



Burgess Square



Palliative Care

*The Relief You Need When
You're Experiencing the
Symptoms of Serious Illness*

Transforming
the lives of those we serve

Burgess Square
Healthcare & Rehab Centre



Palliative Care

Improving quality of life when you're seriously ill

Dealing with the symptoms of any painful or serious illness is difficult. However, special care is available to make you more comfortable. It's called palliative care.

You can receive palliative care at the same time that you're receiving treatments for your illness. Its primary purpose is to relieve the pain and other symptoms you are experiencing to improve your quality of life.

Palliative care is a central part of treatment for serious or life threatening illnesses. The information in this brochure will help you understand how you or someone close to you can benefit from this type of care.



What is palliative care?

Palliative care is comprehensive treatment of the discomfort, symptoms and stress brought on by serious illness. It does not replace your primary treatment; palliative care works in conjunction with the primary treatment you are already receiving. The goal is to prevent and ease suffering and improve your quality of life.

Palliative care is comprehensive care designed especially for your needs

Palliative care can improve your quality of life in a variety of ways.

Together with your primary health care provider, your palliative care team combines vigorous pain and symptom control into every part of your treatment. Team members spend as much time with you and your family as it takes to help you fully understand your condition, care options and other needs. They also make sure you experience a smooth transition between the hospital and other services, such as home care or nursing facilities.

This results in well-planned, complete treatment for all of your symptoms throughout your illness – treatment that takes care of you in your present condition and anticipates your future needs.

Palliative care strives to provide you with:

- » Expert treatment of pain and other symptoms so you can get the best relief possible.
- » Open discussion about treatment choices, including treatment for your disease and management of your symptoms.
- » Coordination of your care with all of your health care providers.
- » Emotional support for you and your family.





A team approach to patient-centered care

Palliative care is provided by a team of specialists that may include:

- » palliative care doctors
- » palliative care nurses
- » social workers
- » chaplains
- » pharmacists
- » nutritionists
- » counselors and others

Palliative care can be very effective

Researchers have studied the positive effects palliative care has on patients. Recent studies show that patients who receive palliative care report improvement in:

- » Pain and other distressing symptoms, such as nausea or shortness of breath.
- » Communication with their health care providers and family members.
- » Emotional support.

Other studies also show that palliative care:

- » Ensures that care is more in line with patients' wishes.
- » Meets the emotional and spiritual needs of patients.



SPECIAL CARE that supports you and your wishes

Palliative care supports you and those who love you by maximizing your comfort. It also helps you set goals for the future that lead to a meaningful, enjoyable life while you get treatment for your illness.

How do you know if you need palliative care?

Many adults and children living with illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, lung disease, kidney failure, AIDS and cystic fibrosis, among others, experience physical symptoms and emotional distress related to their diseases. Sometimes these symptoms are related to the medical treatments they are receiving.

You may want to consider palliative care if you or your loved one:

- » Suffers from pain or other symptoms due to ANY serious illness.
- » Experiences physical or emotional pain that is NOT under control.
- » Needs help understanding your situation and coordinating your care.

Palliative care is different from hospice care

Palliative care is available to you at any time during your illness. Remember that you can receive palliative care at the same time you receive treatments that are meant to cure your illness. Its availability does not depend upon whether or not your condition can be cured. The goal is to make you as comfortable as possible and improve your quality of life.

You don't have to be in hospice or at the end of life to receive palliative care. People in hospice always receive palliative care, but hospice focuses on a person's final months of life. To qualify for some hospice programs, patients must no longer be receiving treatments to cure their illness.

Palliative care also provides support for you and your family and can improve communication between you and your health care providers.





Start palliative care as soon as you need it

It's never too early to start palliative care. In fact, palliative care occurs at the same time as all other treatments for your illness and does not depend upon the course of your disease.

There is no reason to wait. Serious illnesses and their treatments can cause exhaustion, anxiety and depression. Palliative care teams understand that pain and other symptoms affect your quality of life and can leave you lacking the energy or motivation to pursue the things you enjoy. They also know that the stress of what you're going through can have a big impact on your family. And they can assist you and your loved ones as you cope with the difficult experience.

Getting palliative care is as easy as asking for it

In most cases, palliative care is provided in the hospital. The process begins when either your health care provider refers you to the palliative care team or you ask your health care provider for a referral. In the hospital, palliative care is provided by a team of professionals, including medical and nursing specialists, social workers, pharmacists, nutritionists, clergy and others.



Payment for Palliative Care

Medicare and Medicaid typically cover palliative care treatment you receive in the hospital, just as they would other services. If you have concerns about the cost of palliative care treatment, a social worker from the palliative care team can help you.

Ask for palliative care and start feeling better now

If you think you need palliative care, ask for it now. Tell your health care provider that you'd like to add palliative care specialists to your treatment team and request a consultation.

Burgess Square offers both palliative and hospice services that focus on quality of life for our patients. Goals of both types of care are to assist with the medical management of patients to relieve pain and other symptoms of illness, coordinate goals of care or end of life issues.



Burgess Square Palliative Care Team



Dr. Rajeev Kumar currently serves as the Medical Director at Burgess Square and provides palliative care consultations and advanced disease management. He completed his Internal Medicine residency at University of Illinois, Chicago followed by a Geriatrics fellowship at Loyola University Medical Center. He is board certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatric Medicine and Palliative Medicine. Dr. Kumar is also the Medical Director of Adventist Midwest Geriatrics Specialists and Adventist St. Thomas Hospice. He also currently serves as the president of the Illinois Medical Directors Association. Dr. Kumar is dedicated to maintaining the quality of life for patients that have chronic health conditions and believes in the importance of providing treatment while at the same time maintaining a patient's comfort.



Anilitta Alex APN-BC, is a certified Nurse Practitioner at Burgess Square and Midwest Geriatric Specialists. Ms. Alex works directly with Dr. Kumar to ensure that patients participating in the palliative care program are receiving the highest level of care according to the palliative care philosophy. She obtained her Master's of Science Degree in Nursing, Adult Nurse Practitioner from Loyola University. Ms. Alex also serves as a clinical mentor for Loyola University School of Nursing. Her goal is help patients determine their health goals and facilitate a plan of care that will provide medical support that aligns with their wishes. Ms. Alex works with physicians to provide palliative care that focuses on improving symptoms of illness, while at the same time maintaining dignity and quality of life.



Michelle Buikema NP-C, MSN, is a certified Family Nurse Practitioner with Burgess Square and Adventist Midwest Geriatric Specialists. Her career in geriatric medicine has spanned the last six years in which she has held a variety of positions including corporate clinician, nurse consultant and director of quality assurance. She has a Master's of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Michelle's love of the geriatric population adds to her personal touch. She has a focus of providing palliative care to maintain the quality of life of her patients while managing their symptoms and providing comfort.



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