Providing your breast cancer patients with emotional support, so you can focus on their clinical needs

What is Reach To Recovery?
The American Cancer Society Reach To Recovery® program connects newly diagnosed breast cancer patients with carefully screened, well-trained volunteers who are breast cancer survivors. Our volunteers offer non-medical, peer support over the phone, online, or through in-person meetings (often outside of the hospital setting). They help patients deal with practical and emotional issues, which enables them to cope with their disease, treatment, and long-term survivorship issues, so you can focus on their treatment and clinical needs.

By building upon the Reach To Recovery program’s successful support to more than 1.5 million women, the American Cancer Society continues to identify promising practices to keep the program current. We are shortening the time from referral to initial contact (within 24-48 hours) and are ensuring that the program meets the evolving needs of breast cancer patients and survivors, as well as health care providers.

What evidence suggests that my breast cancer patients may benefit from the Reach To Recovery program?

- Published research supports the need for peer-to-peer emotional support for newly diagnosed cancer patients. These patients report benefits and satisfaction from peer-to-peer support.
- Some research suggests that although advances in the surgical treatment of breast cancer have reduced physical side effects, many of the concerns of breast cancer patients and survivors remain. In addition, interest in peer support appears to be unaffected by treatment type.
- Patients who receive a Reach To Recovery visit from a trained and matched volunteer report that the meeting has a positive impact on their ability to cope with their disease, treatment, and long-term survivorship issues.
- One of the most common benefits reported by participants in peer support programs is the opportunity to interact with “someone like me.”

How can the American Cancer Society help me and my breast cancer patients?

As a free, one-on-one support program with more than 40 years of proven results, the Reach To Recovery program can help your patients who are:

- Facing a possible breast cancer diagnosis
- Considering or have had a lumpectomy, mastectomy, or breast reconstruction
- Experiencing lymphedema
- Undergoing or have completed treatment
- Facing breast cancer recurrence or advanced breast cancer

While you focus on your patient’s treatment and clinical needs, the American Cancer Society Reach To Recovery program can help provide emotional support. This support can improve your patient’s quality of life and help them focus on what’s important – getting well.
How can I refer my patients to the Reach To Recovery program?

You or anyone on your patient’s health care team can easily refer your breast cancer patients to the program at any point during their cancer experience by contacting your local American Cancer Society staff partner or by calling 1-800-227-2345 to locate the office nearest to you. Your patient will be contacted by the Society within 24 to 48 hours.

How does the Reach To Recovery program differ from other breast cancer support programs?

- **Peer Support from Trained Volunteers**
  - Patients connect one-on-one with a matched survivor volunteer.
  - Matching is based on similar breast cancer experience, age, language, and/or other important personal characteristics.
  - Volunteers are carefully screened, well-trained, and recertified every one to two years.

- **Cancer Information**
  - Patients receive accurate, up-to-date cancer information that has been reviewed by American Cancer Society medical editors.
  - They have access to online American Cancer Society breast cancer content, including videos, news articles, and easy-to-understand guides.

- **Resource Referral**
  - Patients get access to an American Cancer Society online searchable database of more than 69,000 national and community resources.
  - The American Cancer Society can help with non-medical referrals, like transportation to treatment, free or reduced-cost lodging, and financial assistance.

“For years I have strived to have every single one of my breast cancer patients visited by an American Cancer Society Reach To Recovery volunteer. It is remarkable the difference this makes. Often without even asking, I can tell which patients have had a visit from a Reach volunteer. This program is an invaluable component to our overall comprehensive breast oncology program.”

– Catherine A. Ronaghan, MD, FACS

We **save lives** and create more birthdays by helping you stay well, helping you get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back.

cancer.org  |  1.800.227.2345