

LACC Announces “Find a Cancer Buddy”

Have you ever wanted to find someone with the same type of cancer as you, or a loved one, in Los Alamos? Well now you can.

Los Alamos Council on Cancer now has a ‘Find a Buddy’ tool on their website. Using a chat-based system, anyone can go to



The screenshot shows the Los Alamos Council on Cancer website. At the top, there is a logo with a bridge and trees, and contact information: "Los Alamos Council on Cancer, P.O. Box 995, Los Alamos, NM, 87544-0995". Below the logo is the text "Los Alamos Council on Cancer, Furthering the Education, Prevention and Treatment of Cancer". A navigation menu on the left includes links like Home, About Us, Contact Us, Our Mission, etc. The main content area features a "Find a Buddy or Support" chat window. The chat window has a title bar and a "Click here to see the group full size" button. The chat messages are as follows:

- Laccosbuddy:** Welcome to Find a Buddy. Just type in a message below and wait for someone to answer. If you want people to be able to contact you leave an email or phone number or just keep checking back. If you want to be notified when other people post messages, click on the envelope symbol at the bottom of the page. Thanks for visiting!
- Bizzywinemom:** If there are any other ovarian cancer survivors out there, I would love to hear from you. You can email me at kzy@ovariancancer.org. Take care.
- BernieCiv:** Hello. It's good to see this buddy system and hope that if anyone has a concern or question that this can help. I've been in remission since Feb. 07 after diagnosis in Aug. 06 with Ovarian Cancer. I may know you as I've lived in Los Alamos since 1986 (9th grade). You can send email to me, Bernie, at bow_15@msn.com.
- Namesmama:** I have breast cancer and am part way through treatment. I just learned I have more suspicious areas. I know I need to continue for months, but I am tired of all this. Write me here.
- Bizzywinemom:** Namesmama, I know continuous treatment after treatment is hard but keep fighting. There are people who need you and love you. The battle is hard but the victory is so worthwhile. Check out the local resources page here and seek help. No one can get through the journey alone. We all need help whether its professional counselling, anxiety medication or support groups. Don't be afraid to seek help. You'll soon find there are even more people who love you. Peace and blessings.

<http://losalamoscounciloncancer.org/cancerbuddy.aspx>

and leave a message about yourself and your type of cancer. You can remain anonymous or use a pseudonym, or use your full contact details, such as email or telephone number, and others will contact you.

When you have cancer, knowing others with cancer, either past friends or new ones through support groups, can be a great blessing. They have a lot of the same feelings as you, and understand how difficult life can be, during treatment and afterwards.

However, if you've ever met someone with the same type of cancer, you'll know that the bond becomes extra special. Not all cancers are the same. So someone with breast cancer, who has only been through radiation, will not have the same experience as someone who has melanoma, who has probably been through the whole shebang. Whilst the fears and concerns may be similar, the amount you can share is limited.

Same-cancer survivors can share treatment stories, compare doctors or even compare the length of their scars! If you both have had the same drugs, you can laugh at the less common side effects and console each other of the not so pleasant ones. You are on the same path, and as any hiker will tell you, having company not only makes the journey far more interesting but also safer. Safety in numbers applies to cancer survivors too. We all need a security blanket! So go online and find that soul mate.

In addition, you can also leave questions about local support facilities, where to find information, or ask if anyone has a wig they don't want. Basically anything. The only restriction the LACC has is that medical questions are not allowed. These are better served by your doctor or nurse.

What about if you don't own a computer, or feel internet challenged? Then you can also find a Buddy at the Relay for Life event, Ashley Pond, 26th June at 6pm. The Los Alamos Council on Cancer is giving away pins to represent the different types of cancer. So, instead of having to walk up to someone and awkwardly say "So what kind of cancer do you have?" you can just look out for the same pin.

So go ahead, find a buddy by internet, or at the pond. You may just find a friend, or if you're really lucky, a soul mate for life.