

At some point, most people with cancer need help.

Knowing how your cancer diagnosis, and/or your treatment, may affect your abilities to care for yourself is very important. Needing assistance may arise as a result of not feeling well because of the cancer itself or the cancer treatment. Ask your care team what symptoms or side effects you may experience, and the the treatment schedule / time demands so you can have a clear understanding of where you may need help.

You may also at times, feel alone during your cancer experience. You may want others to talk to who understand what you are experiencing. There's help for that too. Talk to a hospital social worker or patient navigator about how you are feeling. (Also see 1:1 Peer Support below)

Initiating a request for practical help or emotional support may be difficult for people. *This is the time however to ask!*

Different people can provide different types of help. Let people know specifically what kind of help you need; "you've offered to help, could you _____?"

- do childcare or dog-walking
- bring a meal or grocery shop
- drive you to your treatment appointment
- do lawn work, house care, transporting children, etc
- provide a listening ear

Content adapted from websites below.

Tips for finding help:

- Ask your friends, family and be open to new sources of support if needed by expanding your circle of people to become part of your caregiving network. Who among your neighbors can you call for a chat or help with the yard work? Do you belong to a church, temple, mosque, or other type of spiritual community? Co-worker or someone in your children's school community?
- Sometimes it's easier to leave the organizing of your care network to someone else when possible. No matter if you do it or someone else, your community will appreciate knowing what – and how – you need to be supported. There are online tools to help do this, *see websites for communicating below.*
- Consider joining a support group in-person, by phone, or online. People often find that support groups offer a sense of camaraderie and encouragement, inspire new ways of coping, help them feel less isolated and can be a good source of information and additional resources.
- If you live alone, ask your friends, family, neighbors, or coworkers if you can list them as emergency contacts, and then post their names and contact information on a visible place inside your home (refrigerator, on your nightstand). You might want to give one or more of your contacts a key to your home.
- If you do not have a healthcare proxy, someone appointed legally in writing to make healthcare decisions on your behalf if you become incapable of making and executing decisions, ask someone in your circle to become yours. This should be someone who clearly understands your health care wishes and whom you trust to carry them out in the event that you cannot.

Taking the time to care for yourself and finding the right help from others is important and a necessary part of your overall well being.

Websites for communicating, organizing help and support

- [My Cancer Circle](#)
- [PostHope](#)
- [CaringBridge](#)
- [MyLifeLine](#)
- [Take Them a Meal](#)
- [Caregather](#)

Resources for Additional Information:

- [Cancer Care, Coping With Cancer When You're On Your Own: How to Get the Support You Need](#)
- [American Cancer Society, Finding Support Programs and Services in Your Area](#)
- [Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly®](#)
- [Cancer Support Community](#)
- [Care.com](#)
- [The Catholic Charities, Get Help](#)
- [Ill Dept of Human Services, Home Services Program](#)

Websites for 1:1 Peer Support & More

- [Cancer.Net, Finding Social Support & Information](#) [Español](#)
- [Cancer Hope Network](#) 877-467-3638 One-on-one support for cancer patients and the people who love them along the entire cancer continuum from diagnosis - survivorship through volunteers who faced similar experiences.
- [4th Angel Mentoring Program](#) innovative, interactive approach to cancer support in which patients and caregivers are matched with trained volunteer mentors with similar age and cancer experiences. A national, free service. More info [HERE](#)
- [I Had Cancer](#) is a cancer support community that empowers people to take control of life before, during and after cancer allowing survivors and supporters/caregivers to share experiences.
- [Imerman Angels](#) 877-274-5529 provides one-on-one connection with someone who has been there for all cancer fighters, survivors, previvors and caregivers.