

# How Family & Friends Can Support A New Amputee

## EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT LIMB LOSS AND SUPPORT

Reviewing this information guide is a good place to start. Additional helpful resources include:

**Connect with others through AMPOWER®.** AMPOWER is a community where amputees, family members, and care providers can connect and learn from others about what your loved one is going through as well as how to be an effective support person and/or caregiver for someone with limb loss.



[HangerClinic.com/Ampower](https://www.hangerclinic.com/ampower)

## Follow Hanger Clinic's YouTube channel.

Watch videos to learn more about helpful resources, caring for a prosthesis, and patient stories.



[YouTube.com/HangerNews](https://www.youtube.com/HangerNews)

## LISTEN EFFECTIVELY

Try to let the person experiencing limb loss drive the conversation. Respond with positive words and nonverbal cues that let the person who has experienced limb loss know you hear them. For example, you might nod or say “I



For more resources on adjusting to life with limb loss, scan the code or visit [HangerClinic.com/LimbLoss](https://www.hangerclinic.com/limbloss).



hear you” or “I believe in you.” Remember, if someone’s upset, they might react to even well-intended remarks. If that happens, try to take it in stride — it’s not about you. Try to avoid cliché responses such as “I know what you’re going through.” Instead, empathize and recognize what they are feeling and going through.

## OFFER MESSAGES OF SUPPORT

Especially early on, it’s generally a good idea to let your loved one know that you’re thinking about them and are there to support them. As they continue to progress, check in with your loved one or their partner from time to time.

## PHYSICAL SUPPORT AND HELP

Many aspects of daily life will be different after lower limb loss. If you are a partner or close family member, you may be able to help figure out “the new normal” for everyday activities. If you’re not involved on a daily basis, you can still offer to help with specific

activities, appointments, meals, social outings, or transportation depending on what help is needed. Over time, recognize that your loved one will better understand their changing abilities. Offer to help instead of simply stepping in, and let them try to do activities on their own. Watching someone you love struggle is hard, but often necessary to build strength, efficiency, and confidence. Let your loved one find their own way.

### 3 THINGS TO REMEMBER:

**1. Find the fun.** All work and no play is not healthy for anybody. Encourage your loved one to keep pursuing their hobbies and try some new activities. Find ways to have fun together — go to a favorite restaurant, have a barbecue, or watch your favorite sports team. Even doing simple activities together can mean a lot to you and your loved one.

**2. Be patient and trust the process.** Recovering from limb loss is not easy. Your loved one's physical abilities and emotions will go through ups and downs. Try to just take each day as it comes.

**3. If you're struggling with this change, seek support.** When a loved one experiences limb loss, it can be hard on everyone around them as well. Of course, their struggle is the most difficult, but it is natural and normal for you and other loved ones to have strong feelings about this experience, too. You may feel confused, frustrated, stressed, angry, sad, tired, and more. It is important to remember your own self care activities and seek support if you need it. Ensuring your own emotional and physical well-being will help you be the best support you can be.



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