

Lifelines

from the National Cancer Institute



LATINOS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE FREE CONFIDENTIAL 1-800-4-CANCER INFORMATION SERVICE

Bethesda, MD - A Hispanic woman in her mid-40s is an ovarian cancer patient whose doctor has prescribed a treatment with the drugs cisplatin and Taxol. She is concerned about side effects and the possibility that she may be hospitalized during treatment. She wants to know why she can't have the same drugs her friend had for breast cancer, which had few side effects. She's also concerned about the cost of her chemotherapy.

Every day, people in the Hispanic/Latino community have questions about cancer, whether about their own fight with the disease or about a family member, a friend, or a co-worker. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) can help you get the answers to your questions over the telephone – in English and in Spanish – at no cost to you. When you call 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237), a free and confidential service of the NCI, a cancer information specialist is ready and willing to assist you on the line, taking as much time as you need to answer the questions that you have about cancer.

The Cancer Information Service (CIS) is available to everyone. But given how cancer health disparities are affecting Latinos and other minority communities, the NCI is encouraging more members of the Latino community to learn about and use the service. One way to address cancer health disparities is to make sure all communities have access to the same information.

When you call 1-800-4-CANCER, a highly trained information specialist will provide you with information that is right for you based on your unique situation. While information specialists

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can provide answers to many questions and help you understand more about cancer, they do not take the place of a doctor and cannot provide medical advice. What they can do, however, is direct callers to sources of reliable and accurate cancer information. In fact, that is what the CIS was created to do – to connect the calling public with accurate and useful cancer education information. This includes helping people use our Spanish-language website, www.cancer.gov/espanol.

“When a person contacts the CIS, their personal information is kept confidential and they receive tailored responses to their questions about cancer,” said Mary Anne Bright, who heads the CIS. “Often, a patient or their loved ones contact CIS for information about cancer prevention, early detection, symptoms, questions to ask their doctor, cancer treatment and/or palliative care. Our Cancer Information Specialists are highly trained, caring individuals, who take time to fully address the person’s cancer information needs.”

Anyone can call 1-800-4-CANCER. A doctor does not need to place the call for you and you do not have to provide any private information about insurance or anything else. As a member of the public, you are free to call and ask questions during the business hours that are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 pm. Eastern Time. You can also access Live Help online or even send e-mail in both Spanish and English. For more information about the CIS and how you can use the service, go to: <http://www.cancer.gov/aboutnci/cis/page1>.