

How To Help Someone With Cancer

- Make them a **chemo care package**. A quick Google search will give you ideas that are helpful.
- Write them a **note** of encouragement. Just one time. Monthly. Weekly. Daily.
- Fund a **getaway**, if they're feeling well enough. Even if it's just a hotel in their own city.
- **Go with them** to chemo.
- **Go with them** to radiation.
- Get them a little **gift**. Examples:
 - **Hard candies**, especially for those going through chemo.
 - **Books**. Large-print can be especially helpful for those going through chemo as it may affect their eyesight.
 - **Magazines** for doctor's appointments, waiting rooms and passing time, especially for those that are off work.
 - **Scarves** and **warm socks** as body temperature experiences changes.
 - **Cozy blankets** are loved by all, even non-cancer patients
 - **Water** or **re-useable water bottles** for staying hydrated.
 - **Puzzle** books like cross-word puzzles or Sudoku for helping to pass the time.
 - **Comfy clothes** like pants or shirts that allow easy access for medical treatments or for recuperating at home.
 - **Cancer-kicking shirts** or merchandise for showing a positive attitude.
 - **Gas gift cards** as there can be a lot of travel involved.
 - **Netflix** subscription.
 - Amazon gift certificates for downloading **e-books**.
 - **Pedicure** or **manicure** experience.
 - **Balloon bouquets** will brighten someone's day.
 - **Silk flowers** as it won't irritate sense of smell or overwhelm or pose a health risk.
 - **Funny movies** can lighten the mood.
 - **Video games**.
 - **Board games** – those that can be played alone (like card games) or with a small group.
 - Roll of **quarters** for vending machines.
 - **Headphones** for blocking out noise during chemo or doctor's appointments or for communicating "It's okay not to talk to me."
 - **Heating pads** can be a lifesaver for post-treatment.
- **Run errands** for them. Examples include:
 - Buy them standard **household** supplies. Toilet paper. Paper towels. Pasta. Cleaning supplies.
 - Return **library books** and/or check out new ones for them.
 - Drop things off at the **post office**.
 - Drop off or pick up **dry cleaning**.
 - **Cook** them a meal. Breakfast. Lunch. Dinner. Snacks. Ask if their tastes have changed or if they have diet restrictions.
 - **Line up meals** for them. TakeThemAMeal.com is helpful for this.
 - Help them **shop for others** – things that they usually do like spouse's/partner's/kid's birthdays. Anniversaries. Christmas. Easter. Halloween. Wedding/Shower gifts.
 - Have **groceries** delivered. Either staples or things that make for easy meals.

- Go on a **walk** with them. Let them walk at their pace.
- **Educate** yourself on their cancer or treatment. Not so that you can make decisions for them, but so that they have someone to talk to and so that they don't have to explain everything every time.
- **Host** family that may be in town visiting.
- Just **spend time** with them. Sit with them at home. Don't force them to make conversation, just BE with them.
- Arrange for a **card shower**, where others in their life sends them cards.
- Take care of something **around the house**. You don't even need to see to it yourself, you can arrange for someone else to take care of it, such as:
 - Clean **windows**.
 - **Spring cleaning**.
 - **Mow lawn**.
 - **Shovel snow**.
 - Change & wash **linens** or **towels**.
 - **Fix something** that's broken.
 - Get **firewood**.
 - Take care of their **garden**.
 - Plant **annuals** if they have a spot for them.
 - Take out their **trash**. Especially if you're their neighbor.
 - **Wash** their car.
 - **Rake** leaves. Don't even need to ask. Just do it.
 - Do a load of **laundry**. You can take it to your house and return it a couple of hours later, already done and folded.
- If they have **children**, help is probably greatly appreciated! Help such as:
 - **Babysit** during their appointments *or* so they can rest *or* so they can go out with their spouse/partner *or* so that they can run errands more easily.
 - Help with **school drop off & pick up**.
 - Help with **before or after school care**.
 - Buy back-to-school **clothes**.
 - Buy back-to-school **supplies**.
 - Buy **holiday clothing** like outfits for Christmas or Easter - if the family does that.
 - Notify the **kids' teachers/counselors** so that the parents don't have to.
 - Take the kids out "just because" – **ice cream** or to a **sporting event**.
 - Help kids with **homework**.
 - Take their kids to their **lessons** or **sports practices**. Or help find another child on those team(s) whose family might be able to help.
- Helping with **pets** can ease a burden too. Such as:
 - Change **litter boxes**. Not a fun task anyway, but even less so when you're more sensitive to smells.
 - Take pets for **walks**.
 - Make sure they have **pet food**. Most people wouldn't think of Fido or Fifi when sending a meal or buying groceries.
 - Take pets to the **vet** if they're due for a visit or are sick.

- **Pet sit** if the patient has to be away for a while or if their unable to care for their pets the way that they want.
- Celebrate the **milestones**. First radiation, halfway points, last radiation, first chemo, last chemo, etc.
- Help them cut or shave their **hair** – if they're going to lose their hair anyway.
- **Pray** for them and with them, if they're comfortable with that.
- **Fundraise** for them if they need.
- Take their **caregiver(s)** out to give them a break.
- If it turns out that their cancer is terminal and they want help with certain **end-of-life** activities, walk through that with them, as best you can. Such as:
 - Help them **organize papers**, especially things like life insurance or disability plans.
 - **Sell items** that they don't want nor that they want to pass on nor that their spouse/partner wants to deal with.
 - Help them with **research** – of treatments or ways to sell items or benefits available to them.
 - Help them plan **funeral** or burial wishes.
 - Help them find **legal** help, if they express wishes in putting together a will or other legal documents.
 - Help them conquer their **Bucket List**.