

Palliative Care Myths and Facts

Palliative Care is a concept of care that supports a patient through a chronic illness; this might include Cancer, Heart Failure, or Lung Disease. It focuses on comfort and symptom control more than on curative measures.

Myth: Palliative Care is the same as Hospice Care.

Fact: Palliative Care is for patients with a one year prognosis, has a skilled need and is homebound. These patients benefit from ongoing assessment and management with a nonaggressive approach. Hospice is for patients with a six month prognosis; care focus is on comfort and not seeking curative care.

Myth: Palliative Care is only for people with Cancer.

Fact: Palliative Care is for people with any serious illness that limits their prognosis to one year or less.

Myth: Palliative Care is only for old people.

Fact: Palliative Care is available at any age.

Myth: Palliative Care means no more treatment.

Fact: The focus of the treatment is toward symptom control and comfort; you can continue to receive aggressive treatment as long as you meet criteria for program.

Myth: Palliative Care means I am dying.

Fact: Many people live longer than expected, the goal is to improve your quality of life, relieve physical pain and emotional suffering.

Myth: I have to stay in the hospital to get Palliative Care.

Fact: The home based program provides care where you live. This could be at home, Board and Care facility, or Assisted Living.

Myth: Talking about my serious illness is difficult for me and my family.

Fact: These conversations aren't easy, but talking about your concerns can bring a sense of comfort and support. The Palliative Care Team can assist with providing information, emotional and spiritual support.