

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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often contradictory feelings at once. This process is perfectly normal and most people go through it at some point post-treatment. Family members often feel relieved that the cancer treatment is over because for them it signals that life will return to “normal,” but what they may not realize is that “normal” has taken on a new meaning. Speaking directly to your partner, family, or loved ones, explaining to them how you feel — even though those feelings may be contradictory at times — might give you the best results. A better understanding that fluctuations in mood and energy, including feelings of sadness and worry, are a normal and expected part of the post-treatment adjustment period may help everyone to feel more in synch with one another. Speaking about your feelings will help to adjust expectations, yours and others’, for a “new” normal.

How can I talk to my children about the fact that I have been treated for cancer?

It is perfectly normal that you would want to protect your children from any harm or from anything that would make them anxious. For this reason, people do not like to talk about the cancer diagnosis directly with their children — children of all ages. However, we have found that the more direct and clear you can be about your diagnosis, the easier it will be for the children in your lives. Covering it up or lying about the situation may only serve to make things worse for them, causing your children to think the worst and, in some cases, even that they are at fault. We advise speaking with your children, using age appropriate language, to help them better to understand that what is going on is ultimately the best approach. We have a Kids Express program that specifically addresses this issue, with social workers who can provide guidance on how to talk with your children. To arrange a consultation, please ask a social worker or call the Kids Express consultation line at [212-639-7029](tel:212-639-7029).

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