



When is the right time for palliative care?

Palliative care helps through all stages of many illnesses. It is most helpful when started early in your care and can be provided at the same time as treatments aimed at curing your illness. It will assist in navigating the complex health system.

What if I'm interested in palliative care?

If you think you would benefit from palliative care, please ask for it. Tell your doctor or nurse that you would like to add a palliative care specialist to your healthcare team and request a consult. You may also contact the DeKalb Medical Palliative Care Services office at **404.501.1866** or **404.501.1681** so a team member can assist you with difficult decisions, including treatment options and end-of-life issues, if needed.



Serving the Community Since 1961

DeKalb Medical is a not-for-profit hospital system that includes the 451-bed DeKalb Medical at North Decatur, the 40-bed DeKalb Medical Long Term Acute Care at Downtown Decatur and the 100-bed DeKalb Medical at Hillandale in Lithonia. A leader in progressive medical technology delivered by a highly qualified and caring staff, the hospital system serves approximately 500,000 patients annually and offers a variety of community outreach programs.

How can you help support the Palliative Care program at DeKalb Medical?

Patients and family members who would like to make a donation in support of the DeKalb Medical Palliative Care program may call the DeKalb Medical Foundation at **404.501.5956**.



DeKalb Medical

Pushing Beyond®

2701 North Decatur Road, Decatur, GA 30033

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404.501.1866 or 404.501.1681

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Palliative Care



*“To cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always.”
- Anonymous*

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What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tive) focuses on providing patients with the relief from the pain, symptoms and stress associated with serious illness.

Palliative care (or comfort care) is given to improve quality of life when you have a serious or life-threatening illness. It is provided by an interdisciplinary team including medical and nursing specialists, social workers, clergy and other staff. All team members work together to meet the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of you and your family.

Palliative care can be provided at the same time as curative medical treatments and strives to provide symptom and pain relief while helping you explore potential care options. Palliative care specialists can also help you make informed decisions and set goals for your care.

Palliative Care can help by:

- Providing comfort/supporting interventions
- Managing symptoms to relieve suffering
- Listening to and addressing concerns
- Asking questions of the healthcare team
- Working through tough decisions
- Finding care and resources after the hospital stay

You may have a hard time dealing with another's advice. You may also feel the need to remain strong for your loved ones. All of these are normal feelings that should be acknowledged and addressed. A palliative care professional can help you explore these feelings to find the best way for you to cope with them.

Common Questions about Palliative vs. Hospice Care

QUESTION	PALLIATIVE CARE	HOSPICE CARE
WHO CAN RECEIVE THIS CARE?	Anyone with a serious illness, regardless of life expectancy	Someone with an illness with a life expectancy measured in months not years
CAN I CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TREATMENTS TO CURE MY ILLNESS?	You may receive palliative care and curative care at the same time	Only treatments and medicines aimed at relieving symptoms are provided
DOES MEDICARE PAY?	Some treatments and medications may be covered	Medicare pays all charges related to hospice
DOES MEDICAID PAY?	Some treatments and medications may be covered	In 47 states, including Georgia, Medicaid pays all charges related to hospice Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit
DOES PRIVATE INSURANCE PAY?	No, there is no "palliative care" package; the services are flexible and based on the patient's needs	Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit
IS THIS A PACKAGE DEAL?	No, there is no "palliative care" package; the services are flexible and based on the patient's needs	Medicare and Medicaid hospice benefits are package deals
HOW LONG CAN I RECEIVE CARE?	This will depend upon your care needs, and the coverage you have through Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance	As long as you meet the hospice's criteria of an illness with life expectancy of months, not years
WHAT ORGANIZATION PROVIDES THESE SERVICES?	Hospitals, hospices, nursing facilities, healthcare clinics	Hospice organizations, Hospice programs based out of a hospital, other healthcare organizations
WHERE ARE SERVICES PROVIDED?	Home, assisted living facilities, nursing facilities, hospitals	Some hospices have facilities where people can live, like a hospice residence, or receive care for short-term reasons, such as acute pain or symptom management
WHO PROVIDES THESE SERVICES?	It varies. However, usually there is a team including doctors, nurses, social workers and chaplains, similar to the hospice team	A team – doctor, nurse, social worker, chaplain, volunteer, home health aide and others

Information provided by Caring Connections

How do I know if palliative care is right for me or my family?

Palliative care may be right for you or your loved one if symptoms occur from a serious illness or injury including:

- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Lung Disease
- Cardiac disease/stroke
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Dementia
- Serious trauma
- Kidney failure

By working closely with your physician, the palliative care specialist will assist with:

- Pain control
- Symptom relief
- Emotional and spiritual support

