

## Tips

### Support groups and discussion forums

In self-help groups, people in similar situations share their experiences. Here you can get support and advice: «How we can help - Cancer Support Switzerland». An alternative to self-help groups are discussion forums, where you can exchange your experiences in writing: «Cancer Support in English - Family, Education, Health and Pets - Swiss Forum»

### Offer of support

Take regular time out to recharge your batteries. Keep up your hobbies and social contacts. Respite care staff or volunteers can spend time with your ill relative while you are away «[www.angehoerige-pflegen.ch](http://www.angehoerige-pflegen.ch)»

### Psycho-oncology support

If you are experiencing feelings of helplessness or fear, or if the suffering of the person concerned is weighing on you, it may be useful to talk to a specialist. Psycho-oncologists can help. Ask the treatment team and talk to your family doctor about this possibility.

### Further information on this topic

- **«Cancer Pain Control»** (National Cancer Institute, 2019) – Comprehensive guide explaining cancer pain, its causes, and how to manage it effectively with medications and other treatments
- **«Daily Pain Diary»** (American Cancer Society) – Tool to help track pain levels, medication use, and other factors to aid in managing cancer-related pain
- **«Caring for Someone with Cancer»** (Cancer Council Australia, 2023) – Guide providing information and support for individuals caring for someone with cancer

This brochure was produced in collaboration with patients and experts. Further information can be found on the website.



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**For informal  
 caregivers**

## Support in case of pain




### Good to know

Pain is a challenge for those affected and for their loved ones. It's often stressful to see how pain affects the daily lives of those affected. Pain that isn't managed well can be very upsetting and make you feel very tired. This can negatively impact the life of those affected and their relatives.

It's important to treat pain quickly so that it can be effectively reduced. Talking regularly with the healthcare team will allow professionals to see how well pain medication is working and how it affects the patient's life. The pain treatment plan can also be changed as needed.

As a relative or other informal carer, you can help manage pain at home. This task can make you feel powerless or afraid, because you see the person you are caring for suffering. We would like to support you with this.

## Support in case of pain

You feel...	Or you notice...	What you can do for yourself...
	<p>The person you are supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has little pain that doesn't stop this person from doing everyday things or normal activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a tool (a pain scale) can help you to measure pain. The healthcare team can give you advice on this.</li> <li>• Encourage the person to take their prescribed pain medication regularly, even if the pain is only mild.</li> <li>• If the pain gets worse even after taking the painkillers, encourage the person to take a back-up medication.</li> <li>• You can suggest trying complementary non-drug treatments like physical therapy and relaxation training.</li> <li>• Contact the healthcare team if you have any questions or concerns about pain management.</li> </ul>
	<p>The person you are supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has pain that affects their daily life (for example, they have severe headaches)</li> <li>• wakes up at night because of pain</li> <li>• has side effects from medication like nausea, loss of appetite, constipation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserve medicines (a medication taken when necessary, when treatment is not sufficient) should always be taken well in advance.</li> <li>• If you observe painful activities, encourage the person to take a reserve medication 30 minutes before the activity.</li> <li>• Keep a pain diary. In it, you can note how severe the pain is, the times at which all pain medication is taken, how well it works and any side effects.</li> <li>• Encourage the person concerned to talk to the healthcare team about the side effects of pain medication so that they can react immediately if there are any signs of infection.</li> </ul>
	<p>The person you are supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is in a lot of pain despite medication</li> <li>• the pain is getting worse very quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the person concerned is okay with it, contact the healthcare team or the family doctor.</li> </ul>