



1. Hospice is not just for the last few days or the last two weeks. Hospice is designed to care for the patient and family during the last months of life.
2. Hospice is not a "crisis" service. Patients and families should ask their doctor whether curative treatment will work and what burden it will place on the patient. An early hospice admission helps the patient and family get the full benefit of hospice services, including the emotional support and family services.
3. Hospice is not a "place" - it is a kind of care and a set of services. Hospice care is typically delivered in the patient's own home, a nursing home or in assisted living. Other locations can include a hospital or a "hospice house".
4. You do not have to be "ready to die" to receive hospice care. Rather, you should be seeking comfort and an improved quality of life. Hospice is ready to help you and your family make the most of the time that's left.
5. Under normal circumstances, hospice does not provide services in the home around the clock or for "shifts" that allow family members to go to work. Hospice team members provide services during visits that may last 30 minutes up to a couple of hours.
6. You may continue to see your own doctors, whether for your terminal illness or other illnesses.
7. You do not need to be homebound to receive hospice care. Many patients get out and some make trips while under hospice care.
8. You may leave hospice care at any time. If you would like to return to curative treatment, discuss it with your hospice team. You will be eligible to re-enter hospice at any time without penalty.
9. Hospice does not conflict with the beliefs of any major religion. All faiths recognize the value of spiritual support, pain relief, symptom management and counseling during the final phase of life.
10. Hospice is not just for the elderly or just for Medicare patients. Hospice serves patients of all ages, from infants to the elderly.
11. Hospice is not a financial burden. Medicare Part A, Medicaid and many private insurers cover hospice services. Most hospices have a sliding scale for poor patients and some provide charity care for the truly destitute. The vast majority of patients and families never receive a bill from hospice.
12. You may decline specific hospice services such as volunteers and housekeeping support.
13. Hospice will neither hasten nor delay death. Hospice seeks to improve the patient's quality of life and allow dying to take place naturally. It will not extend life through artificial or mechanical means. Nor will it shorten life through assisted suicide.
14. There is no limitation on how long you can receive hospice care. True, your physician must certify that you are expected to live six months or less, but hospice services need not end at six months. Hospice care can extend well beyond the original six-month life expectancy.