

Working During Treatment

breastcancer.org

While some people choose to take some time off from work during treatment for breast cancer, others decide to work through treatment. If you've chosen to work during your treatment, let your doctor know. Your doctor may be able to schedule treatments around your working hours or give you suggestions on dealing with work stress while in treatment. Also, you can ask your doctor if any of your treatments have side effects that could affect your daily routine. Side effects such as nausea and fatigue may have an influence on daily work routines. Learn how to manage side effects associated with some breast cancer treatments.

Sometimes, people undergoing breast cancer treatment experience thinking and memory problems, or "cognitive" effects. Cognitive effects such as memory loss and lack of concentration can have an impact on work. If you're finding that it's hard to stay focused, or you're forgetting important things, it may be helpful to keep a work journal. In your journal, you may want to:

- **Record meetings and appointments on paper** with time and date, who the appointment was with, and what was discussed. You can keep track of work meetings and doctor's appointments.
- **Jot down important conversations.** Make notes that include ideas you want to remember and decisions made during the conversation. If you have regular meetings at work, bring your journal for note-taking.
- **Track deadlines.** List when things are due, and keep a timeline of goals met along the way.
- **Make a to-do list** and add to it each time you think of something new. Check off items as you accomplish them.
- **Set realistic goals for tasks to be completed.** Try to stick to your goals if you can, but don't push yourself too hard.
- **Keep a written schedule** to help you remember your work days and days off.

If you have health insurance, it's also a good idea to keep track of certain medical information. You may want to write down the dates of doctor's visits and any

hospitalizations, as well as names and dosages of medications. Keep copies of insurance claims and correspondence, in case any questions come up about what's covered. Keep all of this information in a safe place, along with the rest of your medical records and any financial or legal information.