

Learn more about [relaxation therapy](#).

## Mindfulness meditation (mindfulness-based stress reduction)

With mindfulness meditation (mindfulness-based stress reduction), you are aware of your thoughts and feelings,

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diagnosed with breast cancer [28,123,198]. It can also improve [quality of life](#) [198].

Learn more about [meditation](#).

Learn more about [guided imagery](#).

Learn more about [relaxation therapy](#).

## Physical activity (exercise)

Being active is a healthy way to deal with daily stress.

Regular exercise (such as [yoga](#)), can help breast cancer survivors reduce stress and anxiety and give a sense of control over their bodies [14-17,124-126,198].

You don't have to do a lot of exercise to get a benefit. Even simple activities (such as walking several times a week or yoga) can improve quality of life [14,198].

Physical activity can also reduce fatigue [20-22].

The American Cancer Society recommends cancer survivors aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity a week [127].

Learn about [exercise and breast cancer survival](#).

Learn about [other benefits of exercise for breast cancer survivors](#).

## Other ways to cope with stress

Other ways to lower stress and anxiety include [198]:

- [Music therapy](#)
- Stress management (in a group program)

### SUSAN G. KOMEN® SUPPORT RESOURCES

- Our Breast Care Helpline 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) provides free, professional support services to anyone with breast cancer questions or concerns, including people diagnosed with breast cancer and

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other resources in your area. [Find your local Affiliate.](#)

- Our [Message Boards](#) offer online [forums for people diagnosed with breast cancer](#) to share their experiences with others.
- Our [Family and Friends section](#) has detailed information and resources for loved ones.
- Our [Family, Friends and Caregivers forum within the Message Boards](#) offers loved ones a place to share their own unique experiences and challenges.
- Our [fact sheets, booklets and other education materials](#) offer additional information.

Updated 07/30/18



EVERYTHING YOU DO MAKES A DIFFERENCE  
Discover the different ways you can help

[GET INVOLVED](#)



NEED HELP  
OR MORE INFORMATION?

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