



*Reading
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Guide for Children

Preparing for a Parent that is seriously ill

Prepared by Oncology Social Work Team 2019
Cancercare

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Preparing for a Parent that is seriously ill



**Please be reminded
to make use of the free oncology social work
counselling and emotional support services at any time
during your cancer journey.**



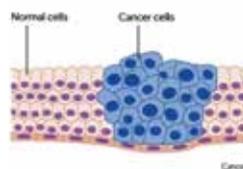
Introduction

When you find out someone in your family has cancer, it can be a very difficult time for you. You are not too young to understand that your mommy/daddy or other family member is very sick and weak. If somebody you know is going to die, it is heartbreaking news and it makes you feel very sad and all you want to do is cry.

Reading this may help you understand the illness a bit better and what lies ahead.

Cancer

Cancer cells in the body take over the normal cells and eventually cause the body to stop working. Your mom/dad fought the cancer bravely, but it has made her/him very weak and she/he will not be getting better. The doctor and professional team who are trained will help your mom/dad to be comfortable and make sure their needs are met. Remember, cancer is not contagious. It is also nobody's fault that they are ill.



Feelings

You may feel sad, scared, upset, down, guilty, lonely, angry, neglected, uncertain and have a lot of mixed feelings, but it is quite normal. There will be good days and bad days. Don't bottle up your feelings, cry if you want to. Ask your parents to help you find a counselor to talk to if you feel you need to chat to someone other than the family.



Talking to a friend or somebody you trust

It is very important to ask questions and talk to people you love. It will help you understand what is going on. If you feel unsure and unsafe, you are not on your own – your loved ones also feel heartbroken and they understand your feelings.



You can do something to help

Sit next to person who is ill and just be with them. You don't have to talk - you can make a cup of tea - or talk about special times - give hugs or tell you them you love them - look at all the family photos - write them a letter or draw them a picture.



Go to school

Keep up with your daily school programme, play sports, spend time with friends, read, walk the dog. Take a break and do something for fun. Your ill family member wants you to not be so sad all the time.



Make a memory box

A memory box is a container that holds special things belonging to you. It can help you keep busy and remember all the good memories of your family member.

Write a letter, find special photos.



The funeral

It is a sad occasion and some people will be crying and feeling very sad. It is ok to go to the funeral and you can sit with somebody you love. But you don't have to go. Remember that even when your loved one has died; they live in your heart forever and you will always remember them as they were and what they said and meant to you.



Live life

It's ok to be sad. Think of all the good memories. Ask somebody to help you if you are not feeling better. Remember you will always have a connection with your family member. She/he loved you very much. Your loved one will live in your heart for ever.



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