

# Talking to Children About Illness



Explain the disease in ways children can understand.

Children may not understand disease names or their associated symptoms, and the word “disease” may make them worry that it is something they can catch.



Try not to go overboard, but address common fears.

Carefully explain that your loved one isn't acting this way because she doesn't love the child anymore. It is just that he or she has trouble doing some things now.



Even if your child doesn't ask, make sure he or she knows that the illness is not contagious.

Emphasize that the disease has nothing to do with germs and cannot be “caught” by being near a loved one.

