

ONE DAY JOURNEY WITH A PATIENT WITH HEAD AND NECK CANCER

<ADAPTED FROM A TRUE STORY>

Taking good care of emotion
is as important as taking good
care of physical condition



Health Promotion Administration,
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ceremony

Dress up! His best clothes is not a suit, and no need grooming, nor makeup.

Every morning, holding the mirror steadily, carefully cleaning his wounds, and then neatly bandaging them with gauze. Looking at the mirror, he is satisfied with his works.

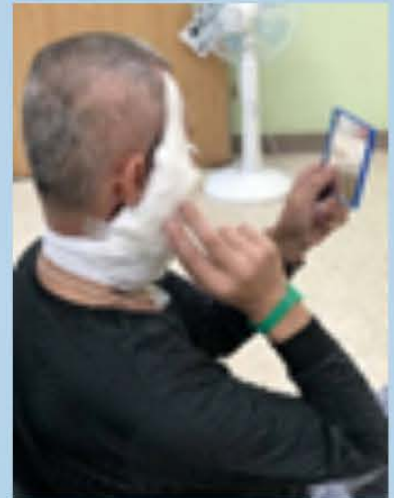
As if preparing for the important visitors, He hopes that his efforts can invite people willing to come close to him.

A-Yong was diagnosed with oral cancer 3 years ago. The most painful thing for him is not surgery or chemotherapy, but after the treatment completed, he must go back to his life, alone...

Getting up at 7:30 in the morning, A-Yong started to change his dressing and clean wounds, because without the assistance of his family, A-Yong has already made perfect skills. He wrapped the wounds neatly and cleanly. Because he was afraid that a little blood or smell would scare others away.

Patients with head and neck cancer often feel embarrassed or low self-esteem because the wound is over the easily visible part of the body. Do you feel the same way? Let's see what others say

[\(Listen\)](#) [\(Watch\)](#) or scan QR Code



A-Yong has lost his livelihood due to cancer, and he is not willing to work then. He can only make a living by setting up roadside stalls, and every morning he takes the MRT to go to work. In the crowded carriage, only the seat next to A-Yong is always empty, and his head is getting lower and lower...

If you have the same economic or emotional problems, please try our suggestions

[\(Listen\)](#) [\(Watch\)](#) or scan QR Code



He usually displays merchandise, because the wounds after surgery affect the language and hearing function, so he can only communicate with visitors in a hand-to-hand way, but what he attracts is only people's eyes and pointers until the sun sets. But not even a single item was sold.

Because of the changes in his appearance and smell, it affects interpersonal relations, oral communication and hearing impairment...

Is there any communication countermeasures?

[\(Listen\)](#) [\(Watch\)](#) or scan QR Code



On the way home, the fragrance of the food in every household evokes A-Yong's taste buds, and the ordinary home cooking has left him. It's far away... Listening to his belly call, he hasn't tasted food for a long time.

Patients with head and neck cancer are usually unable to eat normally due to the sequelae of dysphagia after the treatment, which often causes distress or depression. See how experts advise ([Listen](#)) ([Watch](#)) or scan QR Code



A-Yong returns home after a hard day, lying in bed and recalling what happened today. Suddenly there was a feeling of sadness, because he is very weak and there was no one could help him. To him, living was an endless torture. "I'd be better off dead" A-Yong thinks...

What should you do when you feel that life is meaningless? ([Listen](#)) ([Watch](#)) or scan QR Code



It is often for head and neck cancer patients being emotional distressed, because of financial difficulties related to treatment and fear of becoming a burden to family members. In addition, changes of appearance and communication difficulties cause inferiority and interpersonal isolation and loneliness. Please do not hesitate seeking medical teams and mental health professionals to provide psychological support and counseling.

If you need psychological consultation, please contact
<https://reurl.cc/MdEypL>

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【Map of Mental Adjustment to Cancer】

is a direction for you to be mentally prepared to take care of yourself at all stages

1

★Cancer Screening

- Commitment to take good care of the physical condition
- Regular screening and follow up

Compass: At this time, you may escape because of fear. We have to take courage to return to the clinic.

This is your responsibility of taking care of your own body.

3

★Treatment

- Feeling anxious or depressed, sometimes apprehensive
- Feeling like “it never ends”
- Worrying that the treatment outcome might not be good
- Worrying that being a burden to families

Compass: For many patients their lives changed due to treatment, so emotionally unstable are not rare.

Worrying about the outcome of treatment is common.

You may develop skills for taking care emotional distress.

(Such as: doing exercise regularly, do what you like to do regularly, counseling with mental health professionals regularly)

5

★Advance stage

- Feel meaningless about life and worthless
- Thinking about death repeatedly
- Thinking about loss of autonomy/dependence and end-of-life issues

Compass: Thinking about living and dying/death is common at this stage. To explore the spirituality, meaning and mortality should not be a taboo. Encourages communication with medical team and to collaborate with palliative care team.

4

★In remission and Follow up

- If there are some symptoms, you will be alert to whether it has recurred
- Feelings of losing meaning in life, edginess
- depressed and feeling of meaninglessness

Compass: You need to find the focus of life again and monitor your emotional adjustment. If necessary, seek help from a mental health professional.

2

★Initial diagnosis

- Feel shocked, afraid and helpless
- Eager to figure out why you got cancer
- Feel anxious and depressed

Compass: At this time, it's quite distressful, so don't rush to attribute why you got cancer.

To focus on choosing a medical team you trust. If you are emotionally difficult to adjust, you should find a professional to clarify the current emotional state.

START