

How to Help a Family Member or Friend

1. Be patient and accepting. Believe in the person's ability to get well.
2. After a hospitalization or treatment, help with health care and daily responsibilities. Offer to take them to appointments, do housework or grocery shopping until the person is well enough to do these tasks on their own.
3. Offer to help them find or communicate with health care providers.
4. Find contact information for the person's doctor, therapist, psychiatrist, hospital and other friends or family members who could help if needed.
5. Give hope by focusing on their strengths.
6. Help the person restore a positive self-image. Help them realize that their symptoms are not their true personality.
7. Recognize the person's symptoms and when they may be having trouble communicating their concerns or feelings.
8. Empower the person to take care of themselves by:
 - Keeping with a consistent sleep and wake schedule.
 - Eating nutritionally balanced meals.
 - Getting regular exercise or physical activity (take a walk together).
 - Encouraging your loved one to stay away from alcohol and illegal drugs.
 - Recommending some type of support group attendance.
 - Be present, take them to a new environment.
9. Help identify things they want to change. Assist in developing future goals.
10. Help them identify ways to incorporate the things they enjoy back into their lives (i.e., playing an instrument again).