

People want to help you. Here are ways to let them.

Parenting little ones was tough enough on its own. Then one day, **BOOM.** Cancer joined that mix, uninvited.

On top of parenting and all of your other daily responsibilities, now you're riding a seemingly-endless carousel of doctor appointments and treatments. And suddenly, everyone you've ever met is asking what they can do to help.

Want our best advice? Let them.

Letting people help you is a gift you can give to them. Your friends and family are concerned about you. They feel powerless. They don't want to intrude and often don't know what they can do to be helpful. But it's important to realize that they WANT to help you. Think, if the tables were turned, how far you'd go to help a friend.

It's also a gift you can give yourself. Cancer treatment takes a toll: physically, mentally, emotionally. No one wants to be a burden on friends or family, but more than likely, you'll benefit from their help.

It may be easier to ask for help with specific tasks by having a list to share or a "care manager": someone you trust implicitly that can organize your personal support team. A number of different websites exist that can help you share information and coordinate helpers. Some of these are: Meal Train, CaringBridge, Lotsa Helping Hands, CarePages, GoFundMe and PostHope.

It may feel hard to know what sort of help to ask for.

The right answer is:
Anything you can think of.

REMEMBER:
It's okay to ask for help.
It's okay to say "Yes! Thank you" when someone offers their help.



Here are some ideas to get you started:

Around the House

- Change the bed sheets
- Change batteries in the smoke detectors
- Coordinate any needed home repairs
- Do the laundry/fold & put away clothes
- Take the trash out
- Clean the bathrooms
- Sweep/vacuum
- Fix stuff (the light bulb that went out, the clogged toilet, etc)
- Hire a cleaning crew

Outside the House

- Rake leaves
- Mow the lawn
- Collect your mail and packages
- Shovel snow from your driveway or walkway
- Put gas in your car
- Take your car for an oil change or any necessary repairs

**Bonus: these activities don't require people to come inside...if you're not up for company.)*

Food

(Yes, this gets its own category.)

- Prepare/deliver meals
- Go grocery shopping
- Clean up/do dishes
- Pack lunches for your kids

Care for YOU

- Keep you company
- Drive/accompany you to/from appointments or treatments
- Coordinate your village (set up websites, meal drop-offs, etc)
- Share updates with your village on your status
- Pick up your prescriptions/medications
- Take walks with you or other forms of exercise (as you're able)
- Take you for a massage or other form of self-care

Entertainment

- Help with computer or TV/technical issues
- Lend you books or magazines
- Bring art projects/toys/books for your kids
- Offer new TV or app subscriptions

Care for your pets

- Walk your dog
- Come over to feed or play with your pets
- Keep your pets in their home
- Drive pets to/from boarding facilities (and/or cover costs)

Care for your kids

- Drive kids to/from school or get them to/from the bus stop
- Help with homework
- Have your kids over for play-dates or sleepovers
- Watch your kids/babysit
- Help connect you to a local breast milk donation center
- Make sure your kids have seasonally appropriate clothes & accessories (hats, scarves etc)
- Fill out school forms
- Take kids to after-school activities, doctor appointments, birthday parties, etc
- Plan birthday parties for your kids

**This one can be tricky--save these tasks for people you know your kids are comfortable with.*

Care for your caregiver

(Yes, your partner will need some breaks too.)

- Take your caregiver(s) out for meals/activities
- Exercise with your caregiver
- Watch kids so partner can do what they need (spend time with you, spend time alone, spend time with just one child, etc)