

Palliative Care During COVID-19 Guidance

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What Is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is patient and family-centered care that improves the quality of life for those who face a serious, potentially life-limiting condition by addressing the individual's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual needs throughout the illness. Palliative Care is not the same as hospice. People do not have to be diagnosed with a terminal illness to receive palliative care. People living with such conditions such as cancer, Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's, heart conditions, kidney or liver disease may benefit from palliative care. The primary goal of palliative care is to reduce the symptoms and stress of living with an illness.

Who Provides Palliative Care?

Palliative Care is provided by a physician, nurse practitioner (under the direction of a physician) and can include a social worker, chaplain, pharmacist and nutritionist. Palliative care can be provided in the hospital, out-patient clinics, nursing facilities and at home.

Why Is This Important During COVID-19?

Because palliative care's core population are those who are frail, elderly, and/or living an underlying serious illness, they may be at higher risk of serious complications from an infectious disease outbreak. The use of every day palliative care skills can be crucial in reducing the number of emergency department visits; managing pain and symptoms; supporting caregivers and families; and coordinating and communicating of care plans among providers caring for a seriously ill patient. According to Center to Advance Palliative Care, numerous studies have shown that palliative care improves the quality of life and lowers symptoms burdens of patients. If you need more detailed information about palliative care in terms of COVID-19, please see <https://www.capc.org/toolkits/covid-19-response-resources/>