

# The Meaning of Hospice Care And How to Start the Conversation

Hospice is a philosophy of care that focuses on maintaining the quality of life for people who are experiencing an advanced, life-limiting illness. While many people know of hospice care for cancer patients, it is important to note that it can benefit anyone who has a life-limiting illness. Hospice care does not necessarily mean the patient is dying but rather that the illness they are suffering from has made death a realistic possibility.



The overall goal of hospice care is to maintain or improve the quality of life for someone whose illness is unlikely to be cured. Know that hospice care does not mean “giving up” or that all hope is lost. It means that the patient will be receiving the compassionate care and attention they need to live as fully and comfortably as possible during these challenging times.

## How to Speak to a Loved One About Hospice

It's not an easy topic but talking to your loved one about hospice care is a discussion worth having. Before you begin the conversation, choose the right space. Make sure you are both comfortable and are in a location where you won't be interrupted. Turn off potential interruptions such as cell phones.

A good starting place for the discussion is reviewing your loved one's health condition. Have they been declining? Are there still available treatment options? Do they want to try these treatment options? And most importantly, what kind of quality of life would they like to have?

When life has been consumed by a serious illness and the required treatment for so long, it is likely that your loved one will wonder how life can be enjoyed at this point and going forward.

Discuss the benefits of hospice care with your loved one. If your loved one is making frequent visits to the doctors or hospital, they may be pleased to learn that hospice care teams can make home visits. Conclude the discussion by explaining to your loved one that hospice care doesn't mean giving up but rather focusing on enjoying life.

If you have any questions about hospice care or would like to speak to our team about your options, please contact CovenantCare at Home at (877) 708-7689.