

Serious Illness/End of Life Scenario #1

Stage IV Congestive Heart Failure

A person with signs of symptoms of end-stage CHF now experiencing symptoms that they are within the last 6 months of life including: dyspnea, edema, rapid heart rate, loss of appetite, and chronic cough. They are worried about the loss of clarity of thought and possible dementia that can occur with late stage CHF and want to talk about options at the end of life. You know that CHF stage IV qualifies them for hospice but no one has mentioned this to them yet.

Serious Illness/End of Life Scenario #2

Metastatic Head and Neck Cancer

A person has had several surgeries for a sinus tumor, which has now extended into the orbit of the eye and into the brain and is inoperable. They have had some anti-cancer treatments which have not have had much effect. The prognosis is increasing headaches and possible seizures as the tumor extends into the brain. They want to talk about options now. No one has told them what the prognosis is although you have read in the chart they qualify for hospice now.