

COMFORT CARE



HOUSTON HOSPICE

Life Matters

Wherever Home Is To You

Hospice care, sometimes referred to as “comfort care,” offers respectful physical, social and spiritual support to individuals facing life-limiting illness, as well as their families and other caregivers. Medical care is palliative (management of pain and symptoms) rather than curative (treatment in an attempt to cure).

Why People Choose Hospice Care

Hospice care focuses on quality of life. Care is tailored to the unique needs of the individual and his/her support network. Houston Hospice team members (doctors, nurses, hospice aides, social workers, chaplains and more) are specially trained for life-limiting illnesses and end-of-life issues. Patients’ hopes, wants and needs are assigned the highest value.

When patients feel that curative treatments no longer offer hope of restoring health, the relief of comfort care can bring a new form of hope.

For all hospice patients and their loved ones, hospice care services can help them make the most of their time together and live each day to the fullest.

Diagnoses that Often Lead to Hospice Referral*

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|-----------------------|------------------|
| Cancer | Kidney Disease |
| Dementia, Alzheimer’s | Liver Disease |
| Heart Disease | ALS, Parkinson’s |
| Lung Disease | HIV / AIDS |
| Stroke | Coma |

**Source: National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) Facts and Figures annual report, 2013.*

HOUSTON HOSPICE
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Indicators That Hospice Care May Be Appropriate

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Frequent hospitalizations | Recurring infections |
| Decline in functional status | Increased difficulty breathing |
| Uncontrolled or increased pain | Incontinence |
| Increased mental impairment | Frequent falls |
| Involuntary weight loss | Disease progression |

Comfort Care Is Available For Months

Hospice comfort care is not just for 'final days' but is available for six months or more as needed. Familiar surroundings enhance comfort, so every effort is made to help the patient stay wherever he/she calls home – be it an apartment, a house, an assisted living facility, a skilled nursing home, etc. If inpatient care is needed, Houston Hospice provides services at its Margaret Cullen Marshall Hospice Care Center at the Texas Medical Center.

A Team of Helpers

Families are helped by a professional care team (doctor, nurse, hospice aide, social worker, chaplain, trained volunteer and more) to support their own loving care so that family members and friends have more energy and quality time to give to their loved one. The care team helps manage pain and symptoms, monitor the patient's condition, maintain hygiene, anticipate needs, assist with medical/insurance forms or processes, listen with compassion and openness and give caregivers rest.

Who Qualifies And How Is a Referral Made?

Patients with limited life expectancies, who agree to receive hospice care, may be eligible for hospice services. A patient's own primary or treatment physician may make the referral to hospice care, as may a medical social worker, the patient, a family member or a friend – by contacting Houston Hospice at 713-468-2441 or info@houstonhospice.org. Once a referral is made, a liaison and/or nurse will visit the patient to confirm that hospice care is appropriate.