| **Choose a Patient Champion** | Your patient champion could be a spouse, child, parent, or anyone with whom you share a close relationship. This person will help support you not only emotionally, but also will help in talking with doctors, finding medical resources, and will act as a patient advocate. |
| **Find a GIST Specialist** | When seeking a new oncologist, ask the scheduling coordinator if the doctor under consideration treats GIST patients regularly.  
• Do they treat both Adult and Wildtype GIST?  
  It is important for you to see a doctor who has experience treating your specific GIST classification.  
  - Adult GIST: Mutations detected in the KIT or PDGFRA gene.  
  - If mutations are not detected in the KIT or PDGFRA gene, then it is considered Wildtype or Pediatric GIST.  
• For help finding a specialist, please visit: https://liferaftgroup.org/gist-specialists/ |
| **Find a Dietician** | After starting a new treatment or having surgery, it is recommended to monitor your dietary intake and ensure you are absorbing and retaining enough vitamins and nutrients.  
• Record all post-operative meal intake, treatments, and side effects to identify any patterns.  
• Contact your insurance provider and speak with your doctor about coordinating an appointment to a Registered Dietician in your network. |
| **Connect with other GIST patients** | Connecting with fellow patients and caregivers will provide emotional support and other resources to support GIST management.  
• Inquire about your physician’s GIST patient network.  
• Connect with others through the LRG’s online ListServ, an e-mail community with patient and caregiver participants.  
• Please see our membership application to begin the process: https://liferaftgroup.org/life-raft-group-membership-application-form/ |
| **Organize Reports** | Organize and maintain a detailed list of medication, dosages, side effects, and treatment and evaluation dates.  
• Request a copy of every exam (bloodwork, CT, PET, MRI) and organize in a binder chronologically.  
• Join the LRG Patient Registry: A database with specific features to keep a comprehensive record of all medical evaluations and treatment beginning with GIST diagnosis. For more information, please contact the Patient Registry Department at (973) 837-9092 Ext 133 or 114 or email liferaft@liferaftgroup.org. |
| **Become an Expert GIST Patient** | Enroll in our free online certification program developed by the LRG for patients and caregivers with content including: GIST Biology and Mutations, Risk of Recurrence, Treatments, Managing Side Effects, and more. Simply select “GIST Training” on our membership application to receive more information. |