

## +WOMEN'S CANCER HANDBOOK



#### STEAL THESE LINES

## I'm picking you up for breakfast."

"I really appreciated friends and family extending themselves with specific offers to give me meals. Cooking and grocery shopping are tricky when you're dealing with doctor visits and debilitating treatments." —Victoria St. Martin, 33, breast cancer survivor

# You're a tough cookie and you're whipping cancer's ass."

"It's a little rah-rah, but when my good friend said this to me one day when I was feeling uncharacteristically defeated, it totally revved me up."—Chana Garcia, 37, ovarian cancer survivor

## Let me take you to the hospital."

"Anxiety and side effects that come with radiation or chemo can make it impossible to drive safely. Getting a lift is a major relief." —Caresse Schweitzer, 26, squamous cell and basal cell carcinoma survivor

## You are not alone—there's an incredible sisterhood out there."

"As a younger woman dealing with a disease that typically strikes older people, I felt so isolated. Finding Young Survival Coalition and connecting with women who 'got it' made me feel empowered and hopeful." —Jennifer Merschdorf, 39, breast cancer survivor

#### There are no words. It sucks."

"When you really can't come up with anything to say, go with this. It's 100 percent true!"

—Megan McClendon, 29, breast cancer survivor

#### **DON'T GO HERE**

## What can I do to help?"

"I appreciated the offer, but it's vague and openended, and the last thing a person going through chemo wants to do is burden someone with her needs." —Kelly Smith, 34, ovarian cancer survivor

## You're way too young to have breast cancer!"

"Well, guess what? I have it! So obviously age is no barrier." —Kayla Falcon, 24, breast cancer survivor

# My grandmother had that cancer—but she passed away."

"Shockingly, I hear comments like this a lot. I know the person saying it is simply trying to relate, but come on, really?" —McClendon

#### **You look fine.**"

"I knew that I looked anything but fine, so having people pretend otherwise made me feel even more self-conscious than I already did."—Schweitzer

#### I could never get a mastectomy."

"Do people really think I electively decided to get my breasts removed? The decision was made by my doctors and me to save my life." —St. Martin

## Oh, you'll be OK."

"I know this is meant to be encouraging, but it only reminds me that no one knows what the outcome will be." —Suzanne Lasater, 26, melanoma survivor