

Palliative Care

What You Should Know

Palliative Care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It is focused on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of a serious illness—whatever the diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Dr. Marcus Roberts and a team of medical professionals work together with a patient's other providers to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment.

What is the difference between palliative care and hospice care? Both palliative care and hospice care provide comfort. But palliative care can begin at diagnosis, and at the same time as treatment. Hospice care begins after treatment of the disease is stopped and when it is clear that the person is not going to survive the illness. Hospice care is usually offered only when the person is expected to live six months or less.

Where do I receive palliative care? Palliative care is provided in a variety of settings including Tift Regional Medical Center, Affinity Clinic and home.

Does my insurance pay for palliative care? Most insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, cover palliative care. If costs concern you, a social worker or –financial consultant from the palliative care team can help you.

How do I get palliative care? Ask for it! Tell your providers, nurses, family and caregivers that you want palliative care.

How do I know if palliative care is right for me? Palliative care may be right for you if you suffer from pain, stress or other symptoms due to a serious illness. Serious illnesses may include cancer, cardiac disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), multiple sclerosis and more. Palliative care can be provided at any stage of illness and along with treatment meant to cure you.

What can I expect from palliative care? You can expect relief from symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. Palliative care helps you carry on with your daily life. It improves your ability to go through medical treatments. It helps you better understand your condition and your choices for medical care. In short, you can expect the best possible quality of life.

Who provides palliative care? Dr. Marcus Roberts works with a team including a nurse practitioner, registered nurses and social workers. A chaplain, pharmacists, nutritionists and others are also a part of the team.

How does palliative care work with my own provider? The palliative care team works in partnership with your own provider to provide an extra layer of support for you and your family. The team provides expert symptom management, extra time for communication and help navigating the healthcare system.

**Physicians and advanced practice providers can make a referral by calling
229-391-4426**

