

## CHECKLIST FOR NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS

As overwhelming as a pancreatic cancer diagnosis is, it is important to act quickly and put a treatment plan into place. Treatment should ideally begin within one month after you receive your diagnosis.

### Understand the Disease

Thoroughly understand what stage of pancreatic cancer you have. Inquire about having your blood or saliva tested to identify possible genetic mutations. In addition to this routine testing, if you are being treated at a major research center, speak with your doctor about having a tumor biopsy performed to sequence your cancer genes. Knowing the stage and possible mutations can impact your treatment plan. Research the latest treatments and inquire about clinical trials for which you might qualify.

### Seek opinions from experts

Get two opinions and make sure that one is from a large academic institution that specializes in treating pancreatic cancer.

### Know your healthcare team

Treating pancreatic cancer requires an interdisciplinary approach that includes your oncologist and other specialists who will be involved in your care. Continue to see other doctors who are involved in your overall care, such as your internist.

### Get organized

Record your questions in a notebook and bring it with you to all doctors' appointments. Use it to keep track of test results and appointment dates. Write down the contact numbers of all your doctors in one place or save them in your cell phone. Additionally, know the number to call if you have a problem/concern after hours or on a weekend.

### Develop a support system

Have someone accompany you to oncology appointments for support and clarification of the proposed plan of care.

### Delegate responsibilities

Enlist the help of friends, family members and neighbors who want to help with errands/chores, meal preparation and driving.

### Control what you can

Closely monitor your nutrition, physical activity and pain level and provide feedback to your healthcare team. Utilize integrative medicine such as Reiki therapy, yoga, meditation, acupuncture and pet therapy.

