

Compassionate Care Through Patients' Eyes

My husband had been working all day and came home to me laboring. He had to take our children to a friend and rush back to take me to the hospital. By the time we got in the room and were settled, it had been nearly 10 hours since he'd eaten. I mentioned it to our nurse and she came back with some crackers and peanut butter. **That was kindness above and beyond what we expected from her.**
Memphis

The nurse who was taking my husband's blood pressure before he saw the doctor, **took the time** to tell us about her own experience in trying to quit smoking when I mentioned to her that I wished he didn't. She took the time to explain how nicotine patches work.
Chattanooga

I've had the same doctor for several years, and whenever I have medical problems he is on top of it. **He doesn't stop until the issue or the problem has been resolved.** I would recommend him to anyone. He has always been honest, always there when I need him.
Chattanooga

My son Jason has been in and out of the hospital in recent years due to a persistent ileus. Quadriplegia and cerebral palsy leave Jason completely dependent on others for his daily needs. On a recent visit to his hospital room, I met a nurse who demonstrated an uncommon level of compassionate care. My son immediately responded to her smile when she entered the room, and he watched everywhere that she went in the room. Most people don't talk to Jason once they realize he's non-verbal, but she chatted with him the entire time she was there. She scratched his head and read him a few paragraphs from a book that we brought for him. His face lit up, and it warmed my heart to see someone taking such good care of him. Once she finished the story, she adjusted Jason's position and packed some pillows for extra comfort before she excused herself. My wife and I thanked her for her excellent care and encouraged her to return as often as possible. Her visit reminded us how **a smile and a little extra care can heal a patient as well as any medicine.**
Memphis

Our son was in a horrific car wreck a few weeks ago. He has not woken up since that wreck. Every day we cling to the hope he may come back to us. After talking to the neurology and ICU teams, they kept telling us he was having no activity. I didn't really understand what this meant until the palliative care nurse came and talked to us. She was honest but not mean or insensitive. She answered all of our questions, and we now have a better picture as to what to expect. **She gave us time to cry, time to process, and time to get our affairs in order.** I don't think the doctors meant to leave us in the dark but I was thankful we had her through this difficult process.
Memphis

My physical therapist listened to me and **made decisions with me instead of for me.** She tried to understand how my injury was affecting my everyday life and how we could work together to meet my goals. She was also very knowledgeable about what my insurance would cover and tried to minimize unnecessary charges for me, which I greatly appreciated.
Memphis

Our time in the ICU was stressful and overwhelming in many ways, but my son's doctor **always took time** to answer all my questions, and made sure I knew how to get in touch with his team if I needed them. The time and care he took to make sure I had my questions answered meant so much.
Knoxville

My wife came out of heart surgery hooked up to all kinds of tubes and wires. The nurse spent time explaining what all the tubes were doing and why they were there. **It made me feel a little less helpless** to have an idea of why she needed all those things, and I appreciated our nurse taking time to make sure I understood.
Knoxville

Sheryl has helped me on several occasions. One that stands out is when I had broken my ankle in the middle of the night and came walking in the next morning with a walking stick. She immediately got me a wheelchair and took me back to be X-rayed, etc. **She even called me later in the day to see how I was doing.**
Chattanooga

My daughter stayed with me in the hospital one night. The next morning she asked the RN when doctors made their rounds. She said it varied. I told the nurse my daughter wanted to go get a cup of coffee but didn't want to miss the doctor. She said, "I'll get you some coffee. Cream and sugar?"
That's caring about everybody.
Nashville

Dr. Steve Adams is always attentive; listening carefully and giving me time to ask all my questions. He is **sympathetic, knowledgeable, and patient.** I am very glad I was able to keep him as my doctor.
Chattanooga



I was concerned about taking pain meds for pleurisy and the nurse talked to me very kindly and caringly, listening to my concerns but also **anticipating what I might need.** When I asked for something, she always brought more than I asked for (except drugs haha). I asked to take a shower, and she showed up with a wrap for my IV, a new gown, and new sheets! I didn't ask for all that, but she was kind enough to help out!
Nashville

My wife had a small stroke due to a blockage in her carotid, and we had been told by the internist that she was a "ticking time bomb" and to "say our goodbyes". I was preparing to tell my children to come home from college to tell their mother goodbye when the vascular surgeon came in to inform me that he would be performing a surgery to clear the blockage, and it was very routine. When we explained what the internist said, he sat with us for over an hour to comfort us, explain the surgery, that my wife would be ok, that he does that surgery all the time, and that we would be placed with another internist because we felt uncomfortable. Our vascular surgeon went **above and beyond** to reassure my wife and I.
Memphis

Jessica, the pediatric nurse, used to work the appointment desk where **she went out of her way** to make convenient appointments. When my grandchildren were not being cared for properly by their mother, she went out of her way to get them caught up on their shots and was willing to testify in court. She listened to my concerns and responded immediately. She was really wonderful.
Chattanooga

My son has autism. When we come to UTPF everyone at the front desk is so kind, always asking if we need anything. One time we came in he had been having a very bad week. I thought this may be the end. I spoke to Dr. Sawa about my concerns. She **gave me a hug** and proceeded to examine him thoroughly. He has been ok. That day was very comforting. We love all the staff here. They are all so kind and helpful.
Chattanooga

At times, a simple, caring touch, even to a stranger, is all that is needed to convey compassion. When my young son came to me one night and told me that he could not breathe, my world started spinning. After we dealt with the initial crisis, we knew that this was only the beginning of a long journey to keep our son healthy. I had so many questions and fears. At our first appointment with Dr. Susan Raschal, she spent about five minutes talking with my son about his breathing difficulties, and then she turned to me, **took my hand and simply squeezed it.** She continued to hold my hand while she finished her questions and with that simple move, I knew that she understood my fears just as well as she understood physical problems facing my son. Throughout the years of treatment, her compassion made her stand out as an example of the compassion we should all show to others.
Chattanooga

We moved to Memphis in 2005 with hardly any money. We all stayed in one bedroom in my uncle's house for a few months while we tried to get jobs. My daughter has horrific allergies and Memphis, we found out, has terrible pollen. After she got a sinus infection, I bit the bullet and took her to a doctor. He was very kind. I was so overwhelmed I cried and told him our story. He ended up making the visit free of charge and offered to see her at one of his community clinics until her allergies were under control without paying. When so many other things were not going well, **his kindness and concern really were a silver lining.** He helped my daughter, and that is something I will never forget.
Memphis

My husband was critically ill in the ICU, the team taking care of him did an excellent job, especially the ICU nurse and front desk who contacted my family to keep us in the loop during his hospitalization. They made sure we had the information we needed and genuinely cared. **A little caring goes a long way,** and it made a world's difference during my husband's hospital stay.
Knoxville

Dr. Close is always so nice and helpful, and **talks to her patients as equals and as friends.**
Chattanooga

I was diagnosed with throat cancer in September 2014, Stage 4. I honestly did not think I was going to make it. I credit my cure to the wonderful doctors I had here. My cancer doctor gave me such an inspiring speech about how we could fight this together and he would be with me every step of the way. Don't get me wrong, the treatment was horrible, but he said we had to be aggressive. He gave me tough love when I lost 40lbs, saying "I know you can do this, but you have to eat or we will have to put a tube in." I ate, got stronger, and finished the treatment. **Throughout everything he cried with us, celebrated with us, and was very much like another family member.** I am still cancer free today and visit once a year. He was a godsend to our family, and I'll never be able to thank him enough.
Memphis