# The Pro-Active Colon Cancer Patient Toolkit

## Find Your Voice Resource Guide

### Take Action
- Educate yourself about your colon cancer.
- Ask your doctor if you have had essential testing.
- Partner with your healthcare team on care and treatment decisions.
- Include a friend or family member in your appointments.
- Consider a second opinion and/or a consult with a colon cancer specialist.

### Colon Cancer Treatment Approaches
- Radiation
- Surgery
- Medication
  - Chemotherapy
  - Immunotherapy
  - Targeted therapy
- Clinical trials

### Stages of Colon Cancer
- **Stage 1**: The colon cancer is only a shallow tumor or polyp and has not spread to any lymph nodes.
- **Stage 2**: The colon cancer tumor is thick and may be involving the colon or rectum but has not spread into the lymph nodes.
- **Stage 3**: The cancer has spread to nearby lymph nodes.
- **Stage 4**: The colon cancer has metastasized or spread to another organ in the body.

### Colon Cancer Resources
- American Society of Clinical Oncology: ASCO.net and cancer.net
- American Cancer Society: cancer.org
- COLONTOWN: colontown.org
- Colorectal Cancer Alliance: ccalliance.org
- MyBluem: mybluem.org
- National Cancer Institute: Cancer.gov
- Stand Up to Cancer: standuptocancer.org

### Glossary
- **Oncogene**: Mutated gene that contributes to the development of cancer.
- **Lynch Syndrome**: The most common cause of hereditary colorectal (colon) cancer. It is also known as hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (HNPCC).
- **Rectal Cancer (or Colorectal Cancer)**: Cancer that begins in the rectum, which is the last several inches of the large intestine.
- **Immunotherapy**: Type of therapy that harnesses one’s own immune system to help the body fight cancer, infection, and other diseases.

### Factors to Consider When Choosing Treatment
- Cancer stage
- Biology of the cancer
- Presence of molecular markers
- Patient goals
- Side effects

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