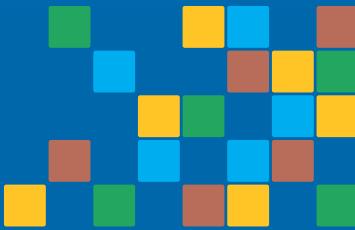


Communicating as a Caregiver

Think · Ask · Do



Talking about the end of life is uncomfortable for many people. But honest conversations can provide relief. They can give the person you care for a way to share their needs—and help you meet them. These ideas about what to think, ask, and do can get you started.



Think About

- **Needs of the person you care for.** Make this the center of any caregiving conversation. Taking time to understand their needs helps to focus your efforts.
- **Expectations.** The wants and needs of someone at the end of life are sometimes more than caregivers can handle.
- **Starting conversations early.** Consider the conversations you want to have, when, and who might be involved.
- **How conversations help.** Talking about dying is important. But talking about how someone wants to live during this time is just as important.



Ask

- How can I be most helpful during this time?
- Can the person I'm caring for take part in conversations about their needs?
- Am I comfortable talking about dying?
- Do I need others to help me with these conversations?
- What times of day seem best for conversations?
- Who can the person I care for talk to about their feelings?
- Does the person I'm caring for prefer to die at home?
- How does the person I'm caring for want to spend their remaining time?



Do

- **Focus on the person you're caring for.** Ask about needs and wishes more than once. Pay attention to what they want, even if you don't agree.
- **Create space for conversations.** Look for times when people are most open to talking. For complicated topics, make sure you have enough time to talk.
- **Plan to talk several times.** Engage the person you care for, family, friends, providers, and others. Talking often can help everyone feel more comfortable.
- **Talk about the good and bad.** Conversations may be emotional. Balance tough topics with less stressful and positive ones.