



Palliative Care

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What is palliative care?

Palliative care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv) is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. Palliative care aims to provide relief from the symptoms and stress of illness to improve quality of life.

Who is on my palliative care team?

Palliative care is patient-centered care and is provided by a specially trained team of doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, social workers, and chaplains. We work together with your other doctors to provide an extra layer of support.

When is palliative care needed?

Palliative care is based on your unique symptom and support needs. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage of a serious illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment.

Your palliative care team members:

What does my palliative care team do?

- **Helps you identify and communicate goals for your care.**

The members of your palliative care team talk with you and your family to get to know you as a person. We want to learn what you value most at this time of your life and help you identify goals for medical care. We communicate this important information to your primary care team, which helps the decision-making process.

- **Manages pain and other symptoms.**

The palliative care medical providers have specialized training in pain, nausea, constipation, fatigue, anxiety, among other symptoms.

- **Improves communication between you and your care team.**

We help make sure there is good communication between you and your primary care team. We also check that medical information is understood by you and your family.

- **Provides emotional support.**

Palliative care can provide support for the psychosocial, emotional, spiritual, and existential impact of serious illness on patients and their loved ones.



Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning helps people think and plan ahead about who will be the surrogate decision-maker for their healthcare choices, and about their values and care preferences. Your palliative care team can help with your advance care planning.

Palliative care is not hospice, but we can provide information about hospice if you need it.

For patients who are nearing end of life, palliative care can help with:

- Grief and loss.
- Supporting your family and caregivers.
- Legacy activities. Examples include making a video message or writing a letter to loved ones.

Palliative care is provided in the hospital, the outpatient clinic, and where you live (in select service areas).

For more information, visit:

[med.unc.edu/pcare/about-palliative-care/
what-is-palliative-care](https://med.unc.edu/pcare/about-palliative-care/what-is-palliative-care)