

Serious Illness Conversation Guide

Clinical Nutrition

SET UP

I'd like to **talk together** about what's happening with your nutrition and **what matters to you**.
Would this be okay?

ASSESS

To make sure I share information that's helpful to you, can you tell me **your understanding** of what's going on with your nutrition now?

How much **information about what might be ahead** with your nutrition would be helpful?

SHARE PROGNOSIS

I want to share **my understanding** of where things are with your nutrition: **[Choose one]**

Uncertain: It can be difficult to predict what will happen. **I hope you will be able to** [eat normally again, regain weight, tolerate TPN or tube feeding] for a long time, and we will work toward that goal. **It's also possible that you could get sick quickly**, and I think it's important that **we prepare** for that.

Function: It can be difficult to predict what will happen. **I hope you will be able to nourish yourself** for a long time, and we will work toward that goal. **It's also possible that it may get harder to get the nutrition you need** [if applicable to tolerate medical treatment] because of your illness, and I think it's important that **we prepare** for that.

Pause: allow silence. Validate and explore emotions.

EXPLORE

If your health gets worse, what are your **most important goals**?

What are your biggest **worries** about the future with your [eating/drinking/TF/TPN/nutrition]?

What nutrition-related **activities** bring joy and meaning to your life that you can't imagine living without?

If you were **unable to eat by mouth**, would you want to be fed through a nasal tube or an IV line if your doctors felt it was appropriate?

How much do the **people closest to you** know about your priorities and wishes for your eating and nutrition?

Having talked about all of this, **what are your hopes** for your nutrition?

CLOSE

I've heard you say _____. Keeping this in mind, and what we know about your health and current nutrition, I **recommend** that we _____. I will also pass this information to the rest of your healthcare team. This will help us make sure that **your nutrition plan reflects what's important to you. How does this plan seem to you?**

We will do everything we can to help you through this.

**Handoff to
Key Clinicians**

I talked with the patient about _____. I learned _____.
I think they would benefit from talking with you about _____.



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