

What to Say When Friends Ask: A Guide for Kids with a Chronically Ill Parent



Hey there!

Having a parent with a chronic illness can be tough sometimes. You might get questions from friends or classmates that are hard to answer. Don't worry - that's totally normal! We've put together some common questions you might hear and some ideas on how to respond. Remember, it's okay if you don't have all the answers or if you don't want to share everything. Your feelings matter!

Q: "Why is your mom/dad always sick?"

A: "My parent has a condition called [illness name]. It means they don't feel well a lot of the time, but we're managing it as a family."

Q: "Can I catch it?"

A: "No, it's not something you can catch. It's just something my parent deals with."

Q: "Why can't your parent come to school events?"

A: "Sometimes they don't feel well enough to come out, but they always want to know how it went!"

Q: "Why is your dad never at your games?"

A: "My dad has an illness that makes him very tired sometimes. He wants to come, but he needs to rest a lot."

Q: "Is your parent going to get better?"

A: "The doctors are doing their best to help. We're taking it one day at a time."

Q: "Why do you seem sad/distracted sometimes?"

A: "I have a lot on my mind because of my parent's health. But I'm okay, and I have people I can talk to when I need to."

Q: "Why do you know so much about medicines and doctors?"

A: "When someone in your family is sick, you learn a lot about these things. It's just part of our daily life."

Q: "How come I can't come over to your house?"

A: "Some days are tough for my parent and they need quiet. But we can hang out at the park or your place instead!"

Q: "Do you wish your family was normal?"

A: "Every family is different. This is normal for us, and we support each other in our own ways."