

Prepare for the Caring of You

Living with illness is hard. We want to make sure we know what is most important to you so that we can give you the best care possible. Here are 3 things you can do to make sure your doctors, care team, and those close to you know what kind of care you want.

1. Think about what matters most to you

Each person has their own thoughts about the kind of care they want and don't want. Think about what matters to you. Here are some questions to help you. Some examples of answers are given to help start your thinking.

- **What matters the most to you?** Comfort might be most important. Or trying more treatments in hopes of living longer.
- **What are you most worried about?** You might worry the most about being in pain. Or you might worry the most about the cost of care.
- **What helps you through difficult times?** Your family or friends might help you. Or faith or prayers might help the most.

Take your time thinking about what matters most. What is important to you can also change. That is normal. Remember there is no right or wrong way to feel. Your feelings and thoughts are important for your care.

2. Talk about what matters most to you

Talk to those close to you about what matters most to you. Talking about these things can sometimes be hard. You don't need to talk about everything at once. You can talk about it in small parts too. If you have trouble talking with your loved ones, let your care team know. They can help you find support.

Talk to your doctor and care team about the type of care you want and what is important to you. Knowing what matters most to you helps your care team give you the kind of care you want.

Your care team is here for you. Talking to patients about the kind of care they want is something your care team does every day. Your care team wants to know what matters to you.

You can start talking to your care team about what matters to you by **asking questions such as these:**

- I'd like to talk about what matters to me about my care, is now a good time?
- Can you tell me more about ways to treat my illness that will help me do the things that matter the most to me?

- What can I do to feel more comfortable?
- Can you tell me when you think I can go back to work?
- What are some things I can do to help me become more active?
- Who can I talk to about my worries?

3. Choose a person to be your health care decision maker

Choose a person such as a family member or close friend, to make medical decisions for you if you are not able to. This person is sometimes called a health care decision maker, health care proxy, or surrogate. This person will use what they know about what matters most to you to make health care decisions for you if you cannot.

An advance care directive is the legal document that states who this person is. It also has a place to list what types of medical care and treatments you want and do not want. You may ask your doctor for a blank copy of an advance care directive to fill out.

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