

## Social Support

**Note: My NM Care corner is not intended to replace clinical care or management by a healthcare provider. If you have a medical emergency, please contact your healthcare provider.**

Living with cancer can be stressful. It's not always easy to express your feelings and ask for support, but doing so can ease tension and enhance well-being. Here are suggestions to make it easier when you reach out for support.

- Family, friends, and co-workers want to help but often don't know how. Be specific when you ask for help. Some enjoy providing practical help like meals and rides, while others are great listeners.
- Most friends and family will be open to talking about cancer and its impact on your lives together, but some may have a harder time discussing the topic. Don't think that their silence means they don't care.
- If you don't feel ready to ask those close to you for support, you can also find help outside your network of family and friends. Local support groups, for example, can be a safe place to express difficult feelings and talk with others managing a similar experience.

### Maintaining & Strengthening Relationships

Make time to be with family/friends, as it's a good way to reduce stress. Below are a few ideas for spending more time together.

- Family or Friend Night. Dedicate a night each week to spending time with the people you love.
- Cook, exercise, or read together.
- Learn Something New. Pick a new hobby or activity to do together, like going to museums around Chicago or taking a free yoga class.

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