



Inspired by Urology Awareness Month TUF supporter and journalist Olivia Wood kindly submitted the following article, on living with Prostate and Bladder Cancer, to us and we re produce it here with her kind permission

Living with Prostate and Bladder Cancer

Urologic diseases include kidney stones and bladder control problems, as well as one of the five most common types of cancer: prostate. Prostate cancer is the most common type experienced by men; in the UK alone, more than 47,500 men are diagnosed with it every year.

Bladder cancer is another urologic disease, and there are around 10,200 new cases in the UK every year. As it's Urology Awareness Month, now is the perfect time to learn more about these common conditions.

There are ways to make the most of your everyday life despite a difficult diagnosis. If you are currently living with prostate or bladder cancer, read on for some advice.

1. Connect with people who understand

Although your family and friends surely want to support you, they're unlikely to 100% understand what you're going through.

You might consider accessing a support group specifically designed for people with cancer, whether online or in person.

Why not ask your doctor if there are local opportunities to socialise with other cancer patients?

Many survivors offer support by volunteering with cancer charities. On tough days, it may help to get inspiration from people who have survived the same urological cancer as you.

2. **Adapt your routine as required**

One of the challenges of living with urological cancer is trying to continue living your life while facing significant additional obstacles. You don't have to give up on your usual routine. However, you may need to make adaptations.

Keep it manageable! Include plenty of rest breaks and you can still participate in your normal activities at a reduced rate.

3. **Be honest with your support network**

You may feel responsible for reassuring your family and friends that you're ok, but feigning constant positivity adds an emotional burden to what you're experiencing.

Instead, provide them with resources so they understand what to expect from your condition. Explain that some days, you'll simply need to offload your worries.

They need to know that the best thing they can do is be there and listen – they won't always be able to fix your problems or make you feel better, and that's ok!

4. **Learn more about your condition**

This doesn't mean you should go down an internet rabbit hole, scare yourself, and potentially end up with dubious information.

Instead, you should speak to your doctor and read any resources that they recommend. It's good to be prepared for how your cancer might present itself.

You can also get advice on how to best manage symptoms and side effects this way.

5. **Maintain your health as much as possible**

Eating a balanced diet, resting properly, and participating in gentle movement where possible will improve your overall sense of wellbeing.

A healthy lifestyle should help you feel more energised, which can in turn provide much-needed strength during the ups and downs of urological cancer treatment.

Think about how you can best support your body at this time.

6. **Don't give up on your passions and pleasures**

It's obvious that having cancer has a huge impact on your life, but you're still entitled to enjoy the things you enjoyed before. You may simply have to be more cautious and thoughtful about how you enjoy them.

Find space in your day to pursue your passions and pleasures. Happiness won't heal your cancer, of course, but it will improve your quality of life.

7. **Make an effort to relax**

It's understandable to have a busy mind when you receive a urological cancer diagnosis. It's usually an emotionally intense period, too.

Why not give your brain some breathing space? You can do this by practising mindfulness and listening to guided meditations. Journaling or gentle movement such as yoga can also help to relieve stress.

Find the coping strategies that work for you and schedule in time for purposeful relaxation.

8. **Be realistic with yourself and others**

Sometimes your side effects might stop you from doing what you want to do. This is frustrating, but it helps to accept the situation as much as possible and bear in mind that certain things are beyond your control.

Similarly, your support network will undoubtedly say or do the wrong thing from time to time. You might too! This is a difficult period for everyone. Be patient and forgiving with yourself and others: remember, you're all doing your best.

If you still find yourself struggling, remember that there is professional support available for people in your precise situation. Don't hesitate to reach out for help.