

Hospice MYTH vs. FACT

MYTH	FACT
Hospice is a Place	Hospice is compassionate, holistic care that prioritizes comfort, dignity, and peace of mind for patients and families facing terminal illness. Expert teams provide pain and symptom management, along with emotional, spiritual and grief support.
Hospice Care is Only for the Last Days of Life	Hospice care can last six months or longer, depending on the course of illness. Experts recommend at least three months of care for the greatest benefit.
All Hospice Programs are the Same	While all hospice providers offer core services, nonprofit organizations deliver the highest quality care through more patient visits, deeper community connections, experienced staff, and expanded support like unique programs, inpatient hospice facilities, and grief centers. They put people over profits
Hospice Care Only Supports the Patient	Hospice care supports both patients and their families, providing comfort and peace of mind. It focuses on the needs of the grieving family as much as on the dying patient.
Hospice is Giving Up Hope	Hospice care doesn't mean giving up hope, but shifts it toward living fully and creating meaningful moments. Hospice helps families cherish personal and spiritual connections during the end of life.
Hospice Care is Expensive	Hospice care helps lower healthcare costs by preventing unnecessary hospital visits and is fully covered by Medicare, Medicaid, most insurance plans, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and nonprofit assistance programs. Unlike other healthcare, hospice treats the patient and family together as one unit of care.
Once I Choose Hospice Care, I Can't Change My Mind and Discontinue Services	Hospice care can be stopped or resumed at any time based on the patient's choice.
Hospice Care Requires Stopping All Medications	Hospice does not require stopping medications that support the patient's well-being. Treatments that no longer help, cause side effects, or aim to cure the illness may be adjusted to prioritize comfort and quality of life.

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Hospice Care Means I Have to Give Up My Doctor and Routine Care	Your doctor collaborates closely with the hospice team to manage your pain and symptoms.
Hospice Care is Limited to Six Months	Hospice care typically begins when a physician certifies a life expectancy of six months or less, but care can continue as long as the patient remains eligible. Care duration is based on the patient's condition, needs, and choice of comfort-focused care, with re-certification possible if they outlive the initial prognosis.
Hospice Hastens Death	Research shows hospice patients often live longer than those without hospice, while enjoying comfort and quality time with loved ones.
I Need to Wait for My Doctor to Recommend Hospice Care	Doctors often delay recommending hospice due to discomfort discussing end-of-life care, causing patients to miss months of supportive care. Families can consult their doctor or contact a hospice program directly to explore services like symptom management, personal care, and emotional support.
Hospice is Only for People Who can Accept Their Terminal Diagnosis	Hospice helps patients and families come to terms with terminal illness at their own pace. Chaplains and social workers are available to discuss options and guide families through decisions.
Hospice Care is Only for Seniors	Hospice care supports patients of all ages—from unborn infants to seniors. Families seeking pediatric hospice should choose a program with specially trained staff who tailor care to the child and family's unique needs.
Hospice is Only for Cancer Patients	Hospice care supports not only cancer patients but also those with many life-limiting illnesses. Conditions such as advanced heart, lung, kidney, liver, and neurological diseases benefit greatly from holistic hospice care.
Hospice Patients Must Sign a DNR	A "Do Not Resuscitate" (DNR) order is never required in hospice care, and the decision to sign one is entirely up to the patient and family. Hospice honors each person's individual wishes regarding resuscitation.
Hospice Care is the Same as Home Health Care	Hospice care differs from home health care, as hospice patients don't need to be homebound.
Hospice Patients Cannot Travel	With careful planning, hospice patients can travel anywhere within the United States. Talk to your hospice nurse in advance to coordinate medical, logistical, and supply needs for a safe, meaningful trip.
Only a Doctor can Make a Referral to Hospice	Anyone—patients, families, friends, or care professionals—can refer someone to hospice. Early referrals help ensure patients and families receive the full benefits of care.



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