

What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care, also frequently referred to as **supportive care**, is specialized care for individuals with chronic and serious illnesses that focuses on treating and caring for the whole person. Palliative care is **very different** from hospice. Palliative care teams can address the following areas to improve the quality of life of their patients:

- physical
- emotional
- social
- spiritual

Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses, therapists, social workers, and other health professionals. This type of care would be beneficial for anyone diagnosed with Parkinson's and is ideally provided at **every** stage of the disease. Palliative care can be provided, and should be provided, in conjunction with current disease management.

How is Palliative Care Different From Hospice Care?

- Palliative care is ongoing care that helps people plan for the future, manage chronic pain and daily symptoms, and ultimately aims to increase the quality of life of people living with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers. This type of care can be provided for years.
- Hospice care focuses on end-of-life and comfort, mainly through the form of pain management. This type of care is typically only provided for weeks to months.

Key Elements of Palliative Care for Parkinson's Patients:

- addressing non-motor symptoms
- managing chronic pain
- providing emotional and spiritual support and care
- also addressing the needs of the care partner
- continual advanced care planning
- partnering with other doctors to provide a well rounded and communicative care time
- can provide guidance on various treatment options that may improve quality of life

How to Start Receiving Palliative Care:

- Any doctor who is currently on your care team and give you a referral to Palliative Care at your request. It may be best to ask either your primary care doctors or your neurologist/movement disorder specialist as they may be the most familiar with your care and condition.
- Medicare Part B will cover Palliative Care services. Check your specific plan for coverage benefits.