Article Series Mental Health All

Offering emotional support

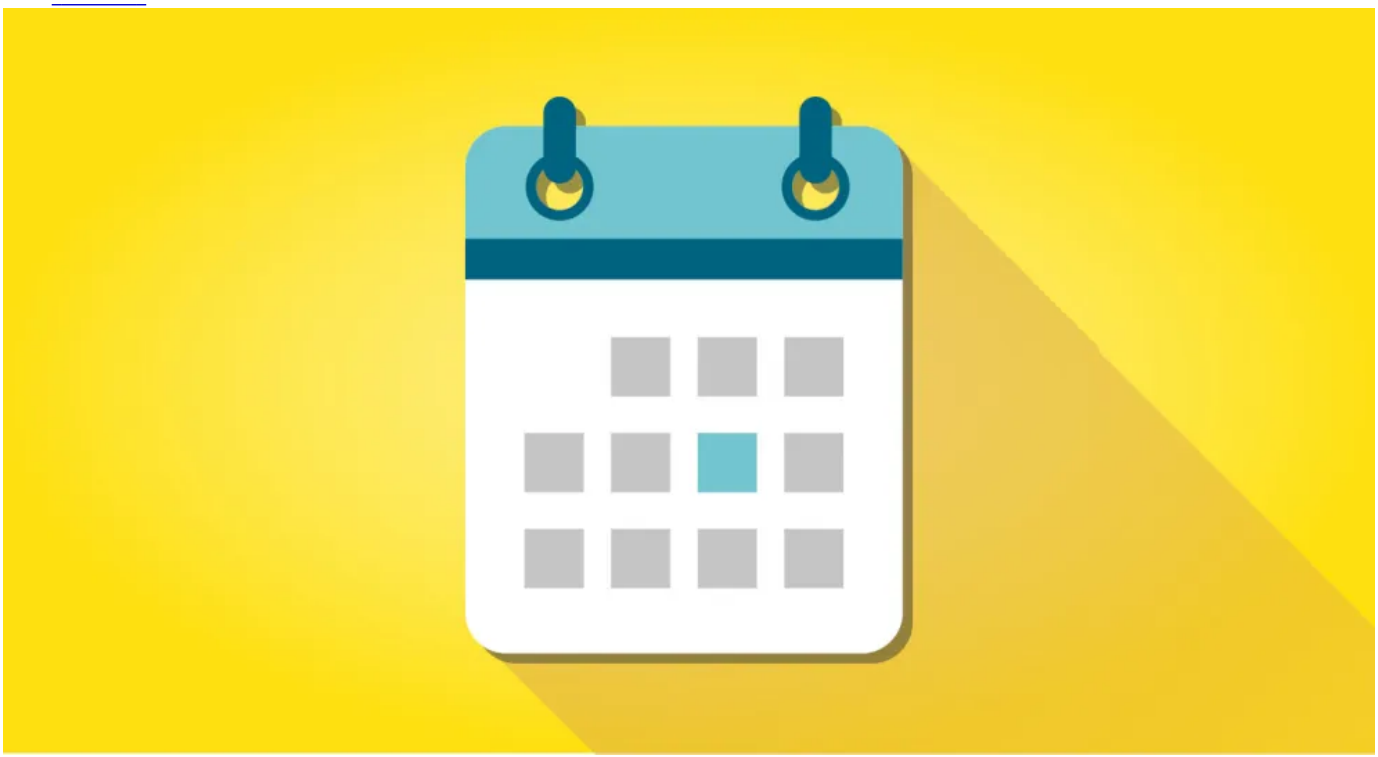
3 min read

Like (0) Likes

Bookmark

Share

Print



All Mental Health

Resize

A A A

Living with cancer brings a steady stream of physical and emotional challenges. Friends and family can help by offering positive support to try to nurture a loved one's spirit. These tips can start you off on the right foot.

Reach Out on a Regular Basis

When a loved one is living with cancer, it is a constant reality for them. Keep that in mind as you look for ways to provide support. Rather than wait for the perfect time to sit down in person and have a heart-to-heart about how they're feeling, remember that texts, short emails, phone calls and cards may be just as meaningful.

Sending an encouraging text, an email with an uplifting book recommendation, or a handwritten card with a funny anecdote inside can serve as a reminder that you care. These constant and consistent connections may make a difference.

Follow Your Loved One's Lead

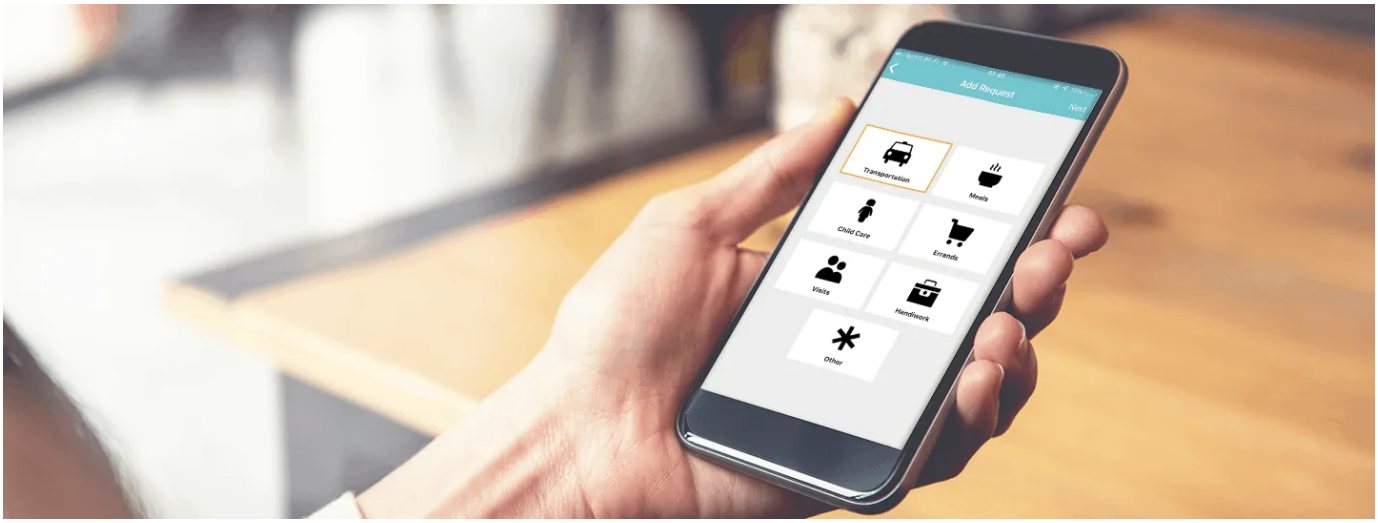
A cancer diagnosis is incredibly personal, so it's important to respect how your loved one is handling this life-changing development. Try not to take it personally if your friend or family member doesn't want to share that many details. On the other hand, if they do want to share details, the best thing you can do is simply listen and offer your love and support. This isn't the time to share your own fears or tell stories about others you know living with cancer. If you're unsure how your loved one wants to communicate, a very simple "How are you today?" is a great way to open a discussion and let them lead the way from there.

Speak in Specifics

After you've opened the dialogue, one of the best things friends and family members can do for someone living with cancer is to offer tangible ways they can help. Instead of saying, "What can I do?"—which puts the burden on the person who's been diagnosed—offer specifics. For example, "I'd like to drive you to your next appointment, if that's helpful." or "I'd love to make dinner for you and your family. May I drop a meal by your house on Tuesday evening?" Those offers of specific help may ease the emotions that stem from feeling unable to do certain chores. If you're a member of your loved one's circle in the **LivingWith™** app, you can sign up for certain tasks and needs that they input.

Keep Being Inclusive

Someone living with cancer may not always have the energy to do the things they used to, but that doesn't mean you should stop inviting them. Keep them on your invitation list for dinner parties, your monthly book club, and other activities you share together. If they're not feeling up to it, offer to modify or try something new. Whether it's bringing dinner to their house instead of going out, starting a virtual book club or spending time with them while they rest, the important thing is to ensure you're still getting quality time and letting your loved one know you can support them in whatever way works best for them.



Explore LivingWith™

A free app designed to help manage life with cancer.
Download **LivingWith™** for free or
learn more about the app.

ios android