What Should You Know About Palliative Care?

For people with serious illnesses and their families, palliative care provides relief from pain and other symptoms and supports the best possible quality of life for the longest possible time. There are many misconceptions about what palliative care is and when people receive it. Do you have the facts?

Palliative Care is NOT JUST for the End of Life

Palliative care can begin at the start of a serious illness and be given alongside treatments designed to combat the disease. It can be an important component of treatment for long-term progressive conditions like cancer, Parkinson's disease, kidney disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), and heart disease.

Palliative Care May Actually EXTEND LIFE

People who receive palliative care may live longer and have a better quality of life than people with similar illnesses who don't receive palliative care.

Hospice is a Well Established form of Palliative Care

Hospice is a type of palliative care program for people in the final months of life. Like other forms of palliative care, hospice can improve quality of life and be an important source of care and comfort for patients and their families.

Palliative Care is Available in MANY Settings

Palliative care and hospice can be received at home, in the hospital, through an outpatient clinic, and in many other settings. While there are doctors and nurses who specialize in palliative care, primary care doctors, social workers, chaplains, nutritionists, pharmacists, therapists, and other professionals also play important roles.

Palliative Care Supports Families

As part of a patient-centered approach, palliative care,including hospice, allows patients and their families and friends to make plans that reflect their goals and preferences. Often, palliative care allows seriously ill patients to avoid stressful trips to the hospital and spend more time at home with loved ones.

EVERYONE should have access to Palliative Care

All people with advanced serious illness should have access to skilled palliative care services, including hospice as appropriate, in all settings where they receive care.

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