

# Palliative Care or Hospice Care?

Palliative care and hospice care **focus on the comfort, care, and quality of life of individuals with a serious illness.** Hospice care is a specific type of palliative care that is provided in the final weeks or months of life. Although these two approaches to care are similar in some ways, they can differ as to when and where care is received, and which treatment options are available.

## Palliative Care

**Palliative care** is a holistic approach designed to enhance the quality of life for individuals facing serious or potentially life-limiting illnesses. Palliative care is a resource accessible to anyone dealing with a serious or life-limiting illness.

## Hospice Care

**Hospice care** is a specialized type of palliative care focused on enabling people to live every moment to the fullest, in peace and without pain. Patients entering hospice care recognize that their illness is no longer responding to medical treatment.

CARE TEAM

**Palliative care** is interdisciplinary, which means that it involves multiple types of doctors and other care providers. These providers work together with patients and their families and care partners to ensure that the treatment plan reflects the person's goals and values.



**Hospice care** brings together a team of people with special skills — among them nurses, doctors, social workers, spiritual advisors, and trained volunteers. Everyone works together with the person who is at end of life, the caregiver, and/or the family to provide medical, emotional, and spiritual support.

CARE TEAM

WHERE

**Palliative care** can be provided in hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient palliative care clinics and certain other specialized clinics, or at home.



**Hospice** is an approach to care, so it is not tied to a specific place. It can be offered in two types of settings — at home or in a facility such as a nursing home, hospital, or even in a separate hospice center.

WHERE

TREATMENT

In **palliative care**, a person does not have to give up treatment that might cure a serious illness. Palliative care treatments are tailored to the individual based on his or her medical needs and wishes for how they want to be treated holistically (mind-body-spirit).



A person starting **hospice care** understands that their illness is not responding to medical attempts to cure it or slow the disease's progress. They can choose to leave hospice care at any time to pursue curative treatments or if their condition improves.

TREATMENT

GOALS

**Palliative care** is designed to relieve the pain and discomfort associated with an illness and to reduce patient and family members' stress.



**Hospice care** focuses on the care, comfort, and quality of life of a person with a serious illness who is approaching the end of life. This includes Grief Services during and following the hospice care journey.

GOALS

## What is Palliative Care?

**Palliative Care is specialized medical care for people living with serious, life-limiting illness.**

It is focused on providing relief from symptoms and stress of illness with a multidisciplinary team in coordination with your primary healthcare providers. The care is **based on the needs of the patient, not the patient's prognosis**. It is appropriate at any age and any stage of serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment.

Palliative care supports people with serious illnesses like heart failure, COPD, cancer, dementia, and Parkinson's disease. It enhances quality of life, relieves symptoms, and helps patients make informed treatment choices. Studies show palliative care not only improves well-being but can also increase longevity even in terminal cases. Its multidisciplinary services provide essential support for those facing significant discomfort or disability, helping them live as fully as possible.

### Why is Palliative Care needed?



Helps you **understand your disease** process, prognosis and your current plan of care



**Optimizes quality of life** by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering by addressing physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs



**Clarifies goals** and treatment options



Helps **coordinate your care** with your multiple health care providers and improves communication



**Offers guidance** for difficult and complex medical decisions



Provides you with adequate time to **discuss and address complex medical decisions**

### Who Handles Palliative Care?

A palliative care team is made up of multiple different professionals that work with the patient, family, and the patient's other doctors to provide medical, social, emotional, and practical support. The team is composed of palliative care specialist doctors and nurses, and includes others such as social workers, nutritionists, and chaplains. A person's team may vary based on their needs and level of care.

### How Do I Get Palliative Care?

To begin palliative care, a person's health care provider may refer him or her to a palliative care specialist. If he or she doesn't suggest it, the person can ask a health care provider for a referral.

To learn more, visit [Luminis.Health/TheLifecareInstitute](https://Luminis.Health/TheLifecareInstitute) or call **443-332-5800**.

