

New Spanish-Language Resources for Cancer Patients Getting Chemotherapy

With websites in Spanish and English and a new app, TINA en español, people undergoing chemotherapy and their caregivers can get answers to their questions.

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By Vivian Diaz-Espinosa, cancer survivor and caregiver

[Lee esta publicación de blog en español](#)

I remember thinking: Isn't having cancer enough? Does my dad really have to have stage 4 cancer and not be able to understand what his medical team is telling him? Unfortunately, I didn't like the answer to any of these questions.

Coming to the United States from Cuba as a small girl, I picked up the English language fairly fast. Since my parents were older and not immersed in the English language during the school day like I was, it was not as easy for them. While my parents were excellent providers doing everything they could to ensure my brother and I excelled in school, made friends, and ate like kings, the language barrier eventually caught up to them.

It's been 14 years since my dad died from lung cancer. At that time, there were limited Spanish-language resources about cancer, chemotherapy and the important topic of preventing infections during chemo. I quickly realized he and my mom needed me to accompany them to my dad's doctor's appointments. Being the translator and interpreter for my parents was not uncommon for me, but having to ultimately be the one to explain the seriousness of his cancer and prognosis was anything but common. No child should have to do this.

For this reason, and in honor of my Dad and Hispanic Heritage Month, I'm so proud to spread the word about the [Preventing Infections in Cancer Patients](#) program that is available in English and Spanish. Since 2009, CDC and the CDC Foundation have provided evidence-based resources for patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers on how to lower the risk of infection during chemo, including an [English](#) and [Spanish](#) website.

Just this month they launched [TINA en español](#), an animated virtual health care provider who is helping patients and caregivers better understand the risks of infection during chemotherapy, something my dad struggled with during his treatment. Available as a free online tool and mobile

app, TINA en español provides answers to questions many cancer patients going through chemo need to know: can I care for my pet, what should I do if I have a fever, should I follow a special diet, can I be around friends and family, and what are the signs and symptoms of an infection.

These resources would have helped my dad, but also my mom who desperately wanted to know how to take care of him. As a cancer caregiver to my dad and now a cancer survivor myself, I encourage you to take 10 minutes today to check out these resources if you or someone you love has cancer. [Find out how you can help prevent infections during chemotherapy](#)—a vitally important step in your cancer treatment.

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