

# Palliative Care

*For UWMC oncology patients*



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digital copy of  
this handout.*

## What is palliative care?

Palliative care is special kind of healthcare. It focuses on easing the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve the quality of life for patients, families, and caregivers.

Palliative care is for anyone with a serious illness. It is not based on the patient's age or stage of illness. Palliative care can be provided to patients with cancer while they are getting active treatment, including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and immunotherapy.

The Palliative Care team at UWMC is a special service that offers extra support and comfort for patients and families living with a serious diagnosis. This team attends to all aspects of the patient's well-being. This includes their emotional and spiritual needs, and what they value most. They can also help guide talks between patients, families, and the healthcare team.

## How does the palliative care team help patients and families?

The palliative care team can help patients and their families:

- Manage pain and other physical and emotional symptoms
- Cope with the stress of living with a serious illness
- Coordinate care among all providers and care settings
- Connect to information and resources
- Talk about complex health issues
- Make important decisions
- Align the healthcare plan with their personal goals
- Plan for the future
- Cope with grief and loss
- Live as well as possible for as long as possible



*Palliative care providers can be present  
during talks with your healthcare team.*

## What happens during a palliative care consult?

During a palliative care consult, we will focus on getting to know you as a person. We will explore how your illness has affected you and your family, both physically and emotionally.

Some of the questions we may ask are:

- What is most important to you?
- What is your understanding of your current situation?
- What are you hoping for during this time of uncertainty?
- What concerns you the most?
- What should we know about you as a person to give you the best care possible?

## How do we learn more?

Talk with your care team about palliative care. Ask them to request a palliative care consult for you.

### Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

**Your provider or social worker's name and number:**

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