

## Who Pays for Palliative Care?

Palliative care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurances, but is available to all patients – regardless of ability to pay.

## How to Get Palliative Care

Palliative care services are available at all Inova hospitals. Talk to your doctor or healthcare team about a palliative care consultation. In the hospital, patients are typically seen the same day. Outside of the hospital, a home or clinic appointment can be arranged.

*Learn about Inova's palliative care services, visit [www.inova.org/palliative-care](http://www.inova.org/palliative-care)*

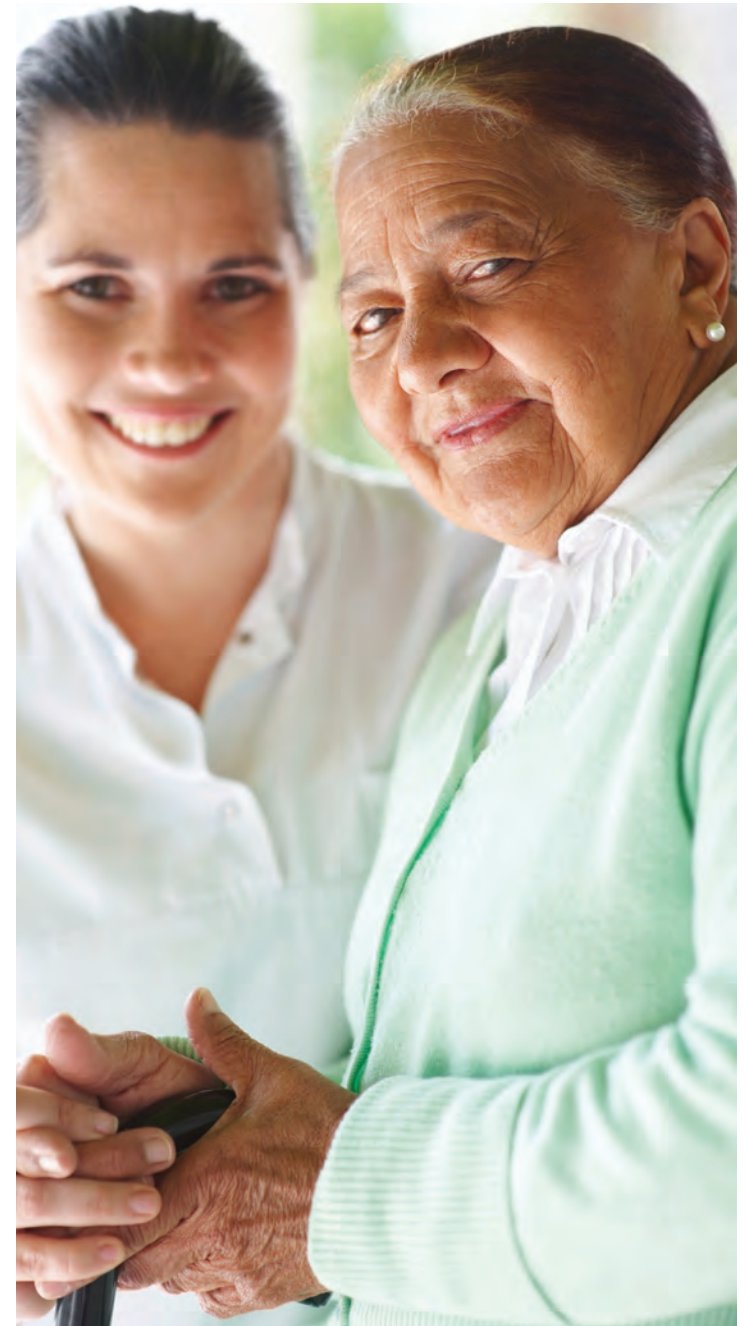


## How can Palliative Care be helpful?

Select any of the following and discuss with your physician and care team.

- I need help controlling pain.
- I need help controlling distressing symptoms like shortness of breath, nausea, anxiety, sadness, confusion, decreased appetite, etc.
- I need help understanding my illness and what happens next.
- I need help understanding treatment options and expected results.
- I would like additional guidance making medical decisions now, or for the future.
- I need help understanding how this illness will impact caregiving needs, living arrangements, insurance, finances, etc.
- I would like a family meeting with my care team.
- I would like help communicating with loved ones or my care team.

Your care team will work with you to meet your needs. If you need additional support, request a palliative care consult.



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## Palliative Care for a Better Quality of Life Now

If you are dealing with serious illness, special care is available to help control your symptoms and make you more comfortable *right now*.

### Why Consider Palliative Care?

Advanced or complex diseases come with challenging symptoms that can negatively affect your ability to maximize healing and enjoy life. Palliative care is provided hand-in-hand with curative care to help with symptom control and communication regarding options for your plan of care. It focuses on lessening the impact of physical issues on emotional well being, to improve comfort and quality of life for patients and their families. In some cases, palliative care has been shown to increase length of life.

#### *Palliative care is not the same as hospice.*

Palliative care can be provided at any stage of illness, even if a cure is likely. Hospice care provides services for patients who are at the end stages of an illness and may have a year or less to live.

## What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is specialized medical care focused on the unique physical, psychological, and spiritual needs of patients living with serious or life threatening illness. Palliative care enables the best quality of life by providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain, loss of function, and stress caused by serious illnesses, including:

- Dementia
- Heart Disease
- Kidney Disease
- Lung Disease
- Neurologic conditions (ALS, MS, Stroke)
- Cancer
- Any serious illness, regardless of whether it is curable, chronic or life-threatening

Palliative care teams may consist of board-certified or specially trained:

- Palliative care physicians\*
- Chaplains
- Nurses
- Nutritionists
- Occupational therapists
- Social workers
- Speech therapists
- Psychologists
- Others

*\*Palliative care physicians do not replace a patient's primary physician(s), but work alongside them.*

## When is Palliative Care Offered?

Palliative care is available at any stage of serious illness and appropriate for patients of all ages.

## Palliative Care Services

Your doctor may request a palliative care consultation for you to assist with:

- **Treatments to relieve symptoms:** Expert treatment for relief of pain and other burdensome symptoms such as shortness of breath, nausea, fatigue, anxiety, decreased appetite, and others.
- **Emotional and spiritual support for the patient and family:** Living with a serious illness can be frightening, isolating and stressful for all touched by it. Palliative care helps foster communication and support to one another throughout an illness.
- **Guidance on medical information and treatment options:** Information regarding illness and treatment options can be overwhelming and confusing. Palliative care can help coordinate health information and care providers in a way that helps individuals define and achieve their personal goals for care.

