

# Questions to Ask Your Hospice Team

Print this. Bring it to your next visit. Check off what you've asked.

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## Ask Your Nurse

Your hospice nurse is your frontline resource — they visit regularly and are available 24/7 by phone.

- How will I know if my loved one is in pain — especially if they can't tell me?
  - What medications are in the comfort kit, and when should I give each one?
  - What changes should I call about — even in the middle of the night?
  - How do I safely turn or reposition them?
  - What if they can't swallow their medication anymore?
  - How often will you visit? Can we increase visits if things change?
  - Is this symptom normal, or should I be concerned?
  - How do I keep their mouth and skin comfortable?
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## Ask Your Social Worker

Your hospice social worker helps with the practical, emotional, and financial side of things — don't hesitate to lean on them.

- What financial assistance or benefits are we eligible for?
  - Can you help us talk to family members who are struggling with this?
  - Are there caregiver support groups I can join?
  - What legal documents should we have in place right now?
  - I need a break — how do I arrange respite care?
  - What community resources are available to us?
  - Can you help us plan for after death — funeral, paperwork, logistics?
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## Ask Your Chaplain

The hospice chaplain is there for spiritual and emotional support — for any faith tradition, or no faith tradition at all.

- Can you just sit with us and be present?
  - My loved one is afraid of dying — can you help them find peace?
  - We have specific religious or cultural wishes — can you help us honor those?
  - Can you lead a prayer, ritual, or reading that's meaningful to us?
  - I'm angry at God / struggling with my faith — is that OK to talk about?
  - Do you offer support to family members after death?
  - Can you help my loved one say goodbye or find closure?
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## Ask Your Doctor

The hospice physician (or your loved one's doctor working with hospice) oversees the medical plan of care.

- What is the likely trajectory of this illness — what should we expect?

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- Should we continue medications for chronic conditions (blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.)?
- What does 'comfort-focused' care actually mean day to day?
- Are there any treatments that could improve quality of life right now?
- How will we manage pain if it becomes severe?
- What happens if they need to go to the hospital — does hospice continue?
- Can you explain the different levels of hospice care (routine, continuous, respite, inpatient)?

Tip: Check the boxes during your visit to track what you've asked. You don't have to ask everything at once.

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