

Keeping Your Meetings Interesting

All groups appreciate suggestions on how to keep their meetings interesting so that members want to continue attending. Here are several ways to entice members to remain actively involved in your group.

1. Encourage men who are not newly diagnosed to become “core members.” Core members are those who can best share their experiences and help newly diagnosed men navigate the uncharted waters of prostate cancer.
2. Encourage spouses/partners to become core members as well.
3. Don’t just have a speaker and then expect everyone to go home. Build in time afterwards for a group discussion.
4. Have a table of books, copies of articles regarding prostate cancer and copies of the current and past Us TOO Hotsheets at each meeting.
5. Arrange a tour of your local cancer center, see the equipment, and ask questions.
6. Arrange a prostate-healthy cooking demonstration using a dietitian from a local grocery store chain, hospital, TV station, etc.
7. Arrange a tour of a hospital medical library with education on how to use the internet and how to locate current journal articles in the library.
8. Arrange to have a physical therapist or personal trainer demonstrate stretching and physical fitness ideas appropriate for all age/ability levels.
9. Display containers of Prostate Cancer Healthy Foods. Ask members to bring in empty containers and begin a collection to help educate others.
10. Have a refreshment table and encourage conversation around the table. This is an informal method to provide social support and encourage interaction.
11. Ask members to complete an evaluation form at the end of every meeting. Include a question that asks what topics/ideas they would like to have at future meetings. Try to fulfill all realistic requests so that members feel this is THEIR group.
12. Video-tape the various meeting presenters. Be sure to get their concurrence, obtain a signed waiver. Maintain a library of those videos and share with the home office so that attendees who missed that previously taped meeting can still obtain the available information, as will the Newly Diagnosed persons who had not yet come to the meetings.
13. Have a greeter at the door for guidance for the new attendees. Provide sign up sheets for inclusion in the mailing list for the next month’s flyer information. Assure the signers that the mailing list is very confidential and will not be used for any other purpose. Also announce that We Provide Information BUT DO NOT Give Advice (nor recommendations or references).

14. Have follow-up "BUDDY"s to telephone newcomers a few days after the meeting to inquire of any further questions, provide counseling and receive feedback of the value of the meeting and perhaps what else the attendee would like to see or hear about.
15. Provide time after the speaker is finished for an interactive Q & A; this part of the program promotes balance in the information with greater objectivity as well as surfacing unanswered, but typical, questions on the subject matter.
16. If your meeting has time, ask any newcomers to take 1 (2?) minutes to tell their first name, disease status and how they came to find your group.
17. Establish a regular group for those "newly diagnosed" and who are new to Prostate Cancer where the terminology, the glossary, the anatomy and basic principles (NOT ADVICE) is offered "[Prostate Basics]" so that they can have some understanding of the speakers presentation.
18. Establish subgroups for those with special needs such as Advanced/ Recurrent Prostate Cancer or Complementary Approaches to Prostate Cancer Therapies or Incontinence, etc.