

Helpful Tips on Supporting a Loved-One in Need

Many times friends and families struggle with how to help a loved one with cancer. The following suggestions may help:

- Just call to chat
- Day care for children during appointments, treatments or bad days
- Funny cards or emails
- Day planner for appointments, treatments and meds
- Warm socks or protective slippers
- Offer to help with web research
- Record treatments on your calendar and be in touch, then invite them to lunch/short shopping trip on a “good day”
- Invite them to your home for dinner and a game of cards
- Hats and scarves – make them pretty and/or fun as well as protective
- Lipstick – how about a new shade?
- Just call to chat
- Be available to go wig shopping to provide a caring opinion
- Put-up (and then take-down) holiday decorations
- Arrange for a relaxing manicure, pedicure or facial
- Have friends chip-in on a portable CD player
- Find a soothing CD for them to listen to during treatment
- How about a book or radio program on CD?
- Look for expressive earrings for a feminine feel
- Create a box of creative outlets – knitting, sketching, beading, etc.
- Spend time planting/deadheading/maintaining their garden
- Concert and movie tickets for a special night out
- Just call to chat
- Fresh flowers that remind them you are there
- Restaurant gift certificates, especially for healthy take-out
- Donate to a cancer organization
- Participate in a cancer walk fundraiser (like our Bridge Walk in May!)
- Offer to drive them, and then sit with them, during treatments
- Send old-fashioned, newsy letters and pictures
- Radiation care package of natural soaps, deodorants and aloe
- A journal to capture thoughts, hopes, fears and dreams
- Offer to send out email updates or create a distribution list
- Create a “cleaning” schedule using any available loved-one
- Just call to chat
- Offer to run errands or drive them around while they do them
- Take their caregiver out for dinner and a movie

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- Offer to help write thank you notes or address envelopes
- Take them to the park for some quiet time outdoors
- Offer to take the dog for a walk
- Cook a comforting, healthy meal on treatment days
- Give a gift certificate for a healing massage
- Wash their car
- Take them to hit a bucket of golf balls, they probably miss the game
- Create an assortment of herbal teas to calm them or help with sleep
- Just call to chat
- Bring the supplies and make ice cream sundaes
- Talk to the local Boy Scout troop if they need help with snow shoveling or lawn mowing. The boys always need service hours.
- Collect healthy recipes that are easy/quick to prepare
- Visit and let them nap, take a bath, etc. while you watch the kids
- Bring your loving pet over for a snuggle
- Offer to massage their hands with lotion
- Regularly send cards - not just once
- Help to create a medication chart with doses and times
- Offer to fluff the pillows and loan them your heating pad
- Send an email "thought of the day"
- Just call to chat
- Surprise them with their favorite milkshake
- Bring a good movie to sit and watch together - and give the caregiver a break
- Make sure they have a cordless phone
- Be yourself, ask questions, hold the advice and don't be afraid
- Drop by and do some laundry
- Put them on your church prayer chain
- Create a "do not disturb" sign for when they're not feeling well
- Take them shopping for a new, colorful outfit
- Don't give up! Continue to offer your help
- Collect inspiring quotations and tape them to their refrigerator
- Just call to chat
- Remember the curative powers of homemade chicken noodle soup
- Find a special treasure for their "chemo bag" so they know you're thinking about them - jade for healing, angels for protection, etc.
- Knit them a warm scarf, in a manly navy or a feminine pastel
- Find a comedy DVD to view on a dark day
- Offer to read to them when they are fatigued or feeling ill
- And always, remember to call and just chat