



PALLIATIVE CARE

An extra layer of
support in your
cancer care

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

You or your loved one has been diagnosed with a type of blood cancer. Blood cancer treatment can be complex; different treatment and care options are offered at different times in your cancer experience. Palliative care may be among your care options.

This fact sheet will help you learn:

- What palliative care means
- How palliative care can help you and your loved ones
- Who provides palliative care and how
- When palliative care can be considered





What is palliative care?

Palliative care is a type of care that focuses on improving the quality of life for people living with serious illnesses such as blood cancer. Palliative care is sometimes called holistic care or whole-person centered care – meaning it includes care for your emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual well-being, and physical health.

Palliative care is appropriate for anyone with a serious illness regardless of their age, stage of disease, or prognosis. Palliative care is not limited to individuals with non-curative cancer.

How palliative care can help you and your loved ones

Palliative care can help address your symptoms and concerns associated with blood cancer, including:

Pain management

Palliative care specialists can work with you to develop a plan to control and manage your pain effectively.

Symptom control

Palliative care can help you manage symptoms like fatigue, nausea, shortness of breath, and loss of appetite, allowing you to maintain a better quality of life.

Emotional support

Coping with blood cancer can be emotionally challenging. Palliative care teams can provide you with emotional support, counseling, and resources to help you navigate your feelings and concerns.

Communication and decision-making

Palliative care providers can help facilitate discussions with you about treatment options, goals of care, and advanced care planning if applicable. Palliative care professionals can also help you understand the benefits and risks of different treatment choices.

Coordination of care

Palliative care teams work closely with your primary oncologist and other healthcare providers to ensure your treatment plan aligns with your goals and preferences.

Family support

Palliative care extends support to your loved ones, providing them with information, counselling, and assistance in caring for you.





Who provides palliative care, and how you can access it

Palliative care is delivered by a team of healthcare professionals, which may include doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, spiritual counsellors, and other specialists. They collaborate to provide holistic care tailored to your specific needs.

To access palliative care, talk to your primary oncologist or healthcare team. They can refer you to the appropriate care professional for each step/phase of your cancer experience or provide palliative care themselves. Some hospitals and cancer centres may have palliative care programs you can inquire about.

When palliative care can be considered

Palliative care can benefit you at any stage of cancer - from the time of your diagnosis through your treatment, and beyond. Palliative care can be provided alongside other treatments - such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy - to help you cope with the physical and emotional challenges of living with blood cancer.

Ideally, palliative care is introduced earlier into your cancer experience for full integration into your care plan. Talk to your healthcare team to discuss palliative care options to help improve your quality of life. Palliative care is an extra layer of support – available to you at any point in your cancer experience.

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