

Cancer impacts the entire family and in some ways, our closest friends and colleagues. People with cancer often worry about how people around them are coping with the changes that cancer often brings into their lives. It is normal to feel concerned and to think about ways that you can communicate your love and support to them at this difficult time. They may also be wondering how best to support you as well. Often, your worries about the impact of cancer on those around you will decrease over time as your loved ones adjust to the situation.



[www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org)  
1-888-793-9355



## **RELATIONSHIP STRESSORS**

The stress of cancer and its treatment can be magnified if you need to switch roles from caring for others to being cared for yourself; when you wish or desire to protect your children or other loved ones from your own fears and worries; or when you worry about things like the financial stress on your family. Find someone to share your worries and concerns. With support, you may find that while you may never be fully worry-free, you may begin to manage the stress of caring for family while caring for your own health and well-being.

## **GOOD COMMUNICATION IS KEY**

One of the most important things you can do to stay connected to family and friends is to be open and honest about how you are feeling and ask them to do the same. People often don't know what to say so they may say the wrong thing or nothing at all. Tell them honestly about your diagnosis, how the disease and treatment might be affecting you, and how they can and cannot help you. Let them know if it's okay to ask you questions or if something they are doing is adding to your stress and anxiety.

## **IMPACT ON CHILDREN**

Children understand the world through their parents. How a child reacts depends very much on how the parents or other close adults are dealing with their own feelings. Difficulty in discussing these issues may create distance in relationships that were once close. It is helpful for parents to explain the facts in a way that allows children to understand and participate in what is happening in their lives. When speaking with your children let them take the lead. Answer their questions directly and with simple language. Try not to downplay

their concerns and worries. Learning to cope with difficult situations will increase a child's sense of self confidence for the future.

**Signs to watch for that suggest a child could use some additional help:**

- Changes in a child's sleeping patterns
- A drop in school grades or unusual misbehavior in school or at home
- Getting into arguments or fights with friends
- Emotional withdrawal

## HOW TO GET HELP

Attending support groups, workshops, family counseling, educational programs, and religious retreats can be very helpful. Your health care team can suggest some local resources. There are also many national non-profit organizations that can assist you in locating support for you and your family. The Cancer Support Community *Cancer Support Helpline*<sup>®</sup> can help get you connected to support no matter where you live. Visit [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org) or call the toll-free helpline at 1-888-793-9355.

# General Cancer Information, Survivorship & Support

**Cancer Support Community** • 888-793-9355 • [www.CancerSupportCommunity.org](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org)

**American Cancer Society** • 800-227-2345 • [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**CancerCare** • 800-813-4673 • [www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org)

**Cancer.net** • 888-651-3038 • [www.cancer.net](http://www.cancer.net)

**Caregiver Action Network** • 855-227-3640 • [www.caregiveraction.org](http://www.caregiveraction.org)

**Healthcare.gov** • [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

**Livestrong Foundation** • 866-673-7205 • [www.livestrong.org](http://www.livestrong.org)

**National Cancer Institute** • 800-422-6237 • [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

**National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine** • 888-644-6226 • [www.nccam.nih.gov](http://www.nccam.nih.gov)

**Patient Advocate Foundation** • 800-532-5274 • [www.patientadvocate.org](http://www.patientadvocate.org)

## CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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

**Cancer Support Helpline**<sup>®</sup>—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**<sup>®</sup>—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**<sup>®</sup>—Trusted information for cancer patients and their loved ones is available through publications, online, and in-person programs.

[www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/FranklySpeakingAboutCancer](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.CancerSupportCommunity.org/become-advocate).

**Cancer Experience Registry**<sup>®</sup>—Help others by sharing your cancer patient or cancer caregiver experience via survey at [www.CancerExperienceRegistry.org](http://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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