



# What to do when facing a serious illness:

## 3 sets of questions to ask your health care team

Being told you have a serious illness can be overwhelming. Often, people are not sure about what to expect or what comes next. Talking with your health care team can help you understand your illness more clearly.

Asking questions is important. Here are some you or someone close to you can ask.



1

## What does it mean to have this serious illness?

Each serious illness is different. Some can be cured, and others may last a lifetime. Some may get worse over time and shorten a person's life. These questions can help you understand how your illness may affect you.

Ask your health care team:

- Can my illness be cured?
- Will my illness get worse over time?
- Will it shorten my life?

2

## What can I expect now and in the future?

Everyone's experience is unique, but many serious illnesses follow a general pattern. Knowing this pattern can help you understand what might happen in each stage of your illness.

Ask your health care team:

- Can you explain the general pattern and the different stages of my illness?
- What stage am I in now?

3

## How can I get ready for what comes next?

There will be important decisions to make throughout your illness. Being prepared can help you, and the people closest to you, feel more confident and supported. Learning what to expect and thinking about what matters most to you are key steps.

Ask your health care team:

- What changes should I expect with my illness?
- What important decisions will I need to make as my illness changes?
- What can I do now to help me get ready?

Ask yourself:

- What is most important to me and those closest to me? Share this information with your health care team so your care reflects what matters most to you.

These sets of questions can help you understand your illness and prepare for what's ahead. You can then make choices that reflect and honour your values and give you more clarity and comfort.

### More information and resources

Palliative care information: [Canada.ca/palliative-care](https://Canada.ca/palliative-care)

Resources for people living with serious illness and their families: [waitingroomrevolution.com/resources-page](https://waitingroomrevolution.com/resources-page)

Métis Nation of Ontario services: 1-800-263-4889 Ext. 7 | [contactus@metisnation.org](mailto:contactus@metisnation.org)