



## Men's Group

### Intended Audience

All male Wellspring members, including those living with cancer, family members and significant caregivers.

### Program Description

It's no secret; men are not always as attentive as they should be when it comes to looking after their health. It's like asking for directions... they might prefer to tough it out and struggle rather than admit they've lost their way. At Wellspring Calgary, men living with cancer are invited to participate in a non-judgmental, pressure-free group where they find there is strength and comfort in listening and sharing with peers. The Wellspring Men's Group provides a safe and supportive space for sharing stories, challenges, and dreams, along with a few laughs. In the uplifting and nurturing environment of the group setting, participants are empowered by the knowledge that they are welcomed, supported and celebrated.

### Benefits and Impact

Sharing stories has long been considered a powerful stress reliever known to create connection and greatly assist in physical and emotional healing. The benefits of socializing and sharing are plentiful and widespread, affecting people in a myriad of ways, both measurable and indescribable. More tangible benefits include reduced blood pressure and heart rate, enhanced immune system, increased energy and a reduction of symptoms of depression. Participants speak of leaving Men's Group with more energy, uplifted morale, mental positivity, and inner calm.

### What to Expect at a Session

Participants gather in a circle and are free to talk about anything they wish. They may speak or stay silent, all are welcomed. Everyone finds their rhythm and the group is united in a common vibe of support and appreciation. Come and join us, or send a friend or family member, they and you will not regret it.

### Participant Comments

*"I felt surprisingly at ease and relieved to be surrounded by other men who got me."*

*"It gets a bit lonely all by yourself in your head."*

*"Great company, great conversation."*

### What the Research Says:

Despite the fact that male participation rates in cancer-related support groups are much lower than female participation rates, studies show the benefits of participating in groups are as numerous and beneficial for men as they are for women. In a 2014 analysis, Wenger, Oliffe, and Bototorff reviewed 60 studies on the topic of male-centered psychosocial interventions (e.g. support groups, art workshops, journaling clubs) and found benefits such as increased involvement in one's treatment, improved coping skills, and decreased depression, isolation, and distress. In contrast to prior beliefs that men value information over connection, Trapp et al. (2013) found that connecting with others was of greater value to the men than the information they obtained during the group session. (Trapp SK, Woods JD, Grove A, Stern M. (2013). Male coping processes as demonstrated in the context of a cancer-related social support group. *Support Care Cancer*. 21(2):619–627). (Wenger LM, Oliffe JL, Bottorff JL. (2014). *Psychosocial Oncology Supports for Men: A Scoping Review and Recommendations*. *American Journal of Men's Health*, 1557988314555361).

### Program Frequency:

Once per month

Optimum class size:10

### Related Programs:

Tea Group

