



Talking with friends.

Your friends might not know what to say. They may wonder how to talk with you about what is happening to someone you love. Tell your friends how they can help you.

Alcohol or Drugs

While it might seem that using alcohol or other drugs will help, it only covers up the pain. If you feel like you can't cope any other way, please talk to a trusted adult and ask for help. It will make a difference in your life.

Some words about this time...

Your family is in crisis. This is hard for everybody. It is normal to feel like you are riding a rollercoaster. Eventually things will settle down. No matter what happens you will get through this time. There are people who care about you and love you. Talk to them about the things that are bothering you.

Hello-

We know that when someone you love is in the hospital, life can be stressful. This may be a difficult time for you, too. We hope that we will be able to help you and your family talk about what has happened.

We would like to offer you a few things that may help you deal with what is happening to your family. You can use a journal to write about your thoughts and feelings or keep track of your questions.

Sometimes it helps to talk with an adult. We are part of the medical team that takes care of your family member. We often talk with teens who have a family member in the hospital. Let us know if you have any questions or want to talk with us.

MGH Clinical Social Workers
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What you need to know when someone you love is in the hospital

How did you feel when you heard that your family member was in the hospital?

You might have felt angry, scared, sad, worried, confused, numb or guilty. All of these feelings are normal. There is not one right way to feel. Some of your feelings will change from day to day. Each person in your family will also experience all kinds of feelings.

It is not your fault.

Thoughts do not cause things to happen. Remember you did nothing to cause your family member's accident or illness. It is normal to think, "If only I had ... this would not have happened."

Ask questions.

No question is silly or dumb. Your questions are important. Be careful of seeking information on the internet. Not all of it will be relevant to your family member's illness. Some people might tell you about someone they know who had a similar illness or accident. Listening to what others tell you may be more confusing. Talk to your parent or a trusted adult if you have questions.



You can ask for updates whenever you need them.

Other people you love

You might be worried that something will happen to someone else you love. It is very unusual for this to happen. If you are worried about this, talk to your mom, dad, or a special grown up.

Find support.

Talk with someone you trust. This might be someone in your family, a friend, or an adult at school. Don't try to pretend that everything is OK. Things may feel worse if you don't talk about your feelings.

Be flexible.

Everyone in your family needs to be flexible. There might be times where you need to spend time with your friends instead of watching younger siblings or helping at home. Try to keep a balance between helping and having some space and time to be a teenager.

Find ways to reduce your stress.

Make sure you are eating and sleeping enough. Getting some physical exercise every day will help you manage your stress. Listening to music or reading can help you relax or unwind.