

Use this information to learn about what palliative care is, what services are included, and what happens during your palliative care visits.

What is palliative care?

Palliative care is compassionate care that supports you and your loved ones as you face the challenges of managing a serious illness. Palliative care is not the same as hospice or end-of-life care. **Your serious illness does not have to be life-threatening.** You can receive palliative care at the same time as you receive chemotherapy, radiation, dialysis, physical therapy, occupational therapy, surgery or other medical treatments to help treat your illness.

Palliative care services are services that help you and your family. We focus on the whole person—physical, emotional and spiritual. The goal of palliative care is to relieve pain, reduce symptoms, improve quality of life and lessen stress.

What services are included?

Your palliative care team will work with you to create an individualized plan of care that matches your needs. Your palliative care team members may include a doctor, nurse practitioner, social worker, registered nurse and spiritual counselor.

Your palliative care team can:

- Help you better understand your overall medical condition and what your options are for treatment.

Palliative Care and Hospice: What is the Difference?

	Palliative Care	Hospice
What is it?	Support patients and families dealing with serious illness, provided alongside ongoing medical care. Your serious illness does not have to be life-threatening.	Services and care to provide comfort and improve quality of life if you have an advanced illness, have a life expectancy of months rather than years, and are no longer getting care that prolongs life.
What services are included?	Services vary. Additional support for symptom management, support for emotional and spiritual needs and advance care planning (i.e., health care directives) is available.	Skilled nursing, social work, spiritual counselor, hospice aide, music and massage therapies, volunteers, grief support services.
Does insurance cover it?	Check with your insurance to see if your plan covers part or all of the palliative care services provided.	In most cases, yes. Check with your plan to find out if you have coverage for hospice.
How do I schedule a visit?	Talk with your care team for a referral or call Palliative Care at 952-883-6875 to request a consult.	Patient, family, and hospice team mutually determine the type and frequency of visits. Ask your doctor for a hospice referral or to learn more about hospice.
Where are services provided?	Services may be provided in the clinic, in your home or in the hospital.	Any home setting, including private home, apartment, group home, assisted living, nursing home, or residential hospice.
How long are services available?	You, your family members and the palliative care team will decide how long you would like to have palliative care services.	As long as hospice criteria are met (advanced illness with life expectancy of months rather than years).

- Provide expert treatment of pain and other distressing symptoms, such as shortness of breath, nausea, fatigue, anxiety and depression.
- Help you with advance care planning and completion of health care directive form.
- Offer emotional and spiritual support for you and your family.
- Coordinate and communicate with your primary care clinician and care team members to ensure continuity of care.
- Help you access resources for improving your quality of life.
- Discuss benefits and burdens of possible treatments.

How does palliative care help?

Our palliative care team works closely with you, your family and other members of your care team. You may come to the clinic for your palliative care visits, or you may receive palliative care at home. During your palliative care visits, you and your family may talk about your goals of care, including for treatment of your illness, symptoms and pain. In many cases, your palliative care appointment can be scheduled right before or right after your appointment with your specialist or primary care clinician.

How do I make an appointment for palliative care?

Ask your doctor how you can schedule a visit with a palliative care specialist. Usually, setting up an appointment happens one of 2 ways:

- If your clinic has a palliative care specialist on site to meet with you, your clinic will schedule the palliative care appointment.
- If your clinic does not have a palliative care specialist on site, your clinician will send the palliative care team a referral for palliative care. The palliative care scheduler will reach out to you to schedule your appointment.

For more information

For more information about getting a referral, setting up an appointment, and health plan and Medicare coverage, please call **952-883-6875**.

Thinking about next steps

Below are some questions to think about before your next visit.

- What symptoms are you having that affect your quality of life?
- When you think about your illness and quality of life, what are some of the things you would like to continue to be able to do?

Notes

Palliative Care

Providing support through your illness

