

*I can. We will.*

## Talking to loved ones about your cancer

### Talking to adults

#### Let your loved one know how they can support you

For example, if you would like to continue working, let your partner know how they can support you in making that a reality, such as more help with the household chores.



#### Be as specific as possible about the kind of help you need

For example, accompanying you to the doctor, help with certain household tasks. There may be times when you don't know what help you need at that point. Tell your loved ones exactly that, and let them know you will come back to them if you need any help.



#### Remember that your loved ones will be affected too

Let them talk to you about how they feel as well.

#### Dealing with strong emotions

Try to talk about your emotion vs acting it. For example, say "I feel angry" instead of shouting

Avoid accusatory statements and criticism of character. For example, instead of saying: "You don't do anything to help, I do everything around here", you can say "I feel very tired and stressed when I have to take care of so many things around here."

#### If you do not want to talk

If you do not feel ready to talk, you could practice what to say when your loved ones ask how you are. For example, you could say: "Thank you for asking. I am not ready to speak about this at the moment, but I will let you know when I feel ready."

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## Talking to children and teenagers



### Use age-appropriate words.

For example, if speaking to younger children, say “medicine” instead of “chemotherapy”. For older children, you could explain cancer using a simple analogy of a battle between “good cells” and “bad cells”

### Prepare younger children before your treatment

As the changes in your physical appearance during treatment may frighten younger children

### Regularly reassure your children of your love for them.

Tell them that your discomfort or sadness is caused by your illness, and not because of them

### Answer their questions honestly and encourage them to share their feelings.



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