



# Smilow Palliative Care Program

Palliative care is any form of medical care or treatment that concentrates on reducing the severity of disease symptoms. The goal of palliative care is to prevent and relieve suffering and to improve the quality of life of people facing serious and advanced illness.

The Palliative Care Program at Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven provides a comprehensive approach that focuses on the physical, psycho-social, spiritual, and practical needs of patients and their families.

## **Our program aims to:**

- + Improve the quality of life of patients with serious or life-threatening illnesses
- + Respect the individual's personal values and preferences
- + Provide education and support to patients and their families
- + Promote comfort and relieve pain and suffering

## **Smilow Cancer Hospital's palliative care team will work closely with your oncology team to provide:**

- + Expert treatment of pain and other physical symptoms
- + Guidance and support with difficult treatment choices
- + Information about your illness and the chance to discuss concerns and questions
- + Assistance with psychological and spiritual issues

# COMMON QUESTIONS

## How does palliative care work?

Palliative care uses many approaches, depending on the individual patient's symptoms, needs, and wishes. It might involve:

- + Medications
- + Pain management
- + Complementary techniques, including breathing exercises, massage or Reiki, acupuncture, art or music therapy
- + Mental health services and coping strategies
- + Relaxation techniques
- + Spiritual support and guidance
- + Nutritional support
- + Family support
- + Discharge planning

## Who are the people providing care on the palliative care team?

The palliative care team includes expert physicians and advanced practice providers who partner with social workers, chaplains, pharmacists, care coordinators, and other clinical staff members to offer an additional dimension of expertise to you, your family and your medical team. Our staff is experienced in helping patients and families manage distress in the face of serious illness, as well as at life's end.

## Is palliative care the same as hospice care?

No – hospice care is meant specifically for those approaching the last stages of life, usually the final six months. Palliative care can complement ongoing treatment at any stage of your illness.

## Does palliative care mean that other treatments or therapies will be stopped?

No – palliative care does not mean that active treatment to cure a disorder or prolong life will end. All of your care will continue through any stage or time in your illness.

## Helpful Resources

[getpalliativecare.org](http://getpalliativecare.org) | [agingwithdignity.org](http://agingwithdignity.org) | [caringinfo.org](http://caringinfo.org)  
[yalecancercenter.org](http://yalecancercenter.org)

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For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact: (203) 200-2725