Editorial Note on Palliative Cancer Care

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Editorial

Palliative care is treatment, care and support for people with a lifelimiting illness, and their family and friends. It's sometimes called 'supportive care'. The aim of palliative care is to help you to have a good quality of life – this includes being as well and active as possible in the time you have left.

Palliative care is medical care for people with serious or terminal illnesses. It is often confused with end of life care. These are two different types of care, but they have some similar qualities. Receiving palliative care does not always mean that you will not get better or that you are dying. Palliative treatment is designed to relieve symptoms, and improve your quality of life. It can be used at any stage of an illness if there are troubling symptoms, such as pain or sickness. It can also be used to reduce or control the side effects of cancer treatments. Palliative care is whole-person care

that relieves symptoms of a disease or disorder, whether or not it can be cured. Hospice is a specific type of palliative care for people who likely have 6 months or less to live. In other words, hospice care is always palliative, but not all palliative care is hospice care. You can have palliative care while still having active treatment for the cancer. There is no need to wait until the end of life. The reality is that some people do die from cancer. As people draw closer to death, the end-of-life aspect of palliative care becomes important. Palliative care focuses on the symptoms and stress of the disease and the treatment. It treats a wide range of issues that can include pain, depression, anxiety, fatigue, shortness of breath, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. Palliative care teams improve your quality of life. Palliative care is focused on improving the quality of life for people living with a serious illness like cancer. People with cancer may receive palliative care at any time from the point of diagnosis, throughout treatment, and beyond.

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is usually given as a team approach and is designed to address both the physical and emotional concerns of people coping with cancer. For instance in cancer, palliative care focuses on relieving the typical symptoms of a cancer patient—like pain, nausea, and anorexia—and allow the oncologist to focus on the tumor treatments themselves. Hospice care is a particular type of palliative care that happens in the last six months of life. Palliative care, in contrast, can be offered at any point in the cancer trajectory: from diagnosis to the terminal phase, or even through cure. Studies have found that such care greatly improves quality of life, and may even improve survival. That said, palliative care is relatively new on the scene at many cancer centers, and you may need to request a consult yourself.