PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Supportive Services for Stress and Anxiety During Your Pediatric Stem Cell Transplant

This information explains the services available at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) to help you manage stress and anxiety during your stem cell transplant. In this resource, the word “you” means you or your child.

Having new treatments and needing to stay in your room for long periods of time can be very stressful. People having a stem cell transplant have told us they feel bored in their room because there’s nothing to do. Others have said they’re tired of feeling sick, can’t wait to go home, or are feeling anxious and depressed. All of these feelings are normal.

It can be very helpful to talk with members of your care team about how you’re feeling. You can always talk with your nurses and doctors. There’s also a team of specialized practitioners available to help you and your family get through this difficult time. These practitioners work closely with your stem cell transplant team to make sure you and your family have all the support you need.

Psychology services

The psychology team is made up of psychiatrists and psychologists. They’re available to help you and your family manage the stress and anxiety caused by treatment and long hospital stays. They can help by listening to you, giving you tools to manage stress and anxiety, and prescribing medicine as needed. We consider them an essential part of the transplant team and ask them to meet all patients and families during their inpatient stay.

Social workers

A social worker is assigned to each pediatric transplant patient to provide counseling, information, and assistance during treatment. Your social worker can guide you to resources that may help you both emotionally and financially throughout your transplant.

Child life services

Child Life Specialists are experts in human growth and development trained to make your hospital experience as smooth as possible. They offer a variety of age-appropriate activities at bedside. Child Life Specialists can help you as you learn to adapt and cope with this difficult experience.

Teachers

MSK provides a teaching program staffed by teachers certified by the New York City Board of Education. This program provides schooling for elementary, middle school, and high schools students who are at MSK for long periods of time. Patients can take New York State standardized tests, including the NYS Regents Examinations. They can also get help with college applications and graduation requirements.

Spiritual care

212-639-5982

MSK offers the services of Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Muslim chaplains. We can also arrange visits from clergy of other religions. The Mary French Rockefeller All Faith Chapel is located in Memorial Hospital in room M106 (near the main lobby). It's open at all times for meditation and prayer. Religious services are held every week and on all holy days.

Integrative medicine

646-449-1010

MSK's Integrative Medicine and Wellness Service offers many therapies to go along with traditional medical care. Some of the services offered include music therapy, mind/body therapies, dance and movement therapy, yoga, and touch therapy.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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