

Transportation Concerns

If you have been diagnosed with cancer, you will likely have many doctor's appointments, scans, blood tests and treatments – sometimes at different locations both near and far to your home. These medical appointments may continue after treatment ends. You may also need transportation to get to the store, church or synagogue or to community agencies to participate in support programs.

Getting to appointments can be challenging for many reasons. If you are going for radiation therapy, you may find it challenging to get a ride to therapy on a daily basis for several weeks. Public transportation can be difficult to navigate if you are feeling weak or ill. Some people travel long distances for cancer treatment and the cost of gas and parking can add to already strained finances. Maybe you have a car but don't feel up to driving and need help getting to and from treatment. Even though getting to all these appointments is a challenge, it is critical that you do your best to keep all your scheduled treatments and medical visits so that you can keep your treatment on track.

The first place to start if you need help with transportation is often with your family and friends. Asking for help can be hard but you might be surprised by the response you get from those who want to help. How often have people said, "Please let me know how I can help...?" Providing a ride to and from the cancer center may be the perfect way to help you. Online scheduling tools can help people see what is needed and sign up for times they are available. Check out these websites for more information:

- Lotsa Helping Hands: www.lotsahelpinghands.com
- MyLifeline www.mylifeline.org
- Caring Bridge: www.caringbridge.org

Churches and other faith-based groups may also have volunteers who can help with transportation. Ask your oncologist or nurse if there is an oncology social worker or navigator who can help you find local transportation assistance. If you are disabled or a senior citizen, some city, county and state agencies can often arrange for low-cost or free local transportation. Some pharmaceutical companies have patient assistance programs that provide gas cards or reimbursement for travel for specific treatments.

The American Cancer Society's *Road to Recovery*® program may have transportation to and from treatment available for people who have cancer who do not have a ride or are unable to drive themselves. Volunteer drivers donate their time to drive patients to and from treatment. Call (800) 227-2345 or go to www.cancer.org to see if there is a *Road to Recovery*® program in your community.

Several organizations offer transportation assistance if you have to travel far from home for treatment. These include:

- Air Charity Network (877) 621-7177 www.aircharitynetwork.org
- Corporate Angel Network (866) 328-1313 www.corpangelnetwork.org
- Lifeline Pilots (800) 822-7972 www.lifelinepilots.org

If you need lodging near a treatment center, Joe's House, (877) 563-7468, www.joeshouse.org is a nonprofit organization providing a nationwide list of places to stay to assist cancer patients and their families in finding housing.