

End of Life

The last few days



Version 1- October 2017



This factsheet will help you to understand how you feel.

It will also explain what you and other people can do to help you feel more comfortable.

Changes that can happen as you become more ill.



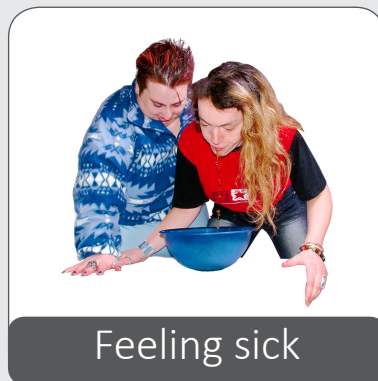
When you have an illness that isn't going to get better you may feel unwell.

Symptoms are problems caused by your illness

These are the symptoms you may have:



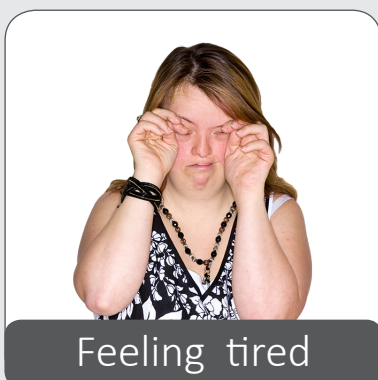
Being in pain



Feeling sick



Loss of appetite



Feeling tired

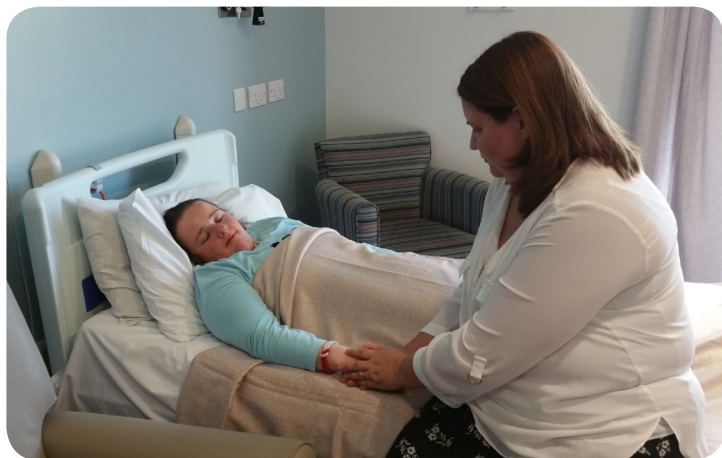


Losing weight



Constipation

The doctors and nurses will help you

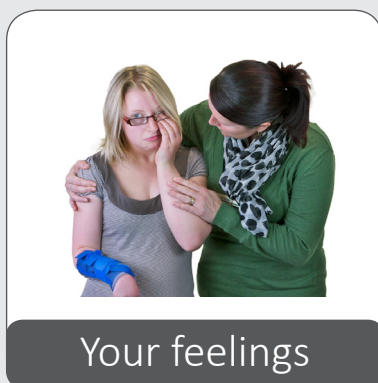
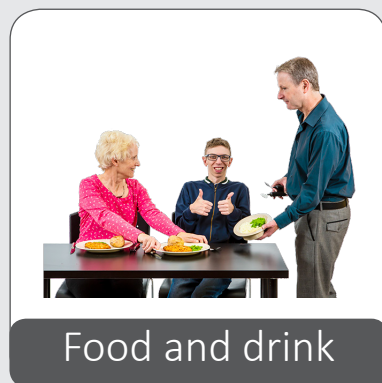
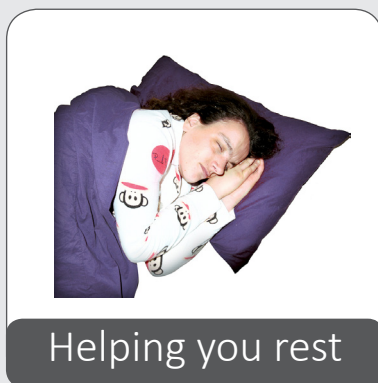
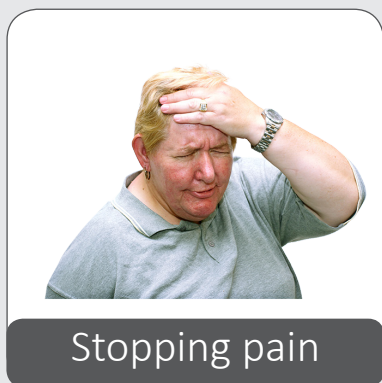


They will not be able to cure your illness.

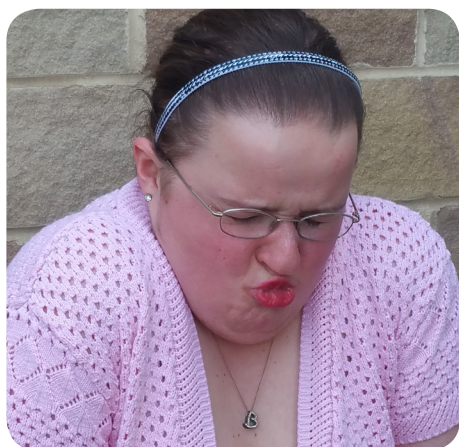
They will help you to look after yourself and feel more comfortable.

They can give you **advice, medicine** and **treatments**

They can help you with lots of different things, including:



Your symptoms



1. Being in pain

Pain is when part of your body hurts. It may upset you.

The nurse will try to help you to feel better.

Medicine can help to make the pain go away for a while



Try to tell the nurse where the pain is and how bad it feels.



The nurse will give you medicine to make the pain go away.



The medicine might be a tablet or a liquid.

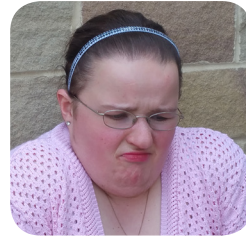
This scale may help you say how bad the pain is



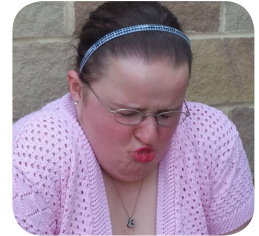
No
pain



Some
pain



Bad
pain



Very bad
pain



0

1

2

3

How I may show I am in pain or distressed

Some people may struggle to explain they are in pain or distressed.

They may show this through how they behave. In the box below your supporters can write some tips about how to notice you are in pain or distressed and what support can be helpful.

Your symptoms



2. Feeling sick

You might feel sick sometimes.

There are anti sickness medicines that can help you stop feeling sick.

X



3. Feeling constipated

Constipation means you may find it hard to have a poo.

Your nurse or doctor might give you medicine to help with this.



4. Feeling tired and weak

You may feel tired and weak because of your illness.

You may find it hard to do things you usually do. It is important to only do what you can manage.



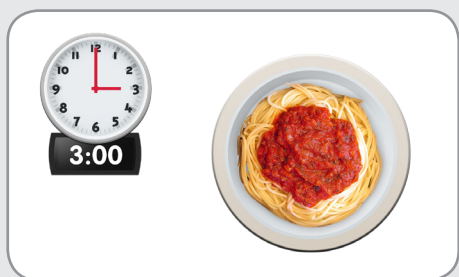
Your symptoms



5. Losing your appetite

Losing your appetite means that you do not feel like eating.

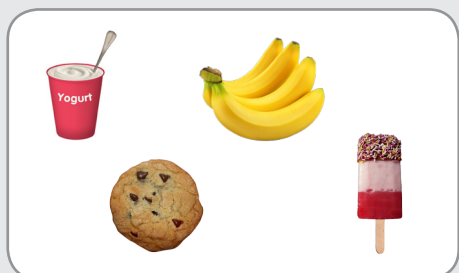
If you lose your appetite these ideas can be helpful:



Eat when you feel like eating, even if it's not the usual time you eat.



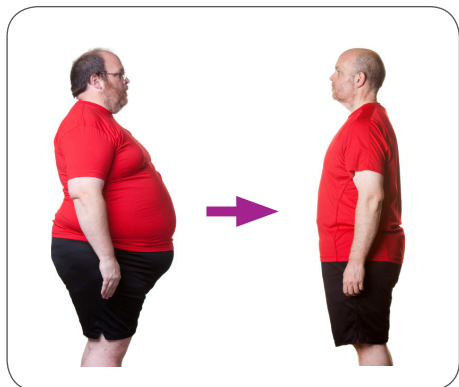
Only eat foods that you feel like eating.



You can eat small snacks.
Eating fruit and lollies can help if your mouth is dry and you don't feel like drinking.

Your symptoms

6. Weight changes



As you become more ill you may lose weight and become thinner.



You may lose weight because of your illness, or because you are eating less.



7. Feeling sad and upset

If you are feeling really sad or worried try talking to someone about your feelings.

The end of life - the last few days

There are certain things that happen to people when they are dying.

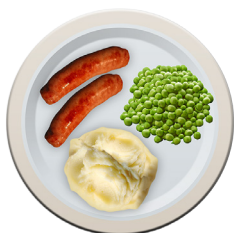


You may feel very tired and weak and want to sleep a lot of the time.



Even if you just want to lie still or sleep then you can still ask that someone stays with you.

You might want them to just be there to hold your hand or sit with you even if you do not want to talk.



You might not want to eat or drink anything.

The end of life - the last few days



For most people their last moments of life are very peaceful.

Their breathing gets slower and then stops.



After you have died your family and friends will be sad.

But they will have happy memories to remember you by.

Credits

This factsheet was developed in partnership by St. Benedict's Hospice, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust and South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust.

Designed by The Clear Communication People Ltd. using Photosymbols and other stock photography.



St. Benedict's Hospice
& Centre for Specialist
Palliative Care

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

South Tyneside **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust