

Caring For Terminally Ill Patients

**Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
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Faculty

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Objectives

- Distinguish between palliative care & curative care
- Define “good death”
- Know quality end-of-life (EOL) care & hospice care qualifications
- Recognize EOL quality indicators & stages of death
- Understand the role of a home health staff member at EOL

Palliative Care

- Comfort versus cure
- Holistic
- Interdisciplinary
- Patient & family are unit of care
- Affirms life
- Regards death as natural process



Who Qualifies for Hospice Care?

- Prognosis of six months, or less, to live
- No longer seeking curative treatment
- Any terminal illness, including, but not limited to: cancer, heart disease, debility unspecified, dementia, lung disease, stroke or coma

What is “a Good Death?”

- Free from avoidable distress and suffering for patients, families, and caregivers
- In accordance with the wishes of the patient and his family
- Consistent with clinical, cultural, and ethical standards

Goals for Quality End-of-life Care

- To avoid inappropriately prolonged dying
- To strengthen relationships with loved ones
- To relieve the burden on their loved ones



Goals for Quality End-of-life Care

- To receive adequate pain and symptom management
- To achieve a sense of control



Transitioning From Living to Dying



Signs That A Person May Be Ready for Hospice Care

- Weight loss
- Increased pain, nausea, fatigue or other symptoms
- Increased need for assistance
- Decreased alertness
- Increased hospitalizations
- Family exhausted from care-giving demands

The Stages of Dying

- One to three months prior to death



The Shrinking World of the Dying Patient at 1-3 months



Nutrition at End-of-life

Why do We Eat and Drink?

The Stages of Dying



- One to two weeks prior to death

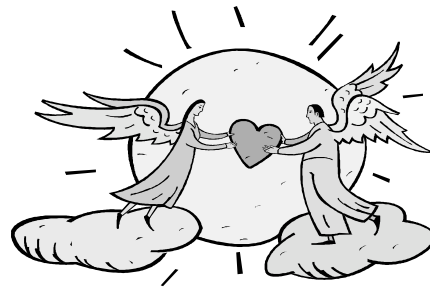
- Physical Changes

- Mental & Spiritual Changes

Physical Changes (1-2 weeks)



Mental & Spiritual Changes (1-2 weeks)



The Stages of Dying

- One to two days to hours prior to death



“You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.”

~ Dame Cicely Saunders

Resources

- www.nhpco.org
- www.alhospice.org
- www.hospicefamilycare.org
- Education Institute of Hospice Family Care - (256) 650-1212

References

- Dobbins, E., Helping your patient to a "good death," Nursing 2005, February, p.44
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