



Appui Lettre Outaouais

October 2015

FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CAREGIVERS!

WWW.LAPPUIOUTAOUAIS.ORG

Pink October

When a loved one is diagnosed with cancer, we feel helpless and overwhelmed. Fortunately, associations such as the **Fondation québécoise du cancer** and the **Canadian Cancer Society** are there to help, guide and support us. Do not hesitate to contact them or call the **caregiver info line at 1-855-856-7784**, if you need someone to talk to and/or support.

In this issue of L'Appui Lettre, you will find articles for caregivers of people with cancer. This month in Tips and Tricks: **Knowing when to seek help**.

Following is a reminder of the L'Appui Outaouais mission.

Our mission

The mission of L'Appui Outaouais is to provide support to caregivers who provide regular home care and support without pay to seniors who have a significant or persistent disability likely to compromise their ability to stay at home.

A word from Jean-Yves



Executive Director, L'Appui Outaouais

Hello everyone!

October is the month for us to show our support to people with cancer and their loved ones. It is important to know that there are specialists you can turn to who will be able to inform and guide you and give you all the support you will need. Remember to take time to relax and prepare yourself by participating in the seminars organized by our partners. Further details are available in our News and Events section.

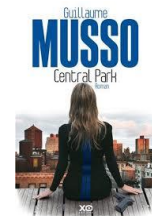
Happy reading and don't hesitate to contact the caregiver info line any time at 1-855-8LAPPUI.

In this issue

- **La Fondation québécoise du cancer**
- **Caregiving for advanced cancer**
- **Advice for family caregivers**
- **A caregiver's story: I am with you no matter what**

Suggested reading

Central Park
Guillaume Musso



Alice, a young Parisian cop, and Gabriel, an American jazz pianist, wake up on a bench in Central Park handcuffed to one another. They don't know each other and have no memory of having met. Alice and Gabriel are left with no choice but to team up to figure out what is happening to them and get back to their normal lives. What they are going to discover will turn their lives upside down.



La Fondation québécoise du cancer

La Fondation québécoise du cancer supports people with cancer and their loved ones, in Quebec, with services that focus on their daily needs and concerns. Its representatives are there, at the most difficult times, to listen and to provide information, comfort, support and accommodation for people in Quebec who have just had their lives turned upside down by cancer.



Need information, someone to talk with, resources or a sympathetic ear?

Info-cancer staff members are there to:

- Answer your questions;
- Guide you to the resources in your region;
- Put you in contact with someone who has gone through the same thing you are experiencing, whether it is you or one of your loved ones who has cancer;
- Provide you with useful documentation.

Toll-free services, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

1-800-363-0063

infocancer@fqc.qc.ca

Art therapy

No artistic experience or talent is needed to participate in art therapy workshops. All you need is curiosity and the desire to experiment with different mediums, such as paint, wood, pastels, plaster and more. Art therapy will guide you through the artistic process and encourage you to create for fun, not for results.

Kinesiology (adapted physical activity)

Regardless of your physical fitness, following an adapted exercise program helps manage the effects of treatments and the disease more effectively. Even the lightest exercise, such as a few minutes of stretching a day, can provide great benefits. The program is supported by a kinesiologist who also suggests ways to adopt healthy lifestyle habits.

Accommodation during treatments

Are your cancer treatments far from where you live?

Are you unable to go there frequently?

Are you too exhausted for the travel that your treatments require?

The Fondation québécoise du cancer offers you affordable, comfortable and safe accommodation near the large cancer treatment centres. Our guest houses in Montréal, Gatineau, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières will welcome you and a loved one for the entire length of your treatments.

To reach us in Outaouais:

555, boul. de l'Hôpital

Gatineau, Quebec J8V 3T4

819-561-2262

cancerquebec.gat@fqc.qc.ca

For more information, please call the caregiver info line at 1-855-8LAPPUI.

Caregiving for advanced cancer

There are many ways of caring for a person with advanced-stage cancer. The most basic simply involves spending time with that person: holding hands, watching television, listening to music or playing cards with each other, or even reading to this person. However, taking care of someone can include many other things.



The importance of touch

Sometimes, when you cannot find the right words, taking the person's hand or holding the person in your arms can be just as comforting. Touch is a powerful means of communication. It helps relieve feelings of loneliness and isolation and it shows the person that you care.

Providing physical care

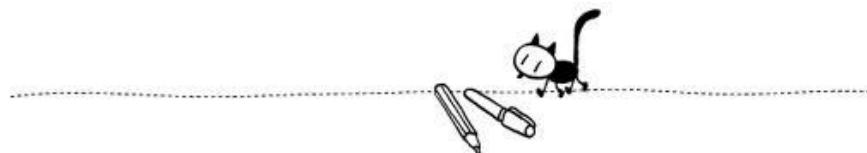
You may have to provide care that used to be provided by nurses or other health professionals. Below are some of the types of care you may be called on to provide.

- **Bathing:** helping the person into and out of the shower or tub, or giving a sponge bath in bed.
- **Lifting and moving:** helping the person get into or out of a bed or chair, moving the cushions, and helping the person roll or turn over.
- **Toileting:** helping the person go to the washroom and relieve him/herself, as well as to use the bedpan, incontinence pads and catheters.
- **Oral care:** helping the person brush his/her teeth, moisturize his/her lips, rinse his/her mouth.
- **Hair, skin and nail care:** washing and drying the person's hair, putting moisturizer on the person's skin, trimming the person's toenails and fingernails.
- **Giving medications:** noting the time medications are taken, the doses and where they are stored. Medications may be administered in tablet, syrup, ointment, spray, suppository or injection form.

It is important to seek help and training if you need it. Hospitals may have pamphlets, guides and other information for you to take home.

If necessary, a home care nurse, physiotherapist or occupational therapist can show you how to perform some of the key tasks. These people can also provide you with support over the phone. If the care to be provided becomes too much for you, consider calling on the services of home care aides, nurses or personal care workers. Depending on your situation and where you live, you may have to pay for these services.

Source: www.lymphoma.ca



Advice for Family Caregivers

When a loved one tells you that she has been diagnosed with breast cancer, it's normal to feel devastated and helpless. Below is list of tips to help you feel better equipped to support your loved one at such a difficult time.



During treatment

Battling breast cancer can be extremely difficult, both physically and emotionally, which means that your support is crucial.

Here are some practical ideas to help you be there for her without exhausting yourself.

- Take a few minutes to call her.
- Plan a trip to the movies, a restaurant or the theatre.
- Treat her to an appointment with a stylist or esthetician.
- Plan a shopping trip. As a result of her treatments, she will need to go shopping for certain things: pyjamas, scarves, cosmetics, a wig or breast prostheses, etc.
- If she has had a mastectomy, offer to help her go through her wardrobe.
- Give her a gift: a bouquet of flowers, a notebook, a book or CD.
- Send her a note.
- Talk to her about everything and nothing.
- Invite her to a show. It will brighten her day and help her forget about the disease for a little while.
- Make some freezer-ready meals for her.
- Do some housework or grocery shopping for her.
- Offer to take her children to daycare or school or to look after them yourself for a few hours.
- If she is interested, gather some information on the disease and the resources available in her area.

However, you must also protect yourself from exhaustion and focus on your own life, especially if you are the spouse of or very close to the person with cancer. Just like the person you want to help, you have to take care of yourself and take time to relax.

Also remember that a person in treatment has a weakened immune system. Therefore, it is important to avoid direct contact when you are sick.

Source: www.rubanrose.org/Support_for_Family_Caregivers-en-57



Tips and tricks: Knowing when to seek help

At any point in the day, you might need help and extra support. Consider asking your friends or, in some cases, calling on a professional who will be in a better position to advise you. Sometimes you will notice physical symptoms that may be telling you it is time to seek professional help: weight loss or gain, frequent headaches, heart palpitations or panic attacks, digestion problems, difficulty concentrating... Don't delay, seek help!

Source: www.prochedemalade.com

I am with you no matter what

My 54-year-old husband has terminal brain cancer

Hello everyone,

This is the first time I have taken the time to write on a site like this about my story as a family caregiver for my husband. I don't really know where to start, but I am letting my heart lead the way, and we'll see where that takes us, okay? :-)



As a title, I could have chosen "I live his cancer." When they told me it was terminal cancer, darkness descended over me; I saw the lips of the physician moving, but I didn't hear anything, not a single thing. What a terrible shock! He has just finished his third dose of chemo and he is suffering. I am so powerless against this disease, and I find that extremely difficult. I'm the kind of person who deals with things, finds solutions, makes concessions to resolve problems at home, but now... all I can do is love him with all my heart, take care of him and ????. How many times I watch him sleep and I cry because I know my love is losing the battle... It's an awful feeling, it is surreal.

We encourage each other, we try to enjoy our days walking in the woods, but these times are becoming shorter and increasingly rare, because he does not have the energy. But, you know what? The thing I find most appalling is the lack of money. I simply cannot believe it! It's dreadful, in 2009 in Quebec, to live below the poverty line because someone in a family has cancer.

In addition to battling this cancer, we have to fight to survive, and that makes my husband worried and unhappy. He should not have to deal with such a situation. In spite of myself, I have become a personal assistant, nurse, accountant, shopper, cook, psychologist, physical support, etc. Good thing I am trained as a visiting homemaker, because that helps me a great deal in how I get things done. It could be said that I haven't fully accepted the situation yet, because sometimes I tell myself that he is going to get better and that everything will be okay in the end! I love him so much and I'm scared about the future.

I try to live each day as it comes, but sometimes I have no choice but to look to the future, because I have to plan things, don't I? I'm tired, drained, I race through my shopping, bring my cell phone with me just in case, I worry when I'm not there. I don't dare spend time with my family, because they live far away and if something should happen! It is so hard to live through. I know that I cannot encourage anyone with this letter today, but I have an immense need to share this with you all. One day, I just know it, I will write you a great letter of encouragement, but today, this is how it is, you will have to forgive me! Thank you for reading my words, it has really done me good to write to you.

Jocelyne D.

Source: Canadian Cancer Society

For more information, please call the caregiver info line at 1-855-8LAPPUI

News and events

❖ Free seminars in Gatineau

Please confirm your attendance with the Centre d'entraide aux aînés at 819-771-6609 or by email at centredentraideauxaines@videotron.ca



Title	Date, time and location	Description
Are you a caregiver in need of some tools to reduce stress?	Wednesday, October 21, 2015 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. 584, rue Maclaren Est Buckingham	During this seminar, caregivers will learn to recognize the signs of stress and be given tools to help them deal with this stress. Caregivers will also be able to try out these tools designed to help them relax and reduce their stress.
Understanding and coping with the many hardships caregivers face	Monday, October 26, 2015 6:45 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Centre d'action bénévole Accès 67, rue Principale (Aylmer area) Gatineau	Being with a senior who is losing autonomy can be a daily challenge for caregivers. During this time, caregivers can face many hardships. This seminar will give caregivers the tools to adapt to various hardships, based on their abilities.

❖ Training workshops (Saint-André-Avellin and Gatineau)



Build your toolkit through the workshops for caregivers being offered in fall 2015.

Many topics will be covered: the theory behind Alzheimer's disease (with the participation of a psychiatrist); understanding the disease and the person with it; various resources available (with a visit from a social worker); importance of an adapted environment (with the participation of an occupational therapist from the CLSC); a caregiver's story; presentation given by a notary, and a great deal of other information.

The specialized workshops adapted to the needs of caregivers will be held in Petite-Nation and in Gatineau. **Please contact Mélissa at 819-777-4232 or by email at mpoirier@saog.org.**

The cost is \$35 per participant.



If you would like to subscribe to L'Appui Lettre, please send this form to:

L'Appui Outaouais, 180 du Mont-Bleu Blvd., Gatineau QC J8Z 3J5

or visit our website: www.lappuioutaouais.org.

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First name: _____

Yes, I would like to receive L'Appui Lettre Outaouais:

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