

The 21 most important questions asked by family members of patients in the ICU

Diagnosis	Neurologic status	Why is he/she not fully conscious?
Diagnosis	Disease	What is wrong with him/her?
Diagnosis	Appearance	I am upset by the way he/she looks. Can you tell me why he/she looks different?
Treatment	What treatments?	What treatments and other care is he/she receiving?
Treatment	Weaning	When will he/she be able to breathe on his/her own?
Treatment	Tubes and machines	What is the purpose of the tubes and machines attached to him/her?
Prognosis	Recovery	Will he/she get better?
Prognosis	Probability	What are the chances that he/she recovers?
Prognosis	How and when families will know	How and when will we know what is going to happen?
Prognosis	Recent events	Is he/she better today?
Comfort	Psychological distress	Is he/she in psychological distress?
Comfort	Supplying comfort items	Is there anything I can do to make him/her more comfortable? (music, newspaper, food)
Comfort	Physical pain	Is he/she in pain?
Interaction	Hearing	Can he/she hear me when I speak to him/her?
Interaction	My participation	What can I do for him/her? (help with care, feeding, washing)
Communication	Being informed	Can I be sure I will be told if something happens?
Communication	News	Will I be informed regularly of changes and, if so, how?
Communication	Phone	Can I call to find out how he/she is doing?
Family	Decision-making	In a decision-making situation, what is expected of me?
Post-ICU	Length of stay	How long will he/she stay in the ICU?
Post-ICU	Sequelae	Will he/she have any after-effects?