

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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Psychiatry Chairman, William Breitbart (left), and other experts in our counseling center help people with cancer and their families manage the emotional issues that arise during treatment.

Patients and their families [react](#) to the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in a variety of ways that impact their mental health. It is normal to feel worried, sad, angry, anxious, or isolated when affected by a serious illness. You might also have feelings of loss — of your health or of control in your life.

The emotions and mental health concerns related to cancer can vary from person to person and from one day to the next. At Memorial Sloan Kettering, we provide counseling services to help you cope with the range of feelings you, and the people close to you, may experience.

Individual, Couples, and Family Mental Health Counseling

Psychiatrists and psychologists at [Memorial Sloan Kettering's Counseling Center](#) are experienced in structuring sessions to meet your specific mental

health needs. We work with individuals and families, in addition to offering group sessions for people who might benefit from interacting with others in similar circumstances.

Topics our mental health counselors cover in our specialized clinics include:

- parenting guidance
- sexual health therapies for men and women
- help for caregivers and families
- bereavement support

In one-on-one sessions, our experts can help you with many issues, including:

- diagnosing and treating the psychiatric complications of cancer and treatments
- easing distress and coping with side effects, such as insomnia, fatigue, and pain
- managing psychiatric drug therapies
- understanding yourself and your reactions better through cognitive behavioral therapy

In some cases, our psychiatrists and psychologists refer people to mental health specialists outside Memorial Sloan Kettering for long-term counseling. They also work closely with our [Pain and Palliative Care Service](#) and [Integrative Medicine Service](#) to help people manage pain, stress, and related concerns.

The experts at our Counseling Center welcome all cancer patients, regardless of whether you are receiving care at Memorial Sloan Kettering or at another institution.

For more information, or to make an appointment, please call the Memorial Sloan Kettering Counseling Center at [646-888-0200](tel:646-888-0200).

Telemedicine Appointments

We know that rest is an important part of the healing process, and that travel to and from appointments can take a lot of time and energy. For some psychiatry visits, you may be able to see your MSK care team through our telemedicine program. If we determine that telemedicine would be appropriate for you, a member of your care team will reach out.

Telemedicine is the use of video technology to connect you with members of your MSK care team. We use secure technology to make sure all of your information stays private. You can communicate through face-to-face video conferencing via a desktop computer, laptop, mobile, or tablet device at several MSK locations. During your appointment, your provider will be able to check how you're doing, assess your follow-up needs, and discuss problems you may be having. You will be able to see and hear your MSK specialist, and they will be able to see and hear you — the only difference is that you won't be in the same room.

A virtual visit saves you time and stress. It may also help prevent an unnecessary trip to an emergency room or urgent care center. In addition, telemedicine can help cut down on missed work days for both patients and caregivers due to travel for appointments.

Social Work Support

At Memorial Sloan Kettering, social workers play an important role in providing emotional support and guidance to people with cancer, as well as, friends, families, and caregivers. Social workers are assigned to each patient floor of [Memorial Hospital](#), and are also present at our regional facilities. [Meet our experts.](#)

They run many of our in-person and online support groups, oversee aspects of our 65+ program that coordinates the care of our older cancer patients, manage our bereavement program designed to help people who have lost a loved one to cancer, and also oversee elements of survivorship initiatives that occur through our [Resources for Life After Cancer program](#).

Social workers can help you with practical and logistical issues such as transportation problems and financial concerns, and in dealing with the impact of cancer treatment on your work.

To speak with a social worker, please ask your Memorial Sloan Kettering doctor or nurse, or call the Department of Social Work directly at [212-639-7021](tel:212-639-7021).

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