

Palliative Care



Improve Your Quality of Life

Palliative care helps relieve pain and suffering, and improves your quality of life. It is not meant to cure your condition—the goal is to treat the symptoms and side effects of your condition and treatment. You can receive palliative care in the hospital, at home or in another facility.

You may want palliative care if you have:

- ◆ **physical symptoms** like nausea, shortness of breath, fatigue or pain
- ◆ **emotional symptoms** like anxiety or depression
- ◆ **spiritual concerns** like questioning beliefs or trying to find peace
- ◆ **practical concerns** like financial worries or questions about treatment

You can get this care along with your regular treatments. And you can ask for it at any stage of your condition, whether you just received a diagnosis or you've had a condition for many years.

Creating Your Care Plan

If you'd like to receive palliative care, tell your doctor or nurse. He or she will have the hospital's palliative care team meet with you to talk about your goals. Be sure to explain what is important to you—this will help the team create a plan that works for you.

Types of Treatment

Your type of treatment depends on the kind of relief you want. If you have pain, you may be prescribed medicine or physical therapy. For anxiety, treatment may include joining a support group. Palliative care comes in many forms since it works to treat all of you, not just your condition.

Different From Hospice Care

Like hospice, palliative care focuses on patient comfort and support. But palliative care can be given at any stage in your condition along with your regular treatments. Hospice care happens toward the end of life, when treatments are no longer helping.

Who Is My Care Team?

Your palliative care team could include many types of people, including doctors, nurses, dietitians, pharmacists and social workers. Your team members will depend on what type of treatment you need.

