

Easy Ways to Show Someone You Care



Whether you are a spouse, child, sibling, parent, or friend of someone with cancer, it is important that you never stop expressing your love. Showing how much you care is not only important on holidays and special occasions, but every day of the year. Here are a few simple and special ways to show a person with cancer that you care.

For young children and teenagers

Here are some ways to show you care:

- Make something special (a card, a memory book, a photo album of your favorite memories, or anything you know how to make). (See the *Crafts* section in this article.)
- Draw pictures and decorate their room together.
- Bring games and play together.
- Share your favorite stuffed animal or toy.
- Write a poem about how much you love that person.
- Write a story and read it aloud to them.
- Make a playlist of their favorite songs and listen to them together.
- Read a book to them to help the time pass more quickly.
- Bring your magazines with pictures of their favorite celebrities or singers. You can decorate the room with their favorite pictures.
- Make treats and eat them together. (See the *Easy recipes* section of this article.)
- Help out around the house or offer to take care of younger siblings when needed.
- Give your mom or sister a makeover, manicure, or pedicure.

For adults

Here are some ways to show you care:

- Write them a powerful letter full of love.
- Take care of some of their responsibilities (for example, watch their kids, do their laundry, cook them dinner, or go shopping for them).
- Call often to remind them how much you love them and how you are always thinking of them.
- Check with the person before you visit. It may help to make short, frequent visits instead of longer, infrequent visits.
- When you visit, bring a book to read aloud or a movie to watch together.
- Bring them pictures of your times together and hang them where they can be viewed all the time.
- Spend time reminiscing about the fun times that you've shared (as children, in high school or college, or on vacations). Remind them that there will be more good times in the future.

For parents

Here are some ways to show you care:

- Be very affectionate with them whether they are ill or not.
- Have a special day and let them plan an event or activity. (See the *Crafts* section of this article.)
- Take them on a picnic or have a family movie night with popcorn and other special treats.
- Help your child make a card or collage for their ill sibling or parent. (See the *Crafts* section of this article.)
- Share happy stories with your children (for example, how you met, what your wedding was like, the day when they were born.)
- Spend time making treats together and then share them with others. (See the *Easy recipes* section of this article.)
- If a child has to miss a school dance or other activity, recreate it in your house or at the hospital.

For spouses

Here are some ways to show you care:

- Tell your spouse that they are beautiful and sexy. People who are undergoing chemotherapy may have low self-esteem due to hair loss and weight loss. It is important for you to remind them that they are still attractive. Try to direct the focus to their healthy features.
- Fill their room with lots of photos of the 2 of you together.
- Have a candlelight dinner in bed.
- Bathe together or give your spouse a bath (use rose petals and aromatherapy candles).
- Write a romantic love letter or poem. Really let your spouse know how you feel. Recreate a special day or moment in your relationship.
- Reminisce about the day you met, how you fell in love, and other special moments in your lives. Read to your spouse from a book of love poems.
- Be as affectionate as you can. Speak to the healthcare provider about what you can safely do. Try to be as close to your spouse as possible. Hug as much as you can, hold their hand, caress their arms and legs, kiss them often and anywhere you can, and rekindle your sexual relationship.

Being loving and supportive every day are the 2 most important things you can do.

Crafts

Making a card

Cards are very easy to make, and you can decorate them any way you choose. You will need construction paper and any other supplies that you wish to use. Take a piece of construction paper (any color) and fold it in half. Keep it folded and decide which side will be the front. Here are some ideas for decorating your card:

1. Using crayons or markers, write a message on the front and the inside of the card (for example, "I love you," "Get well soon," "I miss you," or anything you feel like writing).

2. If you have glitter and glue, you can lightly draw a picture or design with the glue and then sprinkle the glitter over it. Once you have covered all of the glue, shake the extra glitter off. Be careful not to make a mess!
3. You can use paints and paint a picture on the front of the card. You can use a paintbrush, or you can finger paint your picture.
4. With help from an adult, you can trace different shapes on a separate piece of paper and then cut them out and paste them onto your card. You can also cut different pictures, shapes, and words out of a magazine and paste them onto your card.

Once you have decorated the outside of your card, let it dry if it needs to and then decorate the inside, too!

Memory book or photo album

You will need a few sheets of construction paper (any color), some yarn, a hole punch, and any other supplies you may wish to use. Decide how many pages you will want your book or album to be and use that amount of construction paper. Stack the paper in a pile and, using the hole punch, make 2 holes in one side of the stack of paper. One hole should be near the top and the other should be near the bottom. Then take 2 pieces of yarn and string 1 through each hole. Tie each piece in a knot or a bow and you now have a book or an album. You can put whatever you want to in your memory book or photo album. If you are going to use family pictures, you should ask an adult if it is OK first. You can also cut pictures out of magazines and newspapers. You can decorate your book or album in any way that you choose. For ideas, read the directions on how to make a card.

Tissue paper flowers

Cut squares of tissue paper (at least 10 sheets) and make them a little bigger than you'd like the flower to be. They can be different colors or all the same.

Stack the squares and make a crease down the center to create 2 rectangles. Take a pipe cleaner and wrap it tightly along this line so that the tissue paper gets cinched together. The tissue paper will look like 2 fans, or butterfly wings. Next, pull the tissue paper upward 1 sheet at a time until all the sheets are fanned out and you will have a beautiful flower. If you wish, you can spray the flower with perfume to give it a real flower scent!

Easy recipes

Cat's eyes

½ cup peanut butter

8 Ritz crackers

1 banana, cut into 8 slices

8 raisins

Spread peanut butter on crackers and top each with a slice of banana. Place a raisin in the center of each banana to form a cat's eye and repeat for all banana-topped crackers.

Cheese puffers

2 cups unbleached (wheat) flour

1 cup unsalted butter (2 sticks)

2 cups grated sharp cheese

4 cups Rice Krispies

Preheat the oven to 400° F (204° C). Cream the flour, butter, and cheese together in a large bowl. Add Rice Krispies and mix into a sticky dough. Using your hands, shape puffers into small balls. Bake until golden, about 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool. Makes about 4 to 5 dozen.

Chompin' chow

½ cup peanut butter

½ cup butter or margarine

6 oz. chocolate chips

10 cups Corn Chex cereal

2 cups powdered sugar

Melt peanut butter, butter or margarine, and chocolate chips in a saucepan over medium heat. Pour over Corn Chex and make sure that all cereal is coated. Put 2 cups powdered sugar in a large paper bag. Put cereal in bag and shake gently until all cereal is coated. Pour out onto wax paper to cool.

Chocolate no-bake cookies

½ cup butter

2 cups sugar

½ cup water

2 tablespoons cocoa

½ cup peanut butter

3 cups oatmeal or 1 cup coconut

Mix butter, sugar, water, and cocoa together, bring to a boil for 30 seconds. Remove from heat and add peanut butter and oatmeal or coconut. Drop onto wax paper and let harden.

Monkey cookies

1¼ cups all-purpose flour

2 tsp baking powder

¼ tsp salt

1 cup sugar

2/3 cup butter or margarine, softened

2 eggs

2 bananas, mashed

1 tsp vanilla

Combine flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar in a large bowl and mix well. Add the butter or margarine and mix well. Then add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Drop by the teaspoonful onto cookie sheet and bake in a preheated 400°F (204°C) oven for 12 minutes. Makes about 3 dozen.

No-bake peanut squares

1 cup light corn syrup

1 cup sugar

1 cup peanut butter

4 cups corn flakes

4 cups toasted whole-grain oat cereal

1 cup peanuts

In a 2-quart pan, melt together just until smooth the first 3 ingredients, stirring constantly. Do not boil. Remove from heat. Measure the last 3 ingredients into a large bowl. Pour over peanut butter mixture. Stir, coating cereal and nuts. Spread in buttered large pan and let cool, then cut into squares and serve.

Painted heart sugar cookies

1 egg yolk

1 tsp water

Food coloring

Slice and Bake Sugar Cookie dough

In a small cup, mix the egg yolk and water, then add drops of food coloring until you've reached the color you want. Slice a roll of Sugar Cookie dough and place slices about 2 inches apart on a cookie sheet. Using a small, clean paintbrush, paint egg and water mixture on unbaked sugar cookies and then bake them according to the package directions.

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