Article Series Talking About Cancer All

How to ask for help —and accept it

4 min read
Like (1) Likes
Bookmark
Share
Print

View Video Transcript

[Lindsay] After being diagnosed with cancer I think it's hard to look at the big picture because you're just trying to figure out how to get through the day.

When I was diagnosed I had so many text messages and emails of friends that just wanted to do something, and I just didn't really know what to tell them.

You know, I think when you're in the moment and you've just been diagnosed and your world kind of turns upside down, you just don't really know what you need.

But you can put out little requests for like babysitting or a ride to an appointment or anything.

With LivingWith®'s My Circle they can log in and see easily what I need.

It just kind of takes care of everything for you.

Seeing My Circle makes me feel supported.

All Talking About Cancer
Resize
A A A

"There were a lot of people who lifted me over the mountain."

If you're living with cancer, feeling supported by your family and friends may be more important than ever. For Barbara, who fought multiple types of cancer over 14 years, being surrounded by caring people gave her the strength she needed time and again. "There were a lot of people who lifted me over the mountain," she says.

Your loved ones might be eager to support you, but sometimes it's difficult to accept help. You might be worried about relying too much on others while facing cancer. Or you might be reluctant to make too many changes in your day-to-day life.

But the reality is that living with cancer may disrupt your usual routine. You'll need to make time for doctors' visits and follow-up appointments. And you might also find that you need more rest than you did before your diagnosis. As you begin working with your healthcare team to manage your cancer, try to be patient with yourself.

It's only natural to want to keep doing the things that bring you joy. Maybe you love cleaning the house because it gives you a chance to relieve stress, clear your head and accomplish a goal. In that case, if a loved one offers to help with cleaning, this may not be what you need. Remember: it's okay to decline help.

It's also important to remember there's no shame in asking for help, either. Chances are your loved ones *want* to help you in any way they can, but they may be afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, or they may not know what you need. If your loved ones offer to help with things you'd rather do yourself, maybe there's something else they could do for you instead.

Finding the right balance is key

Knowing when to do things yourself and when to ask for help can be challenging. Your needs could change from one day to the next, so it's important for you and your loved ones to be flexible.

Lindsay, an oncology nurse who was diagnosed with stage III colorectal cancer, knows this struggle all too well. Not only does she continue to care for her patients while living with cancer, but she's also a dedicated mother. "I think your mind immediately goes to your children after being diagnosed with cancer," she says. "You wonder…am I going to be able to lift my daughter up after surgery? Am I going

to be able to cook them dinner and get them up in the morning?" Like many people living with cancer, Lindsay has good days and bad days. On the bad days, she feels lucky she can rely on her family and friends.

> **"When I was diagnosed, I had so many text messages and emails from friends who just wanted to do something, and I just didn’t really know what to tell them."**

Even when you're feeling overwhelmed and you know you need help, it can be hard to figure out *what*, exactly, you need. Lindsay uses a free app, **LivingWith™**, which is designed to help manage life with cancer. "When I was diagnosed," she says, "I had so many text messages and emails from friends that just wanted to do something, and I just didn’t really know what to tell them. I think when you're in the moment and you've just been diagnosed and your world kind of turns upside down, you just don't really know what you need."

On **LivingWith**, you can use **My Circle** to build a circle of support with friends, family and loved ones, and ask them to pick your kids up from school, drive you to the doctor, cook dinner and much more. Lindsay feels **LivingWith** makes it easier for her loved ones to see what she needs every day. "Seeing **My Circle** makes me feel supported," she says.

Download LivingWith today

> **"Seeing My Circle makes me feel supported."**

You may have more to juggle now than you did before your diagnosis. Sometimes that means asking for help—or learning to accept your loved ones' offers to help—when you normally wouldn't.

Communication is important

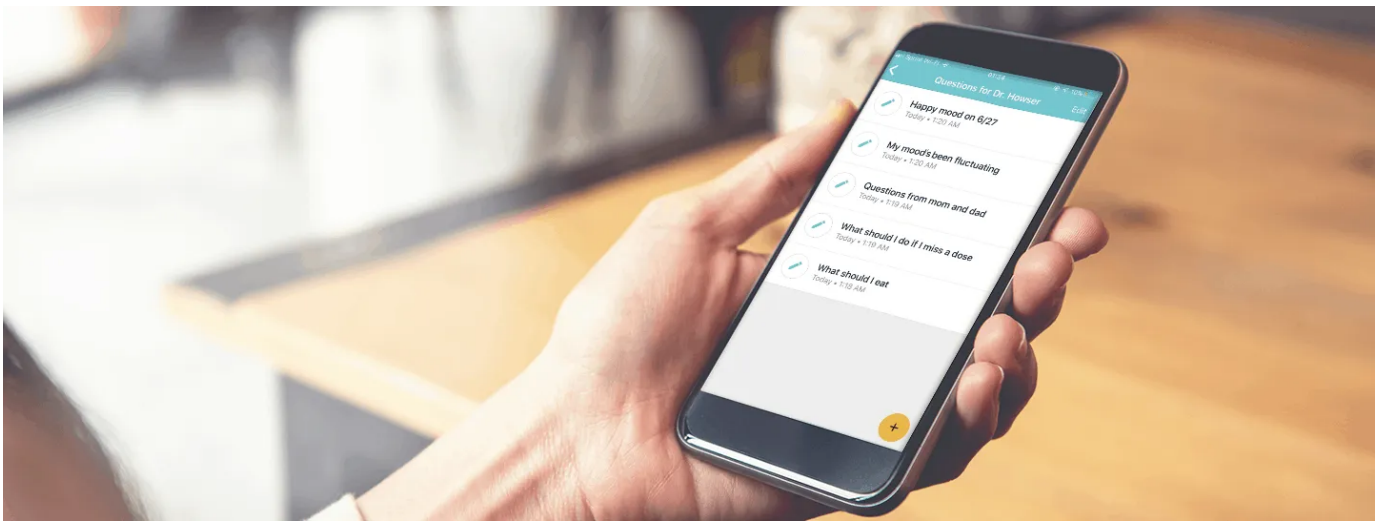
Open communication between you and your loved ones is crucial. Your loved ones won't know exactly what you need unless you tell them. Maybe you need someone to babysit tomorrow, but you could use a ride to a doctor's appointment next week. More often than not, your loved ones will try to support you in whatever way will be most helpful to you.

During this time in your life, it's important to listen to how you're feeling. If you're worried about losing independence, remember that it's up to you to decide what you need and which people in your life you trust. Expressing your needs clearly to those closest to you may allow you to focus on the things you *can* continue doing yourself.

Feeling supported, expressing gratitude

Try to remember that when a loved one offers to help, they're doing so because they care. Even if you don't need their help right now, tell them how much it means to you, just knowing you have someone you can rely on.

Not everyone is fortunate enough to have supportive friends and family. If you're looking to expand your network of support, try using **LivingWith** to find events and support groups in your community.



Explore LivingWith™

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

ios android