



Help Brothers and Sisters Cope

Tell them about the cancer and its treatment.

Be honest and straightforward with your other children about their brother or sister's cancer. Tailor information to the age and understanding of each child. Your children need to hear about the disease from you! It is more frightening to hear about cancer from another child or adult at school.

Talk with your children about their feelings.

Give children the chance to talk about their feelings. They may feel sad, frightened or worried about their sibling's cancer and treatment. They might also feel jealous at all the attention their brother or sister is receiving. It is important to know what they are feeling, not just what you think they are feeling.

Involve them in their brother or sister*s treatment.

Give your children the option to come to the hospital when their brother or sister is receiving treatment. This will make the hospital less frightening. It will also help your children learn how to be supportive to their sibling.

Reassure your child.

Younger children, in particular, may feel that they are responsible for their brother or sister's cancer. Reassure them that they did nothing to cause the cancer. Remind them that cancer is not contagious and they cannot catch it from their brother or sister. Children need to hear this repeated many times.

Plan special time with your other children.

Spend time together with your other children doing something they like. Attend a sports event, have dinner together, or catch a movie. You may want to spend time with your other children together or individually.

Keep routines as normal as possible.

Help older children maintain their usual school schedules and activities outside of school. For younger children consistent bath and bed routines are important.

Ask family members and friends to help.

Those who care about your family will want to help. Suggest things like: taking your child to an activity, attending your child's sports game, or helping with homework.

