

Talking With Your Healthcare Team About What Matters to You



Patient Education

At your scheduled visit, your team would like to talk with you about your illness, your goals and wishes, and planning for the future. This is an important part of care we provide for all of our patients at Duke.

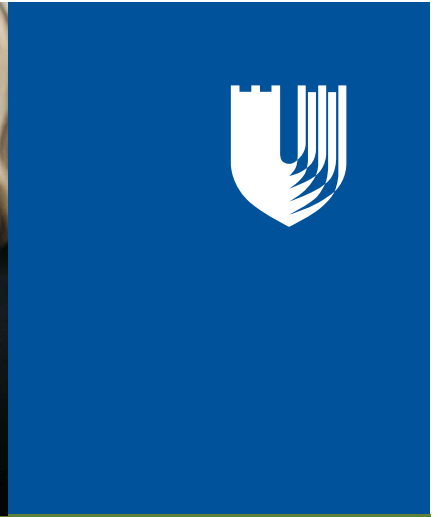
Our team likes to start talking about this when patients are doing okay, so now is a good time to talk about what is ahead and plan for the future. Patients who think through what is important to them often feel less anxious, more at peace, and more in control of their situation.

How should I prepare for these conversations with my team?

Please prepare for your conversation by thinking about these things:

- What would you like to know about your illness and what is likely ahead?
- What kind of information would help you make decisions about your future?
- What is most important for you to have a good quality of life?
- What worries you most about your illness?
- What kinds of medical care do you not want?
- What do you think it would be like to share these thoughts with your loved ones?
- If you were unable to make decisions for yourself, who would you choose to do this for you? (This is what we call a health care agent).





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Why is this important?

Thinking about and sharing your wishes will give you more control over your care. It will also help prepare your loved ones to make decisions for you if you are unable at some point in the future. Knowing what you want will ease the burden on your loved ones should hard decisions have to be made for you.

You may find it helpful to bring other people to your visit.

You can choose to bring the person who is your health care agent or other loved one to your next visit so they can be part of the conversation.

We understand your wishes may change over time.

This is the beginning of an ongoing conversation. We know that you may have other questions or concerns in the future. We are here to support you and help guide you to make the best decisions about your care.

Please bring to your next visit:

- If you have a health care power of attorney form that is not on file, please bring a copy.
- If you have a living will or advance directive, please bring a copy.

If you don't have these documents or have questions about them, talk to your health care team.

