

Caring for a loved one with cancer can be exhausting. This kind of fatigue is tiredness that may have little to do with your physical activity or sleep. Feeling too tired to do what you want and need to do are real parts of being a caregiver to someone with cancer. There are many different causes of fatigue as a caregiver. Some involve physical fatigue, while others are more emotional. Understanding the cause of your fatigue will help you to manage it.

EMOTIONAL FATIGUE

Anxiety, depression, stress, or insomnia can also contribute to feeling tired. Fatigue can affect your physical, mental, social, and financial well-being. Reducing your stress and worry can help you feel more energetic. Allow yourself to rest during the times you are most tired, and be active when you feel up to it. Try to focus on getting regular sleep. If you are constantly having problems falling or staying asleep, talk to your health care provider. It is important to make time for yourself during this challenging time.

PHYSICAL FATIGUE

It is common for caregivers to put their health care on hold while caring for a loved one with cancer. Some caregivers report feeling guilty for thinking of themselves when their loved one is going through so much. It isn't a competition or comparison. It's important for you take care of your health, for yourself and your loved one.

One kind of fatigue is known as "compassion fatigue" and it comes from prolonged caregiving. It is normal and understandable to sometimes feel that you've reached a wall and your energy is depleted. You may feel as if you are letting your loved one down if you don't do it all. That is not the case. Everyone has their limits and it is ok to ask for help. Support of other family, friends, or professional resources may be needed to help you take a break for yourself and rejuvenate.



www.CancerSupportCommunity.org

1-888-793-9355



CAREGIVING AND WORK

If you continue to work during your loved one's treatment, your employer may be able to make changes that make working easier for you. Visit **Cancer and Careers**[®] (www.cancerandcareers.org) to find out more information about tips on how to talk with your employer about your situation.

Good communication with your loved one and their health care team will help you to find solutions. Be kind to yourself. Know that you are going through a challenging time. Your mind, body, and spirit are working hard to care for your loved one with cancer. Remember that you are not alone, and fatigue is a real concern that is important to acknowledge and address.

General Cancer Information, Survivorship & Support

Cancer Support Community • 888-793-9355 • www.CancerSupportCommunity.org

American Cancer Society • 800-227-2345 • www.cancer.org

CancerCare • 800-813-4673 • www.cancercare.org

Cancer.net • 888-651-3038 • www.cancer.net

Caregiver Action Network • 855-227-3640 • www.caregiveraction.org

Healthcare.gov • www.healthcare.gov

Livestrong Foundation • 866-673-7205 • www.livestrong.org

National Cancer Institute • 800-422-6237 • www.cancer.gov

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine • 888-644-6226 • www.nccam.nih.gov

Patient Advocate Foundation • 800-532-5274 • www.patientadvocate.org

Cancer Support Community Resources

Cancer Support Community's (CSC) resources and programs are available free of charge. Call 888-793-9355 or visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org for more info.

Cancer Support Helpline® — Have questions, concerns or looking for resources? Call CSC's toll-free Cancer Support Helpline (888-793-9355), available in 200 languages Mon–Fri, 9 am–9 pm ET.

Open to Options® — Preparing for your next appointment? Our trained specialists can help you create a list of questions to share with your doctor. Make an appointment by calling 888-793-9355 or by contacting your local CSC or Gilda's Club.

Frankly Speaking About Cancer® — Trusted information for cancer patients and their loved ones is available through publications, online, and in-person programs. www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FranklySpeakingAboutCancer.

Services at Local CSCs and Gilda's Clubs — With the help of 170 locations, CSC and Gilda's Club affiliates provide services free of charge to people touched by cancer. Attend support groups, educational sessions, wellness programs, and more at a location near you. www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FindLocation.

MyLifeLine — CSC's private, online community allows patients and caregivers to easily connect with friends and family to receive social, emotional, and practical support throughout the cancer journey and beyond. Connect with other caregivers by joining the Caregiver Support online discussion board. Sign up at www.MyLifeLine.org.

Grassroots Network — Make sure your voice is heard by federal and state policy makers on issues affecting cancer patients and survivors by joining our Network at www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/become-advocate.

Cancer Experience Registry® — Help others by sharing your cancer patient or cancer caregiver experience via survey at www.CancerExperienceRegistry.org.

The Cancer Support Community provides this information as a service. This publication is not intended to take the place of medical care or the advice of your doctor. We strongly suggest consulting your doctor or other health care professionals to answer questions and learn more.

© October 2020. Cancer Support Community. All rights reserved.