

Making Strides Against Cancer

Volume 8, Issue 8

"Why Me?" The Antigua & Barbuda Cancer Society



August
Bone Cancer
Awareness Month



Bone Cancer
Yellow Ribbon for Awareness

BONE CANCER

DEFINITION:

Cancer that originates in the bone—primary bone cancer is rare. Fewer than 2,500 cases are diagnosed in the U.S. each year. The condition affects more children than adults.

The most common forms of primary bone cancer are:

- **Osteosarcoma**, which occurs primarily in growing bone tissue
- **Chondrosarcoma**, which occurs in cartilage
- **Ewings's sarcoma**, which arises primarily in immature tissue in bone marrow

Osteosarcoma and **Ewing's sarcoma** occur most often in children, adolescents and young adults, ages 10 to 20. **Chondrosarcoma** is more common in adults over 50.

Treatment of bone cancer depends on the type of bone cancer, as well as its location, size and stage.

SYMPTOMS:

Pain is the most common bone cancer symptom. Although bone cancer can arise in any of your bones, it most frequently occurs in the long bones of your arms and legs.

Other possible symptoms and

signs of bone cancer include:

- *Weakened bones, sometimes leading to fractures*
- *Joint swelling and tenderness (for tumors in or near joints)*
- *Fatigue*
- *Fever*
- *Unintended weight loss*
- *Anemia*

CAUSES:

Primary bone cancer is different from secondary or metastatic bone cancer. In secondary or metastatic bone cancer, the cancer originates in a different place but spreads (metastasizes) to the bones. For example, someone with prostate cancer may develop bone lesions from the prostate cancer. But, even though the cancer has spread to the bone, it's still prostate cancer.

Metastatic bone cancer is much more common than is primary bone cancer. Additionally, primary bone cancer doesn't refer to cancer that begins in the bone marrow the soft inner core of your bones that makes your blood cells. Bone marrow cancers include diseases such as multiple myeloma and acute and chronic leukemias.

In general, no one knows for certain what causes most primary bone cancers. Adults with Paget's disease of bone, which involves abnormal development of new bone cells, may be at increased risk of osteosarcoma.

In a few cases, bone cancers may have a hereditary component, such as in:

- **Li-Fraumeni syndrome.** This condition is characterized by an increased risk of many different cancers, including osteosarcoma, breast cancer, brain cancer and others.
- **Rothmund-Thomson syndrome.** This condition causes short stature, skeletal problems and rashes, and increases risk of bone cancer.
- **Hereditary retinoblastoma.** Children with this rare cancer of the eye have an increased risk of osteosarcoma.
- **Multiple exostoses.** Children with this inherited condition that causes cartilage bumps to form on your bones have an increased risk of chondrosarcoma.

THE ASSOCIATION WITH RADIATION:

Radiation is occasionally associated with bone cancer. Exposure to radiation from a diagnostic X-ray won't harm you. But heavy doses of radiation, such as radiation therapy given for other cancers, can increase your risk of developing bone cancer, especially if you receive the therapy at a young age.

Still radiation therapy is becoming more and more sophisticated, which may lead to fewer of such side effects. For example, doctors today are better able to regulate doses of radiation and more precisely target the tumor being treated.

WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE:

Talk to your doctor if you develop signs or symptoms that may indicate bone cancer, such as unexplained bone pain. Having bone pain doesn't necessarily mean you have bone cancer. Bone pain is more likely due to injuries or arthritis. And bone tumors are often non-cancerous (benign).

Continue on page 2

BONE CANCER CONTINUED

However, the only way to determine whether a tumor is cancerous is for a doctor to examine a sample of the tissue.

TEST AND DIAGNOSIS:

If your doctor suspects you have bone cancer, he or she will take a medical history and perform a physical exam. In addition, the following tests help in diagnosing bone cancer:

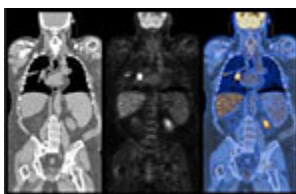
- **Imaging test.** Tests such as X-rays, computerized tomography (CT) scans, ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) enable your doctor to evaluate the area of concern.
- **Bone scan.** Your doctor may also request a bone scan, a procedure in which you are injected with a tiny amount of radioactive material, called a tracer, which can be detected by a special camera used to create images of your bones.

EXAMINING A TISSUE SAMPLE:

Determining whether a tumor is malignant requires removal of a sample of tissue (biopsy) from the tumor for examination. If your doctor suspects you have bone cancer, ask for a referral to a cancer center that specializes in bone cancer before the biopsy is performed. Treatment of bone cancer requires a specialized team who work together to treat bone cancer. This team includes a medical oncologist, orthopedic surgeon, radiation oncologist and physical therapist.

Techniques for removing a sample of a suspected bone cancer include:

- **Needle biopsy.** Your doctor uses a thin needle to remove small pieces of tissue from the tumor. There are two types of needle biopsy—fine needle aspiration and core biopsy. A core biopsy involves using a slightly larger needle to remove a small, solid core of tissue.
- **Surgical biopsy.** Your doctor makes an incision



Pet Scan for bone cancer

through your skin and removes either the entire tumor (excisional biopsy) or a portion of the tumor (incisional biopsy). In some cases you may need only local anesthesia. For a larger or deeper seated tumor, you'll likely require general anesthesia for the procedure. It's important that a doctor experienced in the treatment of sarcomas perform the excisional biopsy.

GRADING AND STAGING:

Besides determining whether the tissue is cancerous, examining tissue can determine how aggressive the cancer is (it's grade). Further testing, such as scans and blood tests, will determine if the cancer has spread and how far (its stage).

Childhood bone cancers, such as osteosarcoma or Ewing's sarcoma, are generally grouped into two stages, depending on whether the cancer is contained in one part of the body (localized) or has spread to other parts (metastasized).

Survival is based on a number of factors, including the type of cancer, at what stage the cancer was discovered and where the tumor is located. If the tumor is very small and localized, the prognosis is generally more promising than if the cancer has begun to spread.

COMPLICATION:

The complications of bone cancer may include weakened bones and bone fractures. If the cancer spreads to other organs, complications include dysfunction of the affected organ, such as shortness of breath if it spread to your lungs.

TREATMENT AND DRUGS:

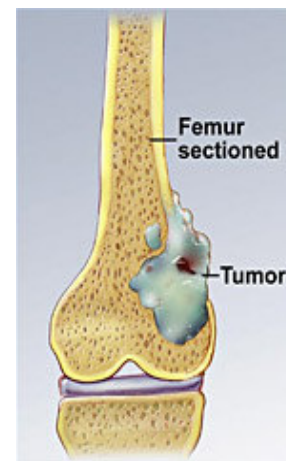
Surgery is the most common treatment for bone cancer. Surgery for cancer that hasn't spread involves removing the cancer and rim of healthy bone surrounding it.

In the past, amputation was common for bone cancer in an arm or leg. Today, advances in surgical techniques and chemotherapy before surgery (neoadjuvant

chemotherapy) or after surgery (adjuvant chemotherapy) and radiation therapy make limb sparing surgery possible in many cases. With osteosarcoma, limb sparing surgery involves replacing the cancerous bone with artificial device (prosthesis) or bone from another part of your body or from another person (transplant).

A well coordinated team of doctors—including surgeons, medical oncologist, radiation oncologists, and physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist who are familiar with treatment of sarcomas—is important for increasing the chance you'll be able to have limb sparing treatment.

If osteosarcoma spreads, treatment may involve surgical removal of both the bone tumor and the metastasized cancer. Ewing's sarcoma has a tendency to metastasize rapidly.



Treatment may involve chemotherapy with multiple drugs as well as radiation therapy and surgery to remove the primary tumor. Radiation therapy—involves treating cancer with beams of high energy particles, or waves (radiation).

Although radiation can affect healthy cells as well as cancer cells, it's much more harmful to cancer cells. In addition, normal cells can recover from the effects of radiation more easily than cancer cells can.

Chemotherapy use medications to kill rapidly dividing cells. These cells include cancer cells, which continuously divide to form more cells, and healthy cells that divide quickly, such as those in your bone marrow, gastrointestinal tract, reproductive system and hair follicles. Healthy cells usually recover shortly after chemotherapy is complete—so, for example, your hair soon starts growing again.

Bone Cancer Continued

COPING AND SUPPORT:

A diagnosis of cancer, whether yours or your child's, presents big challenges. Remember that no matter what your concerns or the prognosis, there are resources and strategies that may make dealing with cancer easier. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Learn all you can.** Find out everything you can about your or your child's cancer—the type, stage and risks involved and your treatment options and their side effects. The more you know, the more you can participate in treatment decisions.
- **Be proactive.** Although you may feel tired and discouraged, don't let others—including your family and your doctor—make important decisions for you. It's vital that you take an active role in your own or your child's treatment.
- **Maintain a strong support system.** Having a support system and a positive attitude can help you cope with challenges cancer brings. Although

friends and family can be your best allies, they sometimes may have trouble dealing with the illness of a loved one. If so, the concern and understanding of a formal support group or of others can be especially helpful. Although support groups aren't for everyone, they can be a good source for practical information for you and your family.

- **Maintain hope.** Although your hopes may change as you go through a cancer diagnosis and treatment, it's important to have hope. For example, when you first hear the diagnosis, you may hope that there's been a mistake. Once you accept the diagnosis, you'll hope for a good result from treatment.

One way to maintain hope is to set goals. Having goals helps you feel in control and give you a sense of purpose. But don't choose goals you can't possibly reach.

- **Take time for yourself.** Eating well, relaxing and getting enough rest can help combat the stress and fatigue of cancer.

Also, plan ahead for the times when you may need to rest more or limit what you do. If your child has cancer, one of the most important things you can do is to take care of yourself. As a caregiver, you need to have the strength and emotional reserves to meet your child's needs.

- **Stay active.** Having cancer doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you enjoy or normally do. For the most part, if you feel well enough to do something, go ahead and do it. It's important to stay involved as much as you can. If your child has cancer, try to keep his or her life as normal as possible.
- **Look for a connections to something beyond yourself.** Having a strong faith or a sense of something greater than yourself may help you successfully cope with cancer.



Why Me?

Talking With Your Doctor

An important part of good health care is a good relationship between you and your doctor. You must be able to communicate well with each other so your needs are met.

Cancer treatment often means that you will have more than one doctor. You may get facts from many sources. However, it's a good idea to choose one doctor to be your main source of information.

You can turn to this doctor with your concerns. This doctor may or may not be the one you see most often. Only you can make that choice. You should feel at ease with your doctor. A good relationship with your doctor is worth the effort



needed to create it. Ask yourself, "how much do I want to know?" You may want a lot of details. Some people feel much better when they know all the facts about what is happening to them. If you are like this, you should ask the doctor for exact details and information.

Or you may want only the overviews. It disturbs some people to be told too many details. They may want simple directions—what pill to take or what their treatment will be and when will it be done. They would rather leave it up to the doctor. Don't be afraid to tell your doctor how much, or how little information you want.

Ask questions:

- What's wrong with me?
- What treatment do you recommend?
- Are there other treatments?
- What are the benefits of these treatments?
- What are the risks?
- What medicines are you giving me? What are they for?
- How should I expect to feel during treatment?
- What side effects, if any, can I expect to have?

Talking with Your Doctor Continues

When you get instructions from your doctor, write them down. Make sure you understand them before you leave the office. Then follow them exactly.

Here are some more questions you may want to discuss with your doctor:

- *Who else gets information about me? Should anyone else—a spouse, friend, or another doctor, also get your own information.*
- *What issues are important to me? For example, will the disease or the treatment keep me from working or caring for my family? Will I have any physical limitations? Again, ask your doctor if you want more information about treatment. Ask if there is written information you can take with you.*
- *If you have persistent low or hopeless feelings, mention this to your doctor. Your may be suffering from clinical depression, a diagnosis and treatable illness that may co-occur with cancer.*

Above all, your doctor should take your questions seriously. He or she should be interested in your concerns and not make you feel rushed. If your doctor does not respond this way, bring it up at your next visit. If you don't, communication will be blocked and your relationship will suffer.

Here's how to maintain a good relationship with your doctor:

- Try to state as clearly as you can any changes in body functions, from sleep and bowel habits to other changes such as headaches. Make notes so you can

report these to your doctor.

- Talk over your concerns with your doctor. Mention lifestyle habits, even if it's something you're not proud of, such as smoking. Never keep back information. Something you think is minor could affect your treatment. Or, something you think is serious might be easily solved.
- Make a list of all of your questions. Take it with you to your doctor visits. Don't be ashamed or shy about asking these questions. There is no such thing as a "dumb" question.

If you have a problem talking with your doctor...

Here are a few ways to help improve the situation. For example, if you need more details after your doctor answers a question, say so. Sometimes it's even helpful to ask the question again in a different way. It will seem as if you understand unless you tell your doctor that you don't.

If you want to take an active role in your cancer treatment, ask your doctor to suggest some reading material.

Being hostile or angry doesn't help improve communication. Don't use questions or statements as an attack. It's normal for people—including doctors—to withdraw or become defensive. Do make it clear that you need answers to your questions.

What should you do if you feel you have done your part but the situation has not improved?

Perhaps could talk to a third party. The

head nurse or your family doctor might be willing to discuss the matter with the doctor. Sometimes this is less stressful than facing the doctor directly. It could be a positive turning point. If not, it may be time to find a new doctor. Don't stay with a doctor only to protect his or her feelings. Just because you were referred to the doctor does not mean you can't decide to change on your own. It's your body and you have the right to find the best doctor for you.

Changes in the relationship...

If you are in the hospital, your relationship with your doctor could change. Many people will be involved in your care. Hospitals have rules and policies. Your doctor has to follow these, too. Sometimes all this activity and the need to follow hospital routines can cause stress. If you have a problem with your doctor while you are in the hospital, there are others who may be able to help you. Speak to someone like a nurse or a social worker. Or ask for a patient services representative. With your permission, they might even speak directly with your doctor.

People who have cancer are likely to want to build a good relationship with their doctors. Over the long term, it is helpful to identify one doctor to be your main source of information. Ask the person if that will be OK. Building this relationship doesn't just happen. *It takes care and effort on both sides. Chances are, you'll both benefit.*

God's Gardner

You planted many gardens. And the bounty you would share and now the Lord has called you home, to tend the gardens there.

The countless seeds that you have sown. The many harvests reaped. The memories you have given us, forever ours to keep.

Countless are the numbers of the seeds that you have sown, not only in the soil but in the hearts of those you've known.

And now you tend the gardens in the place where you belong. As the angels serenade you with your favorite bluegrass songs.

Though you are no longer with us, forever memories will remain and there is comfort found in knowing that our loss is heaven's gain.

In loving memory of Janet Bolla who never stopped—planting seeds of faith, hope and charity. May she rest in peace.



Be Fit To Sit!

Your painful back, neck or shoulders could be because of the way you sit or the amount of time you sit in one position. Problems can start either at home or work, so, Get Fit to Sit!!

This information looks at some of the main problems of office life and suggests some ways to avoid them. The simple exercises should also help to keep you fit at work.

Your body is designed for a much more active lifestyle. Prehistoric man had to catch his food and avoid fast moving predators. Keeping parts of the body still for too long such as when you sit at a desk, can lead to stress on your spine with possible damage and pain.

Lighting, noise and badly positioned furniture can make you uncomfortable, so try to adjust things to suit you.

There is no one chair which suits everyone or every type of job. You should try to adjust your sitting position to the one that suits you best.

Finally don't expect immediate improvements. You should notice the results over a number of weeks.

DO'S AND DON'TS

- **DO** try to keep the body's natural curves. Avoid looking like a banana.
- **DO** use a lumbar roll or seat wedge to help maintain the back's natural curve. (A lumbar roll can be made by rolling up a small towel and placing it between the chair and the lower part of your back).
- **DO** try to keep your elbows at right angles when using a keyboard.
- **DO** use a footrest if your feet don't touch the ground or your chair can't be lowered enough.
- **DO** avoid excessive neck movement by using document holder if you do a lot of typing.

- **DO** place the keyboard where you can reach it easily and can key with either hand.
- **DO** try and arrange your work so that you achieve a mix of sitting still and moving around.
- **DO** get your body moving by doing a few exercises every hour or so. This will increase circulation, send more oxygen to the brain and help you stay alert.
- **DON'T** sit for too long. Stand up and stretch every 20 minutes or so.
- **DON'T** place things out of reach so that you have to make a lot of repetitive movements.

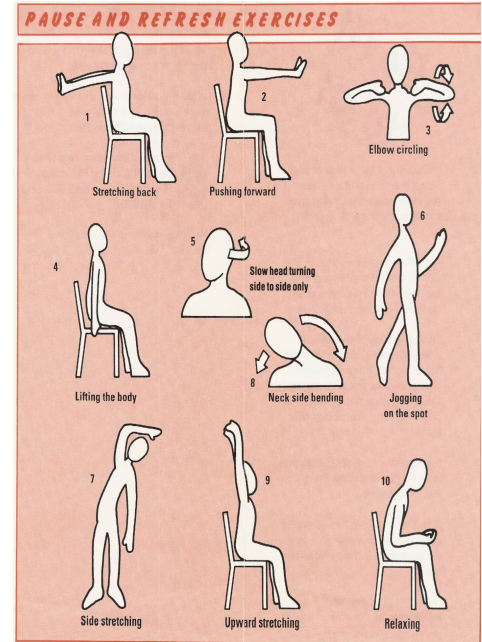
- **DON'T** lean forward more than you have to. Your head weighs about 14 pounds.
- **DON'T** have your chair too far from your desk. The arm rests, if fitted, should not prevent the chair being pulled up close to the desk.

REMEMBER

Everyone is an individual, so work out a "Pause and Refresh" routine to suit your own needs.

The advice you have received can help prevent back, neck and shoulder problems. But if a problem occurs, make sure you consult with your doctor.

Bone Cancer



**A New Way
Of Living with Cancer...
Your Experience
Your Journey
Your Life...
Why Me?**



BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

Because I couldn't stop for Death, He kindly stopped for me; the carriage held but just ourselves and Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste, and I had put away my labour, my leisure too, for his civility.

We passed the school where children played, their lessons scarcely done; we passed the field of gazing grain, we passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed a swelling of ground; the roof was scarcely visible, the cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries; but each feels shorter than the day, I first surmised the horses' heads were toward eternity.

REST IN PEACE TO OUR FRIENDS

Mrs. Beverly Stephens, Mr. Michael (Karaoke Mike) Simon, and Mr. Stephen Mearns.

We will miss you and will always love you.





Creating Hope
and Happiness
for someone
special...
DESTINATION DREAM-MAKERS

We all have the power to **'dream'**. Dreams inspire and empower people. Some dreams bring love and sharing.

Destination Dream-Makers is a program designed to make a huge difference in the lives of children and their families who have been diagnosed with a terminal cancer. When there isn't a cure...we can offer something positive in their lives to look forward to.

This is the fourth time for this very special program and let me tell you—it doesn't get any easier—however, with your help we **can bring joy** into the lives of some very special people right here in Antigua and Barbuda and by doing so bring joy into your own lives as well.

All you need is desire and few resources to make a dream come true for our **"special little one"**. He just wants a "boys summer" filled with "fun things" to do. The sky is the limit.

It's a wish not about dying but about creating a memory of peace, joy and happiness for this special child.

CONSIDER YOUR SPONSORSHIP:

Granting funds—A helicopter ride for 5 around EC\$2,500 (Cost could vary for less time)

In kind resources —Maybe you own a special place designed for fun, Toys, games that would keep him happy. Or maybe a day at the spa (his little bones could really use a massage).

Employee activation—create a special day and the entire company plans a special event (like a party). Do it together, churches, civic groups, mas troops.

Marketing & Advertising—Help us promote this program. The media is very instrumental in help us promote this program. Donate your time to help get the word out.

Liaisons—Do you know someone who knows someone?

We want you to know that your partnership is valued. We are dedicated to building long termed, alliances with each of our partners. And this is the perfect opportunity to identify the most important goals and objectives for your organization's success with its strategic philanthropy intentions.

Our special child's name is Alpha and he is 10 years old and has neroblastoma. He uses a wheelchair but can walk short steps to and from a destination. He is soft spoken child that has endure a lot.

His father, mother and brother have all braved the journey with him. They will never lose site of hope... we must join hands with them to keep this hope alive. What better way to keep hope alive than by showing love to one of God's little angels.

The program is financed through your individual contributions and corporate donations. We thank Stingray City for becoming the first sponsor of "Destination Dream-Makers and for the kindness displayed by the staff and management.

Please join us as we open **"Destination Dream Makers"**.

Why Me?

We are more than just a reference centre.

Sign Up and Join Us Today!

This is the fourth project of this nature for “*Why Me?*” and we are still thankful that we do not have many opportunities to exercise this project—however, it is one that we have whole heartedly accepted. The program is designed to create a lasting memory for the patient and the family. We simply bring joy...and that eclipses the illness. That’s why we would be so glad to have you/your company become interested in forming a strategic alliance with us to help make a dream come true for this courageous child.

Since the illness has had an impact on our little patient and his family the dream includes the family of four. Remember no gift is too small. Working together with others will also awaken the creativity and energy of all involved which will help the program become a wonderful joyful memory.

Here’s how you can support “Destination Dream-makers”:

1. **Granting Funds.** Working capital that can be channelled to underwrite the dreams and operational functions of the organization. \$ _____
2. **In-kind resources.** Budget relieving products and services needed for “dreams”, dream enhancements and or operations. Please describe: _____
3. **Marketing & Advertising support.** Opportunities for the organization to share its mission, this program and philosophy, thereby enabling donations and volunteers to increase and of course ensure more dreams. Please describe: _____
4. **Employee activation.** A company’s commitment to educating their workforce about the mission and to encourage their active involvement and volunteerism and referrals and donations. Please describe: _____
5. **Liaisons.** A company’s commitment to provide introductions to corporate partners, vendors, manufacturers or business colleagues who may be able to become additional sponsors and or supporters of “Why Me?” Please describe: _____

“*Destinations Dream-makers*” is a program designed to meet our goals only, but your company may choose to **enhancement and increase the value of the sponsorship** at any time. Since **time is usually a factor**; your co-operation and assistance must be considered a priority

I would like to volunteer my time for this project: Name/Telephone/e-mail: _____

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted"



"Why Me?" The

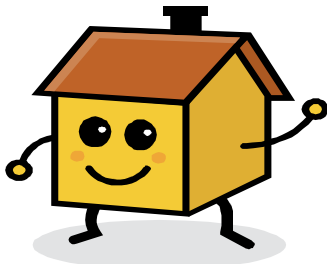
Nellie Robinson Street
C/O P.O. Box 104
St. John's,
Antigua

Phone: 268 764-2561/562-6295

Fax: local only (268) 562-6295

E-mail:

whymeoutmail@yahoo.com



Get Your House Raffle Tickets!!
Listen for mini drawings and
win big prizes on VyzFM 96.1

VOLUNTEER: a person who performs or offers to perform a service voluntarily. A person who renders aid, performs a service or assumes an obligation voluntarily. To do a charitable or helpful work without pay. Yep, that's a volunteer alright. And we are looking for a few good men and women to do just that "volunteer". Doesn't require much, however, there are plenty of things to be done. Our hours are as follows:

Monday — 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Tuesday—10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Wednesday—10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Thursday—10:00 am to 12:noon (patient visits)

Fridays—10 am to 2:00 pm

No weekends unless there is a schedule fundraising event.

What can you do? Help us and our sponsor by taking nutritional snacks for patients taking Chemotherapy—once a month. Or...help send out information from Why Me via mail and fax as well as other forms of media correspondence (community calendars). Maybe you are good at helping out with fundraising events? We have two events coming soon, August and October. Maybe you are an office person at heart.

When you volunteer at Why Me you are giving something back to your community by lending a helping hand to others. What you may not realize is that volunteering also benefits you as an individual. There are many good reasons to get involved with Why Me and your community including learning something about yourself.

Why Me?
Why Me?

When a Child Dies of Cancer

God said, "I know you're hurting and filled with grief and strife

The loss of such a loved one cuts deep, just like a knife."

I said, "it's unrelenting the sadness and the woe, this pain so cruel and ruthless, how could you ever know?"

God said, "I'm full of mercy, My arms are open wide, come here to Me for comfort, get rid of your earthly pride."

I said, "I cannot do that. You took my child away, My world once bright and cheerful, has turned to skies of gray."

God said, "I really love you. Your loss, I truly share. I'm here to ease your burden, this weight, I'm going to bear."

I said, "Dear Lord have mercy on bended knee, I pray. I cannot stand this torture. I fall apart each day."

God said, you'll find the answers. You mustn't be so weak. The truth is found in scripture, it's there that you must seek.

I said, "how could you know, God? Your heart is made of steel. You'll never really understand the heartache that I feel."

God said, "I know you are hurting. I see you've suffered loss. You lost your child to

cancer

Mine died upon the cross.

**Healing hearts, providing support,
sharing and caring.**

**Today, is the day we all open our
hearts for friendship and most of all
for Hope and Love.**

