



# What Can I Do?

Below are some actions of love that can alleviate the mental and physical demands of oncology families. **One thing to keep in mind, though, is time.** The reality is that the outpouring of support tends to dwindle over time while the resources and energy the family has in their reserve tank simultaneously decreases. As the cancer journey continues beyond diagnosis and initial treatment, the need for support continues.

	What you can do...	Did you know...
<b>Household</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House cleaning service</li> <li>• Cleaning the house</li> <li>• Walking pets / caring for pets</li> <li>• Taking out the garbage</li> <li>• Seasonal items: cutting grass, snow removal, raking leaves</li> <li>• Set up a monthly Amazon order for household supplies like toilet paper, shampoo, laundry detergent, diapers, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>While a family is managing cancer, their homes need to be managed as well.</p>
<b>Financial Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help with bills</li> <li>• Gift cards</li> <li>• Fundraisers</li> <li>• Parking passes</li> <li>• Food vouchers</li> <li>• Restaurant gift cards</li> <li>• Gas gift cards</li> <li>• Pre-order regular household items</li> </ul>	<p>25% of families who have a child with cancer lost greater than 40% of their household income.</p> <p>33% had to deal with housing, energy or food insecurity within 6 months of diagnosis.</p>
<b>Sibling Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playdates</li> <li>• Before/after school care</li> <li>• Taking pictures and videos at events parents have to miss</li> <li>• Activities and gifts for siblings (in- &amp; out-of-hospital)</li> </ul>	<p>Children who have a sibling with cancer are dealing with multiple changes to their family and homelife.</p>

	What you can do...	Did you know...
<b>Food &amp; Drink</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meal trains</li> <li>• Groceries</li> <li>• Dropping off meals</li> <li>• Coffee and snacks on treatment days</li> </ul>	<p>At the start, community presence is often high and meals are plentiful. However, appetites are often suppressed at this time food can go to waste. Spreading this generosity out over time could make a greater impact for the family.</p>
<b>Personal Wellness Check</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with them so they do not feel alone</li> <li>• Drop into the hospital to be with their child so they feel they can mentally take a break</li> <li>• Bring water</li> </ul>	<p>Oncology families don't have the time or energy to think about taking care of themselves during these times. It is up to us to do that for them. Nurture them while they nurture their child.</p>
<b>Hospital Specific</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drop off food and drink</li> <li>• Personalized entertainment bags</li> <li>• Call/text</li> <li>• Watch shows/movies together</li> <li>• Take care of their outside world so they don't have to think about it (see Household)</li> </ul>	<p>Hospital stays can be monotonous and repetitive with the same walls, the same food and the same rhythm. Try to shine a little light into the trying days by checking in and providing opportunities for socialization and connection.</p>
<b>Connection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outings with other oncology parents</li> <li>• Outings with friends</li> <li>• Social media support groups</li> <li>• Pediatric cancer fundraisers and events</li> </ul>	<p>Although there is nowhere these parents would rather be than bedside with their child, it can be an isolating experience. Connecting with other adults can provide relief and support for the long haul.</p>
<b>Family &amp; Kids Gifts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide childcare for date nights</li> <li>• Favourite snacks</li> <li>• Entertainment • Electronics</li> <li>• Earphones / earbuds</li> <li>• Online tv/movie memberships</li> <li>• Online book membership</li> <li>• Online fitness memberships</li> <li>• Kindle • Movie passes</li> <li>• Date night gift cards</li> </ul>	<p>Bring a little thoughtful magic to brighten their day. Depending on the situation, gifts suitable for hospital stays, time at home or travel may be especially considerate.</p>