

A Guide for How to Ask for Help – for Adults

It's not always easy to ask for help.

Perhaps you don't want to be a burden to your family, friends, neighbors, or colleagues, you feel they've already done so much for you, or they have too many other things going on. Perhaps you value self-reliance, have a hard time trusting others or it makes you feel vulnerable? Maybe you don't want to seem less than perfect or believe you will lose control? Or maybe deep down you don't think you're worthy of help or believe asking for help is a sign of weakness?

While asking for help can be a humbling experience, everyone needs help at different times, and some people need more help than others. Just as the seasons change, so will the support you may need. Remember...it is okay to not be okay. Your family and friends care about you and want to help...they just don't always know what you need or are trying to respect your autonomy and independence.

We want to help you ask for help!

This resource will help you think through your own wants and needs and help you communicate them with the people in your life who want to help and will be glad to know how.

Tips for Asking for Help:

- Identify who's on your support team and who you can ask for help when needed.
- Think about the type(s) of help you need – physical, mental or emotional.
- Simply tell people what you need without self-judgement or fear of judgement from others.
- Clearly state what's helpful and not helpful.
- Make your request specific and achievable, with a realistic timeframe.
- Sometimes it's difficult to plan ahead. Ask yourself each morning "What are my needs TODAY?"

The attached worksheet was designed to help you figure out the kind of care you want/need and to communicate it with your support team. Complete the information and share a copy with those in your circle of support. Don't forget to update it and re-send it to people as your needs change over time.

"Ask for help. Not because you are weak. But because you want to remain strong." - Les Brown

A Guide to Helping Me

I'm reaching out to ask you for help. Having a genetic aortic and vascular condition makes everyday life challenging for me at times. I'm learning that it's okay to ask for help so that I can prevent even greater pain and hardship later. It's difficult for me to ask for the kind of care I need, and I know you are often willing to help but don't know exactly how. So, I'm sharing this document to assist us both. Please know that I have no expectations and value however you are able to be of assistance. And if you are not able to help at this time, that's okay, too.

I like it when you do _____.

I don't like it when you do _____.

I like it when you say _____.

I don't like it when you say _____.

Other _____.

I prefer you reach out to me by:

- Phone call.
- Text.
- Email.
- Social media.
- Snail mail.
- Personal visit.
- Other _____.

I tend to have more energy in:

- Early morning.
- Late morning.
- Early afternoon.
- Late afternoon.
- Evening.
- Nighttime.
- Other _____.

When I'm upset, I usually like:

- Alone time.
- To talk about it.
- To be distracted.
- Having regular check-ins.
- Other_____.

When I'm not feeling well, please:

- Ask me what I need.
- Wait for me to ask for help.
- Respect my desire to be alone.
- Check on me more often.
- Other_____.

It makes me uncomfortable when:

- I talk about my health.
- I ask for help.
- People see me in bed.
- Other_____.

When I get stressed I:

- Forget to do things/need reminders.
- Shut down.
- Like to talk things through.
- Other_____.

Ideas for Helping

When I'm not feeling well or going through a hard time, these are some ways you can help:

- Call first and then come by for a visit when you can. Please ask how long you should stay, as sometimes I don't have energy and don't want to be rude.
- Offer help for a specific time and date so I know when you're available.
- Cook or bring me/my family a meal in disposable containers. My favorite meals are: _____
Meals I don't like are: _____
Foods I'm allergic to are: _____.
- Do work around my home. Some things I need help with are: ○ Gardening/watering plants ○ Getting the mail ○ Light cleaning ○ Laundry ○ Other: _____.
- Bring my favorite beverages and healthy snacks. Some of my favorites are: _____

- _____
Bring some items to my bedside if I can't go outside. I always appreciate: _____
_____.
- Help chauffeur my children or caregivers. They need help getting to: _____
_____.
- Take me for a ride to a doctor or other appointment.
- Help with holidays/birthdays by picking up gifts or cards for me to give to people.
- Take photos or movies of my family at sports or social events I can't attend. This helps me enjoy occasions I miss. These are some activities coming up: _____
_____.
- Help care for my pet(s). I have a: _____ that needs to be: _____
_____.
- Run errands, such as buying groceries or picking up prescriptions. Some things I need are: _____
_____.
- Allow me to feel sad or afraid. Sometimes it helps to cry with a friend.
- Spend quality time with me. We could: ○ Watch TV or a movie ○ Complete a puzzle
○ Play a game ○ Get fresh air ○ Cook a meal ○ Other: _____.
- Bring magazines and books to occupy my time. I enjoy reading: _____
_____.
- When others ask you what I need, please suggest: ○ Reaching out to me ○ A grocery store gift card
○ A Doordash gift card ○ Other: _____.
- Tell me what's going on in your life. It helps me stay connected to the outside world.
- Other: _____
_____.

Words can't express how grateful I am to have you in my life. I appreciate your taking the time to read this and for your consideration of my needs. Please don't share this document with anyone since I included a lot of personal information. Thank you for your support!
With love and appreciation!