

Palliative Care

(pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv)

Is also known as supportive care. Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. Palliative care is care that makes patients feel better but doesn't treat the disease itself.

This type of care is focused on:

- Relief from symptoms
- Relief from the stress of a serious illness

The goal of palliative care is to improve quality of life for the patient, their caregivers and family. Palliative care may anticipate, prevent, and reduce suffering. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness.

Content adapted from websites below.

Palliative Care Addresses

Aspects of your well-being including:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Psychological
- Social
- Treatment

Cancer patients should be screened for concerns and issues that palliative care can address. Screening should begin near diagnosis or at the initial treatment visit. You may be screened again at different times during your treatment as your needs will most likely change over time. Getting symptom management and support from palliative care is an integral part of a comprehensive cancer treatment plan.

Palliative care can and should be provided by the primary oncology team along with treatment. Additionally, palliative care can be provided by a specially trained team of healthcare providers who work together with your cancer treatment team to provide an extra layer of support. This team may include board-certified palliative care physicians, advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, social workers, chaplains, pharmacists and others.

Palliative care becomes the main focus of care when disease-directed, life-prolonging therapies are no longer effective, appropriate, or desired. Over time, if the doctor or the palliative care team believes ongoing treatment is no longer helping, palliative care could transition to hospice care.

Resources for Additional Information:

- [NIH, National Cancer Institute, Palliative Care in Cancer](#)
- [NIH, National Institute on Aging, What are Palliative Care and Hospice Care?](#)
- [American Cancer Society, Palliative Care](#)
- [Get Palliative Care.org](#)
- [Cancer.Net, What is Palliative Care?](#)
- [CMS, Similar but Different; Palliative vs Hospice Care](#)
- [American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, FAQ](#)

Recursos en Español:

- [NIH, Instituto Nacional del Cáncer, Cuidados paliativos durante el cancer](#)
- [American Cancer Society, Atención paliativa](#)
- [Cancer.Net, ¿En qué consisten los cuidados paliativos?](#)

Videos on Palliative Care for Patients/Family/Caregivers

- [What is Palliative Care – An Introduction for Patients and their Families, ASCO, Cancer.Net](#)
- [Palliative Care: YOU Are a BRIDGE, Get Palliative Care](#)