

Supportive & Palliative Care: Improving Quality of Life



What is Palliative Care?

Palliative Care is specialized care for people with serious illnesses. It focuses on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of a serious illness—whatever the diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and their family.

Palliative Care is provided by a team who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatments.

How are Palliative Care and Hospice Different?

The difference between hospice and Palliative Care services can be confusing. Palliative Care provides assistance at any phase in the patient's illness including during curative treatments, such as chemotherapy, surgery, transplants or radiation. Hospice care is focused on the last six months of life.

How Can Palliative Care Help You?

The Palliative Care team works hand-in-hand with other members of the care team to provide services that meet a patient's specific needs including:

Identification of goals and wishes. Assisting patients and their loved ones with clarifying their goals of care and helping them work towards those goals. They also assist with decisions regarding treatment options or changes in the direction of care.

Prevention or relief of symptoms. Managing pain, nausea, constipation, depression and other symptoms caused by the disease or the side effects of curative treatment.

Emotional and spiritual care. Providing supportive counseling for patients and families and helping identify strategies to cope with the stress of a serious illness.

Advance care planning. Identifying and documenting patient's values and preferences for future health care.

Information and resources. Facilitating communication and coordinating with patients, families and the care team to encourage open dialogue so everyone has the information needed to make important decisions.

Who Should Receive Palliative Care?

Palliative Care is appropriate for anyone with a serious, chronic, or life-threatening illness including:

- Heart failure or advanced heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney or liver disease
- Cancer
- Alzheimer's disease or other dementia
- Chronic progressive lung disorders
- Chronic & life-limiting injuries from accidents or other forms of trauma

How to get Palliative Care

Please talk to your doctor if you or your loved one are interested in Palliative Care.

Supportive & Palliative Care Service
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