

Practical tasks (laundry, shopping, getting dressed and preparing food)

It is hard to know exactly how cancer and its treatment will affect you. You may be able to keep doing practical tasks as you did before. Or you may feel too tired or weak to manage day-to-day things such as:

- washing and dressing
- preparing meals or drinks
- grocery shopping
- laundry or housework.

This may be because you are coping with symptoms, or with the side effects of treatment. If you have surgery, your mobility may be affected while you recover. This can make you feel less confident about doing things around the house or going outside on your own.

Tell your specialist nurse or cancer doctor about any practical help you might need at home as you recover. They can give you advice. They may be able to arrange help or equipment for you.

Remember family, friends and neighbours can all help you with day-to-day activities. Often, they will be glad to help with any practical tasks.

If you need more support when you are at home, contact your GP. They may be able to arrange a home help or carer to help with practical tasks.

Tips for managing practical tasks

- Ask other people to help if you can. Family and friends are usually happy to help.
- Plan ahead and prioritise things you enjoy the most or that most need doing.
- Spread tasks out over the week. Do a little bit each day rather than a lot in one go.
- Go slowly and take breaks.
- Sit down while you are making meals. Cook simpler meals, so you spend less time in the kitchen.
- Make extra meals or double portions and freeze them for when you need them.
- Ask a family member or friend to go grocery shopping with you for extra help. Or ask them to get things for you when they do their own shopping.
- Shop online and have it delivered.
- Have a bath rather than a shower, or sit down in the shower.
- Sit down when getting dressed. And wear clothes that are easy to put on and take off.
- If possible, use a trolley to move your washing to and from the washing machine.
- Ask for help to hang up washing.
- Sit down to iron, or wear clothes that do not need to be ironed.
- If you can afford it, hire a cleaner.
- Ask your GP if there are any aids that may help you around the house, such as a shower chair or trolley.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Red Cross 	<p>www.redcross.org.uk</p> <p>Tel 0844 871 11 11</p> <p>Email information@redcross.org.uk</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wiltshire Farm Foods 	<p>www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com</p> <p>Tel 0800 773 773</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens Advice 	<p>www.citizensadvice.org.uk</p>

Further information

www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/practical-preparation-for-treatment

Our booklets and leaflets are available to order free on be.macmillan.org.uk

- **Coping with fatigue**
- **Going home from hospital**
- **Managing breathlessness**

More information and support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit macmillan.org.uk

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us, in English, the language you would like to use.

We produce information in a range of formats and languages. To order these, visit macmillan.org.uk/otherformats or call our support line.

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