

Caregivers are often so focused on their loved one with cancer that they don't take time to care for their own health and well-being. Some even feel guilty about caring for their personal health concerns. It is important that you take care of your health, through regular checkups and care for specific concerns. Setting time to care for yourself will benefit your loved one. This time will allow you to better provide care for your loved one and reduce their worry about your health.



www.CancerSupportCommunity.org
1-888-793-9355



TAKE A MOMENT TO FOCUS ON HOW YOU ARE FEELING

Have you noticed any new changes in your health? Do you have medical conditions that existed before you became a caregiver? Is there something you have been meaning to do for yourself that you haven't had time or energy to do? Some important topics to consider for your self-care include:

- Going to your doctor for check-ups
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating healthy meals
- Exercising
- Taking medications as prescribed

FOCUS ON ONE GOAL AT A TIME

If you have fallen behind in any of these areas, remember that you don't have to change your routine all at once. Instead, pick one thing that you would like to focus on. Then set a specific and reasonable goal. For example, if you want to exercise, a specific goal could be, "Go on a 15-minute walk this week." Then schedule the walk into your planner or calendar, just as you would any other important appointment. You may also want to ask a friend or family member to walk with you. This helps make it more likely that you will achieve your goal.

SET LIMITS

It can be overwhelming to think about adding more to your already overflowing plate. Consider these steps to assist you in setting time for your health needs:

- **Figure out priorities.** Make a list of tasks. Decide what is important, what can be let go, and what needs to be

MyLifeLine is CSC's private, online community where patients and caregivers are able to easily connect with friends and family to receive social, emotional, and practical support throughout the cancer journey and beyond.

You can use this website to:

- Keep friends and family informed and involved through a personalized blog. You can ask for help with rides, meals, etc. in the Helping Center on your page. As a caregiver, your loved one can give you access as an Assigned Care Coordinator to run their page.
- Connect with other caregivers by joining the Caregiver Support online discussion board. Discussion boards are available 24/7 and are monitored by a licensed professional.
- Learn more about cancer through **Frankly Speaking About Cancer**[®] resources.

Sign up at **MyLifeLine.org**.

modified. You may have to say no to some things and ask for help with others. People may surprise you in their willingness to step up and help.

- **Accept your limitations.** You can only do so much. There is only one of you and you can't always do everything by yourself. Accepting limitations does not mean you are letting your loved one down. It is okay to let others help where they can (i.e. chores, errands, homecare assistance).
- **Ask for help.** There are some things that only you can do. There are other things you can let go of by hiring someone or asking for help from friends, family, or local organizations. Setting up a network of resources can give you support, while allowing you to focus on the most important caregiving activities. Share your

to-do list and ask for specific help in areas most needed. Allow friends and neighbors to take turn bringing meals. Or consider looking into home-delivered groceries or meal services.

- **Community resources.** There are local resources that can help with in-home care, transportation, meal programs, and adult/childcare. Contact your health care team for a list of resources available to you. Additional resources such as alert buttons for help, professional caregiver assistance, and in-home health care may be helpful options.

RESOURCES FOR COORDINATING CARE SCHEDULES:

It is okay to ask for help with some of the practical aspects of coordinating care. For example, family/friends could drive to appointments, make meals, or research information.

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.

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