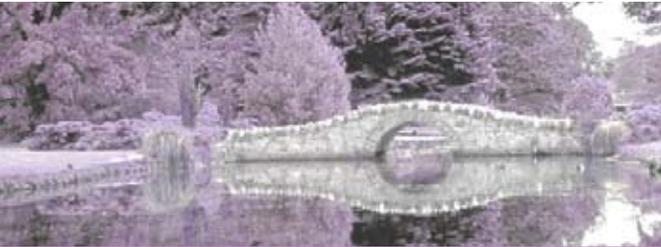


Palliative Care

provides effective management of and **relief** from...



- pain • fatigue • nausea •
- loss of appetite •
- stress •
- shortness of breath •
- and other symptoms •

associated with

a chronic or

terminal illness

Questions About Palliative Care?

Talk with your doctor today.



“Palliative care is a philosophy. It is a compassionate way to approach life through its natural end.”
- Dr. Steven Bensson, board certified in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics

You can also visit Sturdy's website:
www.sturdymemorial.org
to request more information about palliative care and end-of-life planning.



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Palliative Care

can improve your quality of life



- learn more here -

Sturdy Memorial Hospital

What is palliative care?

With the help of modern medicine, many patients with chronic illnesses are living longer and learning to efficiently manage their diseases long-term. Despite the highest quality of care, though, chronic illnesses progress over time. Many patients reach a point where they choose to no longer have aggressive medical treatments, instead opting for palliative care.

The main goal of palliative care is to *enhance quality of life* for patients and their families and caregivers. Palliative care provides chronic or terminally ill patients with relief from the pain, symptoms, and stress of their conditions. This specialized medical care helps patients take control of their illnesses and feel supported throughout the stages of their diseases.

Palliative care is available to patients at any time during their illness. **Hospice care** provides support during the final months of life.

Who receives palliative care?

Palliative care is an appropriate choice for patients with conditions including:

- cancer
- chronic liver disease
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- congestive heart failure
- and other diseases known to be incurable
- dementia
- kidney failure

The goal of palliative care is to optimize quality of life when end of life is reasonably predictable due to disease or other infirmity. Even if the disease does not improve, quality of life improves as patients gain control of their symptoms.

What are the benefits of palliative care?

Palliative care helps patients effectively manage symptoms associated with their chronic or terminal illness, such as pain, fatigue, nausea, loss of appetite, or shortness of breath. Even if the disease can't be cured, symptoms can be treated. Palliative care also addresses emotional, spiritual, and social concerns.

Why are palliative care and end-of-life planning important?

Patients facing serious illness need compassionate care; relief from distress so they can live more comfortably; reliable information and access to help; and assurance that their treatment preferences will be honored.

Without palliative care, patients might experience inadequate management of pain and other symptoms. And, without thorough end-of-life planning, disagreement among loved ones over the patients' medical care could create a crisis. Patients could receive "heroic measures" or life-sustaining treatment against their wishes.

How do I get palliative care for myself or a loved one?

It is important that palliative care be addressed openly and well before end of life becomes imminent. Patients should talk about palliative care and treatment preferences with their loved ones and primary care physician early on and express their wishes should they become ill with a chronic or terminal illness. This provides sufficient time to arrange support services, understand the disease course, and truly enhance quality of life. It also ensures care preferences are honored.



How can I or a loved one plan for end-of-life?

Choices regarding end-of-life care are difficult to make, but are much more stressful when left up to loved ones in a crisis situation. To alleviate this burden from others should patients ever become seriously ill and incapable of making their own health-care choices, it is recommended that patients express and document their end-of-life wishes by completing a *health care proxy form* and designating a *health care agent* to make health-care decisions only when capacity for decision-making is lost. Documenting wishes clarifies treatment instructions and alternatives.

To fill out a health care proxy form, visit Sturdy Memorial Hospital's website at www.sturdymemorial.org. You may also visit the Case Management Department at Sturdy for documents and guidance. Case Management can be reached by calling 508-236-7680.

For more information about palliative care, talk to your doctor or visit www.sturdymemorial.org