

## Holiday Tips for Families Coping With Cancer

(NAPSA)—The holidays should be a happy time for everyone. They can be stressful, however, for women dealing with breast and gynecologic cancer. Though it's the season "to be jolly," these women and their families may struggle to make the holidays happy again.

"When Mom Has Cancer: Help & Hope for the Holidays," a program from the Gillette Women's Cancer Connection, offers straightforward, simple tips on how to minimize the stress experienced by moms and their families during this time of year.

"Traditionally, holidays are the time of year when many mothers feel the need to turn into 'Super-Mom,'" said Ursula Matulonis, MD, gynecologic cancer specialist, at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Brigham and Women's Hospital. "We want women to give themselves permission to decide which activities are right for them this year. It is important to remember to celebrate the essence of the holidays."

Planning and communication are essential to helping women with cancer and their families enjoy the season. The program offers the following tips to help manage the holidays.

### *For Moms*

- **Be True to Yourself.** Keep in tune with and be honest about your feelings. Don't pretend the cancer isn't there. Be aware of your expectations about the holidays and control them, rather than letting them control you.

- **Keep Things Simple.** Pick one or two things that you want to do rather than do the many things you feel you should. Taking on too much or expecting too much will only make the environment more stressful.

- **Be Flexible and Fluid.** Don't strive for perfection or try to make this the most elaborate holiday you've ever had. Don't sweat the small stuff. Give yourself permission and be prepared to cancel plans at the last minute, if you're not up to them.

### *For Families*

- **Don't Let Mom Do Everything.** Just offering to bring in



**Planning and communication can help women with cancer, and their families, get through and enjoy the holidays.**

the mail or make a shopping list can help her. Dividing up the chores makes them seem more manageable.

- **Prepare a Coupon Gift Book for Mom.** Create a coupon book filled from the entire family that Mom can redeem. Create I.O.U.s good for breakfast in bed, a house full of completed chores or a night out with the girls. The best things in life really are free.

- **Be Compassionate.** Be patient. Be generous. Work as a team to help Mom and each other. Notice the small, special moments the holidays can bring.

Help and Hope for the Holidays reflects The Gillette Company's continued support in providing women and their families with tools to foster emotional wellness when diagnosed with breast and gynecologic cancers. A gift from the company led to the creation of the Gillette Centers for Women's Cancers at Dana-Farber/Partners Cancer-Care, in Boston, MA., which is comprised of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the founding members of the Partners Health-Care System, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. Combining the strengths of three of the leading cancer treatment and research centers in the world, the Gillette Centers offer an unprecedented array of services to meet the physical and emotional needs of women with breast and gynecologic cancers. For more holiday tips, visit [www.gillettecancerconnect.org](http://www.gillettecancerconnect.org).