

Doing the **RIGHT** Thing

Yumi needs advice about a problem involving her father.

She has written to Dr. Aoki, a famous medical counselor.

Read the story and find out: What does Yumi want to tell her father?

Dear Dr. Aoki,

My name is Yumi. I'm a 19-year-old college student. Something terrible is happening and I don't know what to do. Please help me.

My father is dying. According to his doctor, he has only three more months to live. He has stomach cancer, which has now spread to other parts of his body. Because the cancer has spread, it is too late for an operation. The doctor says there is nothing we can do.

I am heartbroken. But what is more painful to me is that **my father does not know about his disease.** His doctor told him that he has an ulcer. My mother is trying to hide the fact as well. They are both lying to him.

I think they are wrong. **I think my father has the right to know about his disease.** He should be informed. But when I told my mother that we should tell my father the truth, her eyes filled with tears. She said, "I don't think so, Yumi. If we tell him that he is going to die soon, he will be so shocked, depressed and upset that it might even shorten his life. We should not take hope away from him."

I understand that. However, I still think my father should know what's happening to him. It's his body. It's his life. Of course he would be shocked at first. But I'm sure he has things he would like to do before he dies, and he should be able to use whatever time he has left.

What do you think I should do? Should I persuade my mother to change her mind? Should I talk to the doctor? If they don't change their minds, should I tell my father? Or is my mother right after all? Please, please tell me what to do. I love my father very much and I want to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Yumi Sato



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

If a patient is dying, should the doctor inform him or her? Check the ideas you agree with.

No. You can't tell someone he or she is going to die. The patient will be too shocked. You shouldn't take away their hope.



It depends. If the patient is mentally strong, he or she should be informed.



It depends. The doctor should ask the patient's family.



Yes. The patient should be able to use whatever time he or she has left.



Yes. The patient has the right to know about his or her disease.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

TURN TO PAGE 86 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.

LOOKING AT THE ISSUE

What rights do you think patients should have? Do patients have these rights in your country?

Should have? Yes/No	Patients should have the right...	In my country? Yes/No
<input type="checkbox"/>	to be informed about their disease.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to see all of their medical records.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to have an explanation about how the doctor will treat their disease.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to know the doctor's name and background.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to get a second opinion from another doctor.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to change doctors or hospitals.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	to be involved in the decision on how to treat their disease.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	not to be informed about their disease.	<input type="checkbox"/>