

Your Extra Layer of Support During Cancer Treatment

Palliative care is specialized medical care that focuses on providing relief from the side effects and emotional stress of a serious illness such as cancer. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by an interdisciplinary team of palliative care specialists including doctors, nurses, and social workers. Other professional team members may be included and each member will work with you and other members of the healthcare team to provide an extra layer of support.

Palliative care is for anyone with a serious illness, regardless of age, stage or prognosis.

Struggling with unpleasant side effects of cancer or cancer treatment? Ask for a referral for palliative care.

The type of care your team will suggest depends on the symptoms that interfere with your quality of life and your goals for treatment. For example, if joint pain causes you mobility issues, you may benefit from physical therapy.

Examples of palliative care include:

- Nutrition advice and guidance
- Physical or occupational therapy
- Pain management
- Medications to ease side effects
- Therapy or counseling
- Discussion about advance directives
- Help with practical issues such as managing finances or relationships
- Other medical treatments

You will work with your palliative care team to develop a plan that addresses your needs.

In addition to symptom management, your palliative care team also helps you and your family make choices regarding treatment options with your goals in mind.



MORE ABOUT PALLIATIVE CARE

- Your palliative care team communicates with every member of your healthcare team to improve overall care coordination.
- Palliative care is best delivered early so you can get control of symptoms before they worsen or cause disruptions to your treatment plan.
- Palliative care can be provided in a hospital or outpatient clinic and sometimes at home.
- Most insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, cover palliative care.

Everyone can benefit from palliative care.
Do not turn down care that can improve your quality of life.

People are often hesitant to request or accept a palliative care referral because there is a misconception that palliative care is only for patients who need end of life care. **Palliative care is for anyone with a serious illness, regardless of age, stage or prognosis.**

As cancer treatments improve, the number of cancer survivors continues to grow, but curative treatments can still cause unpleasant side effects. Palliative care offers many ways to help you feel better physically, emotionally, and spiritually during cancer treatment and into survivorship.

Think of it this way. When you have a cold, you may take ibuprofen to reduce the fever or relieve aches and pain. The ibuprofen does not cure the cold, but it can make you feel a lot better while recovering. Palliative care does the same thing. Palliative care does not attack or cure the cancer, but it makes the symptoms and side effects of treatment easier to manage.

With palliative care, you can maintain a better quality of life during and after cancer treatment.

Acknowledgement

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) gratefully acknowledges

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Questions To Ask Your Healthcare Team

- Will you refer me for palliative care?
- What palliative care services are available in my area?
- Who will make up my palliative care team?
- Will my insurance cover palliative care?
- What types of palliative care can help with my side effects?
- Can palliative care help my family and/or caregiver too?
- Where can I find more information on palliative care?

GET SUPPORT. REACH OUT TO OUR INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society team consists of master's level oncology social workers, nurses and health educators who are available by phone Mon.–Fri., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (ET).

Contact us at **800.955.4572** or www.LLS.org/InformationSpecialists.