

Conclusion

[Narrator]

Myeloma is a complex and chronic disease. When first diagnosed, there's so much to learn and adjust to. Eventually, you and your family learn the language of myeloma, and you become an expert.

The resource booklet that accompanies this module contains tips and resources to help you manage life with myeloma. You'll find definitions for terms used in this program, and a list of resources including phone numbers and internet addresses. There are also references to articles and books you might find useful.

To live well with myeloma, you must become your own advocate. You know yourself and your body best. Ask for what you need. Let your health care team know if you need more information or support, or if you think you're developing a new problem. As time goes by, you'll learn to live fully with this chronic illness.

Let's review some important points we've learned:

- Everyone diagnosed with cancer is a survivor.
- Treatment for myeloma is complex. Most people will need treatment throughout their lives.
- It's important to know about symptoms and side effects, and how to deal with them.
- You can't change the fact you have multiple myeloma, but you can learn to adapt to it and manage the life changes required to live as fully as possible.
- You are not alone. There are thousands of others, who like you, are figuring out how to cope with myeloma.

- In terms of treatments, over the past five-to-ten years, there have been many new drugs and combinations. We are very hopeful.
- There are hundreds of clinical trials in progress, a good sign we'll continue to see new treatments.
- There's good information about myeloma clinical trials on the National Cancer Institute, the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation, and the International Myeloma Foundation websites.
- The battle against myeloma is too hard to fight alone. One needs support to fight.
- There are people all around to help you through this. You only have to let someone know you need help.
- The goal after a cancer diagnosis is to get back to normal, but, most often, a "new normal" must evolve.
- You must be a self-advocate. You need to ask for what you need and stand up for your right to good care and support.
- Taking care of yourself as the caregiver can help you be a better caregiver.

This program from the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship is one of many educational programs for cancer survivors. We invite you to listen to other programs contained in the *Cancer Survival Toolbox*[®], available at www.canceradvocacy.org/toolbox or 877-Tools-4U.