

Misconceptions about hospice often prevent people from receiving the compassionate, life-enhancing care they deserve. Get the facts and learn how hospice helps families make every moment count.

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MYTH: Hospice means giving up.

FACT: Hospice is about living. It includes physical, spiritual, and emotional support that increases comfort and empowers individuals to live fully and focus on what matters most to them.

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MYTH: You must be a few days away from dying to qualify for hospice.

FACT: Hospice helps families make the most of the time they have — whether that time is brief or extends well beyond six months. Each person’s journey is unique, and hospice is there to provide comfort, support, and dignity every step of the way.

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MYTH: All treatments stop during hospice.

FACT: While curative or life-prolonging treatments stop during hospice, those that provide symptom relief continue.

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MYTH: Hospice is only provided in a hospice facility.

FACT: In most cases, hospice care is provided wherever the patient calls home — whether that’s their house, a nursing home, or an assisted living facility.

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MYTH: You can no longer see your doctor once you accept hospice services.

FACT: Patients should keep their primary care providers during hospice. Hospice team members — including doctors, nurses, nurses’ aids, chaplains, social workers, bereavement counselors, and volunteers — work alongside primary care providers to deliver holistic support to patients and families.

MYTH: Hospice care is expensive and not covered by insurance.

FACT: Most hospice costs are usually covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance.

- **Private Insurance:** Review your plan or call your insurance company. The best number is usually on the back of your insurance card.
- **Medicare:** If you have Medicare Part A, most hospice services are covered. To check your Medicare coverage, you can call 1-800-MEDICARE.
- **Medicaid (MaineCare):** Contact MaineCare Member Services at 1-800-977-6740 to learn about your benefits.

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MYTH: Hospice makes people die sooner.

FACT: Hospice doesn't speed up death. It focuses on increasing comfort and helping patients and families make the most of every moment. Studies show hospice patients often live longer due to better symptom management.

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MYTH: Hospice is only for terminally ill cancer patients.

FACT: Hospice is for anyone with a serious illness and a life expectancy of approximately six months or less, based on the illness's typical progression. This includes conditions such as advanced cancer, heart failure, lung disease, and dementia, among others.

MYTH: Hospice is only for the elderly.

FACT: Anyone with serious illness and a life expectancy of approximately six months or less is eligible for hospice, regardless of their age.