

How To Ask the Medical Care Team Questions



4 Key Questions:

- 1. Benefits:** “What good things could happen from this treatment?”
- 2. Risks:** “What bad things could happen from this treatment?”
- 3. Options:** “What other options are there? What if we don’t do this treatment?”
- 4. Quality of Life** and what brings people joy and meaning in life. “What will their quality of life be like after starting the treatment?”
“Will this treatment help them live the way they want to live?”

How To Ask About Their Illness:

- “What is the big picture? What does the future look like?”
- “What is the best case? What is the worst case?”
- “What does this mean for their life and quality of life?”

How To Make Medical Decisions for Other People



6 Questions That Can Help You Make Medical Decisions for Others:

1. What does **Quality of Life** look like for your family member or friend?
2. Have they shared any **Prior Medical Wishes**?
3. Have they shared how they felt about **Prior Medical Experiences**?
4. What would **They Say** if they could speak for themselves?
5. What is in their **Best Interest** at this time?
6. Will the medical **Options Help Them Have** what they consider a good **Quality of Life**?

If You Need More Help:

Ask to speak with the Medical Care team or the Palliative Care team.

How To Make Medical Decisions for Other People

When people cannot, or do not want to speak for themselves



This guide will go over:

- How To Ask the Medical Care Team Questions
- How To Make Medical Decisions for Other People
- How To Talk About Decisions You Made for Others
- Advice From Other Medical Decision Makers

How To Talk About Decisions You Made for Others



Prepare for the meeting:

- **Write down** your talking points ahead of time
- **Bring someone** with you for support
- If there is an **advance directive**, bring it

You can share:

- What the medical providers are recommending
- What you talked about with your family member or friend
- What you know about their medical wishes

How to say it:

“I will go over this person’s advance directive, some things they told me are important to them, the things the doctors said, and how I made these decisions.”

Advice From Other Medical Decision Makers



Remember, it is important to care for yourself.

Try to:

- Take some deep breaths
- Eat healthy food
- Drink plenty of water
- Make time for sleep
- Move around and get fresh air
- Some people find it helpful to join a support group

It only takes a few minutes to do things you enjoy:

- Listen to comforting music
- Eat a nice meal
- Talk to other family and friends
- Or, take care of a pet

Other Resources for Decision Makers and Caregivers

Advocate Organizations:

- National Patient Advocate Foundation: npaf.org
- Greater National Advocates: gnanow.org

Services to Help with Caregiving:

- Eldercare Locator: eldercare.acl.gov
- Family Caregiver Alliance: caregiver.org
- Get Palliative Care: getpalliativecare.org

Associations and Societies:

- The American Cancer Society: cancer.org/treatment/caregivers
- The Alzheimer’s Association: alz.org/help-support

Go to prepareforTHEIRcare.org to see video examples and for more information.