

# Cancer & Social Media

- Juan Manuel's story

Hi! My name is Juan Manuel.  
At 23 years old, I moved from  
Argentina to Canada... and was  
diagnosed with leukemia.



Shortly after I arrived in Canada, I was unfortunately diagnosed and had to be hospitalized.

At times, I felt alone. The treatments started quickly, and I experienced some complications that limited what I could do to pass the time.



It was already tough living so far from my friends and family, but the most difficult thing was that my relatives who lived in the same city as me couldn't visit me in the hospital due to the public health crisis.



The healthcare team realized that the disease was more advanced than they initially thought. I was given a rather bleak prognosis, which shook me up a lot and made me experience very strong emotions.



**I decided to take action and get control over what I could, to make myself feel better.**

I'd brought my guitar with me. I took advantage of the time I had alone to express my emotions in music and share it online, something I'd never dared to do before. The response was overwhelming and I was inundated with hundreds of messages of encouragement from all over the world.



Thanks to social networks and some online communication platforms, I was able to keep in touch with my close friends and loved ones and communicate with them every day. Sometimes only in writing and other times by video conference. This brought me a lot of comfort.



After sharing my experience on social media, strangers my age who were going through a similar experience contacted me. Hearing about the hardships they had gone through and knowing that they were now doing okay gave me a lot of courage and hope for the future.





**Psssst!** Everybody's different, and what works for one person might not work so well for someone else.

## My advice:

Organize video meetings with your close friends and loved ones to chat, play games, or even watch a movie together. This can be a great way to break the isolation.

If you're comfortable doing so, use social media to share your feelings about what you're experiencing. This can bring you a lot of encouragement and can help others who are going through the same thing.

Virtual support groups or online discussion forums can give you the opportunity to talk with others who've had a similar experience. Sharing experiences can be very comforting and help you feel less alone.



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