

There for her

Supporting those with breast cancer

As a caregiver, you have a huge impact on how your loved one approaches her breast cancer journey. Whether you're a family member or friend, your encouragement can go a long way. You can empower her to deal with her diagnosis, keep with a treatment plan and take steps toward wellness.

For some, it can be hard to ask for help, especially women who are used to caring for others. Just showing up and being there for someone can mean a lot. Let go of concerns that you're not doing enough, or not doing something well enough. By helping her stay on top of the details, she can focus on her treatment and recovery.

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Let her health come first

Here are some ways to support someone with breast cancer:

Communicate
It's the most important part of your role. Talk to her about her feelings and listen to what she needs.

Do day-to-day tasks
You can help with cooking, cleaning and laundry. Or, run errands, handle the grocery shopping and take care of other household chores.

Be her partner in health care
Go with her to doctors' appointments if you can, take notes and ask questions. Many patients need a second set of ears to help them understand treatment options and results.

Take care of the kids
They may need help with homework, rides to school or activities or just someone to pack their lunch. They'll also need some level of normalcy. Find ways to stick to their routine.

Give comfort and emotional support
Find activities you both enjoy and that can take your minds off her diagnosis and treatment. And don't underestimate the power of touch. A hug or back rub is a small gesture that can go a long way.

Help with pets
Pets can be a great comfort to those fighting cancer. You can help by offering to cover pet care needs, like walking the dog.

Support her social life
She may need help coordinating activities. Reach out to friends and family on her behalf so she doesn't become isolated. Be sure to get her to buy in before sharing health updates with others.

Stay on top of the finances
Organize, schedule and pay the bills on her behalf.

Find more resources for breast cancer screenings, diagnosis and treatment. Log on to **Aetna.com** and look under "Helpful Resources" for our Breast Cancer Support Center.

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This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor. If you have specific health care needs or would like more complete health information, please see your doctor or other health care provider. For more information about Aetna plans, refer to **Aetna.com.**

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