

Here are some resources that can help you talk with your children:

- Your doctor, nurse, social worker or cancer counselor
- Clergy
- Cancer information centers at local hospitals
- Your child's school counselor
- A local bookstore or library
- Local support groups for families coping with cancer
- Resources listed at the back of this sheet

Your first thought — your children

You may have just learned you have breast cancer. One of your first thoughts may be about your children. You don't want them to worry or be upset. You may be wondering:

- Should I tell them?
- How should I tell them?
- If they ask if I'm going to die, what will I say?
- What if I'm not around to see them grow up?

Your family, partner, doctor, nurse or social worker can help you decide what to say. In the end, you know them best. You decide how and when to tell them about your breast cancer.



Your young child's perspective

Your young children look up to you. They depend on you for everything. And now, that may change, (at least for a little while). They can sense when something is wrong. They may think things are worse than they are, so it's best to be as open and honest as you can. This may be hard, but it's important.

Encourage your children to ask questions. Being honest with them will help lessen their fears. Let them know why certain things are happening. For example, explain why you are losing your hair or getting sick. Explain things that may change their daily routine.

It's a good idea to let their teachers know what you are going through. Teachers may be able to help your children cope since they spend most of their day at school.

Finally, just as your children depend on you, you can depend on them too. They want to support you. They'll want to listen to you, hug you, kiss you and spend time with you. Let them.

For more information, visit komen.org or call Susan G. Komen's breast care helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 10 PM ET.

Resources

Susan G. Komen®

1-877 GO KOMEN
(1-877-465-6636)
[komen.org](https://www.komen.org)

Cancer Support Community

1-888-793-9355
What Do I Tell the Kids?
cancersupportcommunity.org

CancerCare

1-800-813-4673
[cancercares.org](https://www.cancercares.org)

Komen Breast Cancer Facebook Group

This group is a place to talk with others and gain support.

Related educational resources:

- [What's Happening to Mom?](#)
- [Genetics and Breast Cancer](#)
- [Men Can Get Breast Cancer Too](#)
- [Support After A Breast Cancer Diagnosis](#)

How might this affect your older children?

You may be worried your children will get breast cancer too. But just because you have breast cancer doesn't mean they will get it too.

If you have an older daughter, talk to her about getting to know the normal look and feel of her breasts. Women under age 40 with either a family history of breast cancer or other concerns about their personal risk should talk with their doctor about when to get screened and how often. Women at higher risk may need to get screened earlier and more often than women at average risk. She can also discuss [options for lowering her risk](#) of breast cancer.

If you have a son, he is at risk of getting breast cancer too. He can talk to his doctor about what your diagnosis means for him. Breast cancer screening is only recommended for some men at higher than average risk due to an [inherited gene mutation](#) or a [strong family history](#) of breast cancer. For these men, [screening](#) may increase the chances breast cancer is found early, when the chances for survival are highest.

Learning about family health history can help your children understand their risk of developing health problems. Susan G. Komen® has adapted the Surgeon General's "My Family Health Portrait" tool. This tool makes it easy to record your family health history. The tool is called My Family Health History and can be found on [komen.org/familyhealthhistorytool](https://www.komen.org/familyhealthhistorytool)



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