

Basic self-care/useful coping strategies



- Be proactive and take control of your health and care as much as possible.
- Do some gentle exercise (e.g. walking) if you feel up to it. If you are concerned, ask your doctor what is an appropriate level of activity for you.
- Eat a nutritious diet (usually this means more fibre, more dark green and orange vegetables, less fat, sugar and salt, unless you have been advised otherwise by a health professional).
- Avoid alcohol.
- Only do as much as you can, both physically and mentally. This may be less than you are used to.
- Have a rest/nap if you need to.
- Be prepared to just take one day at a time.
- Be kind to yourself. Remember it's okay not to feel positive all of the time. Treat yourself the same way you'd treat a friend in the same situation.
- Consider relaxing your housekeeping and gardening standards, making easier meals, using services such as Meals on Wheels and/or accepting offers of help.
- Keep doing as many non-cancer related activities as you can (e.g. seeing family and friends, having a massage, listening to music, going on holidays, gardening, volunteering). It is important to try to keep a sense of pleasure and achievement in your life. Doing things you enjoy and that are meaningful to you will help you take your mind off your health.
- Try to accept that this is not the way you'd like it to be, but it is the way it is for now. You can't change some things but you can choose to make the most of every day.
- Be open with your doctor and/or treating team about how you are feeling and if you are experiencing any difficulties such as worry, lack of sleep or pain. They are not only there to look after your physical health, but also your overall quality of life. Treatment is available to help with these sorts of issues.
- Share your feelings with those close to you. Remember it is okay not to feel positive all of the time.
- Consider joining a [support group](#) or speaking to someone who has been through a similar experience over the phone via [Cancer Council SA's Cancer Connect](#) program.
- If you are having trouble talking about the way you feel, document your feelings by keeping a journal, [sharing your story online](#) or by painting, drawing or finding some other way of expressing yourself.
- If you are having trouble with mobility or managing in your home, consider engaging an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or contacting the [Independent Living Centre](#) for information and helpful equipment and aids.