



Mercy Home Health Palliative Care

Palliative care focuses on the relief of pain, symptoms and stress of those suffering from long-term, serious illnesses. The goal is to prevent and ease suffering and to enable the best possible quality of life for patients and their families. Mercy Home Health has a team of palliative care experts, including nurses, social workers, and therapists. These professionals work together to provide consistent and coordinated care that is tailored to individual patient needs.

Palliative care may be used in the management of diseases such as cancer, cardiac disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's disease, AIDS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and multiple sclerosis (MS).

Palliative Care is an appropriate option for individuals who:

- Are homebound and have a skilled nursing need
- Have pain greater than 4 on a 1-10 scale
- Have unrelieved symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, diarrhea, constipation, nausea or vomiting
- Have serious illnesses regardless of their life expectancy.
- Refuse medications due to the side effects
- Have frequent hospitalizations
- Have terminal illnesses and do not qualify for hospice (or choose not to receive hospice services).

Benefits of Palliative Care include:

- Less frequent hospitalizations
- Education and training on disease management in the home
- Increased understanding of the medical condition and choices for care
- Better coordination of inpatient services and home care.
- Assistance with the transition from home care to hospice (as appropriate).

Palliative care is useful at any stage of illness.

Patients may receive palliative care and curative care at the same time.

For more information about **Home Health** and **Palliative Care Services**, please call: **405.486.4800**. Visit mercy.net/xxx

What is the Difference?

Palliative Care and Hospice

Palliative Care is care that is focused on relieving pain and other symptoms such as shortness of breath, nausea, constipation, loss of appetite and sleeplessness. Patients can receive palliative care at any stage of a serious illness, whether that illness is potentially curable, chronic or life-threatening.

Hospice is a specialized type of palliative care that provides comfort and support when an individual's condition no longer responds to curative treatments. This is usually someone with a life expectancy of six months or less.

	Palliative Care	Hospice
Who can receive care?	Anyone with a serious illness, regardless of life expectancy.	Someone with an illness with a life expectancy measured in months not years.
Can I continue to receive treatments to cure my illness?	You may receive curative measures while having palliative care	Treatments and medications to relieve symptoms and promote comfort are provided by hospice
Where are services provided?	In the hospital, nursing or assisted living facilities. Home Care visits from a nurse, therapist, chaplain or social worker is also available.	Professional expertise in end-of-life care is provided to patients, family and the facility staff wherever a patient considers home. Hospice complements the care in the extended care facility.
Do Medicare and Medicaid pay for services?	Some treatments and medications may be covered	Medicare and Missouri Medicaid pays for all charges related to hospice
Does private insurance pay?	Some treatments and medications may be covered	Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit.
Who provides services?	It varies. Usually there is a team including physicians, nurses and social workers who are available for consultation.	The hospice benefit utilizes a team approach: physician, nurse, social worker, hospice aide, chaplain and volunteers.
Are medications, oxygen, and medical supplies covered?	Medications and supplies are covered based on the patients health plan benefit.	Yes. Medications, medical supplies and equipment to manage patients' symptoms and promote comfort are covered under the hospice benefit.
How is my family supported?	A social worker is available to offer support and check insurance benefits. This is an opportunity for family to gather information about how an illness is likely to progress and to begin planning for long-term-care needs.	Hospice provides 24-hour-a-day support for patients and their families, as well as bereavement (grief) counseling for families and friends following the death of a loved one.