

# Navigating a Diagnosis



## Accept Your Emotions

A new diagnosis may make you feel angry, sad or scared. You might feel accepting one day, then upset the next. You could also feel relieved to finally know what's going on. All your feelings are normal and will get better with time. If they don't, consider talking to a counselor.

## A Step-by-Step Guide

A life-changing diagnosis can be overwhelming and confusing. After you've processed the news, follow these five steps to help navigate your new diagnosis:

- 1. Make a follow-up doctor's appointment, and prepare for it.** Bring a list of questions, and be ready to write down answers. Have a loved one come to your appointment with you to hear what your doctor says and give you support.
- 2. Build a support team.** Tell trusted family members and friends about your diagnosis. They can help you cope. Also look for support groups, either online or in person. You can meet other people with the same diagnosis to share information and concerns with each other. Ask your discharge planner for help finding support groups.
- 3. Call your insurance.** Tell them about your new diagnosis so you understand your coverage for treatments. You may be worried about how much treatments will cost, so never be afraid to ask. Your doctor may be able to offer different treatments that better fit your budget.
- 4. Learn about your diagnosis.** Having a good understanding of your condition will help you feel more in control. Ask your doctor for resources. And remember to keep learning about your condition. You may discover new ways to better manage it.
- 5. Take time to make decisions.** You may not have to decide on a treatment plan right away. Take time to understand your diagnosis and treatment options, and talk to your loved ones. Doing this will help you feel more confident in your decisions.

## Second Opinion

Feeling unsure about your diagnosis or treatment? Tell your doctor you'd like a second opinion. Most doctors will understand that you want to be sure before making decisions about your health.

