When a person you love has been diagnosed with a serious illness such as cancer, it can be hard to know what to say. Talking with your loved one can help both of you through this difficult time. Here are some suggestions for communicating with a loved one who is ill.

### When You Want to Say:

- You are going to be just fine.
- Don’t talk like that! You can beat this!
- I can’t see how anyone can help.
- I just can’t talk about this.
- What do the doctors know? You might live forever.
- Please don’t give up. I need you here.
- There has to be something more to do.
- Don’t be glum. You will get well.

### Try This Instead:

- Are there some things you worry about?
- It must be hard to come to terms with this.
- We will be there for you, always.
- I am feeling a little overwhelmed right now. Can we talk about this later today?
- Do you think the doctors are right? How does it seem to you?
- I need you here. I will miss you terribly. But I will get through somehow.
- Let’s be sure you get the best medical treatments, but let’s be together when we have done all we can.
- It must be hard. Can I just sit with you for a while?


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**Huntsman Cancer Institute’s Patient and Family Support team is a resource for more information about communicating with loved ones.**

Our team is available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

To learn more or make an appointment, call 801-585-9755.

www.huntsmancancer.org/pfs