

What is hospice?

Hospice is a special form of care for people who have been diagnosed with terminal illnesses. Hospice care can provide you with physical, emotional, and spiritual comfort, and help relieve symptoms such as pain and nausea. Hospice care also gives support to your caregivers and family. The goal is not to cure you, but to care for you—to help improve the quality of your final days by offering comfort and dignity.

Kaiser Permanente Hospice Programs

Hospice services are provided by Kaiser Permanente Hospice Programs in Northern California and contracted community-based hospices. If you would like to make a contribution, please send it to the specific agency providing your care.

Antioch
(925) 813-6399

Fresno
(559) 448-3535

Hayward and Fremont
(510) 675-5777

Livermore, Martinez, and Walnut Creek
(925) 229-7801

Modesto
(209) 557-6940

Oakland and Richmond
(510) 752-6390

Redwood City
(650) 299-3970

Roseville, Sacramento, and South Sacramento
(916) 486-5300

San Francisco and South San Francisco
(415) 833-3655

San Jose
(408) 361-2150

San Rafael
(415) 893-4132

Santa Clara
(408) 342-6699

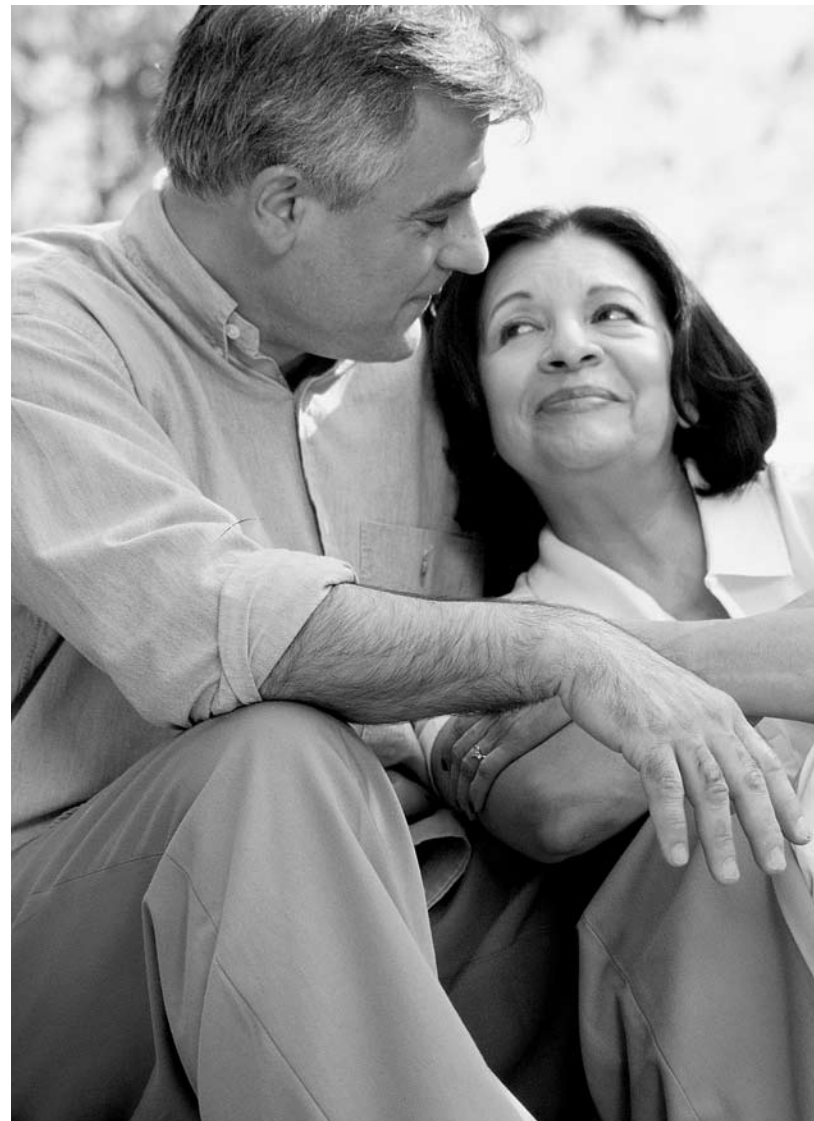
Santa Rosa
(707) 571-4633

Stockton and Tracy
(209) 557-6940

Vallejo
(707) 645-2730

Choices

AN INTRODUCTION TO HOSPICE



How is hospice different from other medical services?

Hospice care is palliative care, which means the focus is on your comfort rather than on trying to cure your illness. Hospice care is usually provided in your home.

Who is eligible for hospice care?

To receive care through a Kaiser Permanente Hospice Program, you must meet the following criteria:

- Your personal physician has diagnosed that you are terminally ill.
- You and your physician agree that hospice care is appropriate. Your family should also be involved in the decision.
- The home where you will be receiving the hospice care is inside the Health Plan's service area. The home may be a friend's or relative's home, even if you live there temporarily.
- The services related to your terminal illness can be safely and effectively provided in the home.

Why choose hospice?

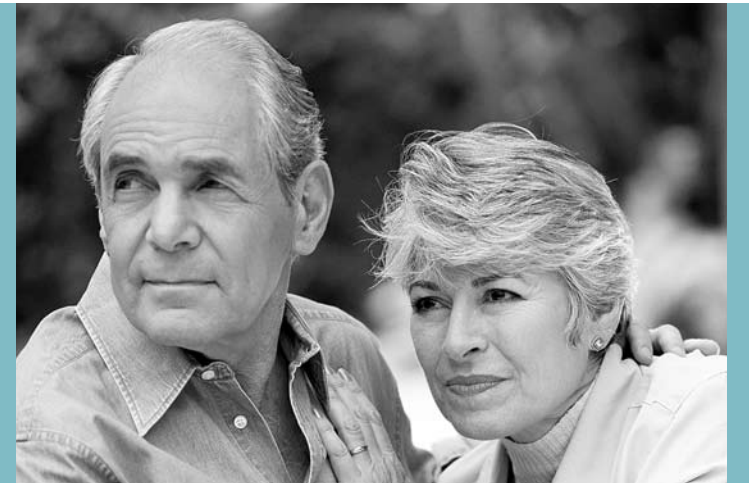
People choose hospice when they do not wish to seek further treatment for their terminal illness. If you choose hospice care, you will receive noncurative medical and support services.

Who provides the care?

Your caregiver can be a member of your family, a friend, neighbor, significant other, or someone you hire. Your caregiver will work with you with the help of a care plan that is developed by your physician and members of your hospice team.

Your caregiver may provide personal care such as supervising your activities, feeding you, changing linens, bathing, and administering medication.

If you don't have a designated caregiver, your physician will evaluate your condition to determine the level of care you require. Hospice staff can also assist you and your family in finding a caregiver to hire if necessary, but you and your family are responsible for the cost of that care.



What does hospice provide?

Hospice offers care from a team of practitioners from many disciplines who work together to meet the medical, psychological, and spiritual needs of you and your family.

Phone advice

Hospice provides you and your family with a phone number to call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to help answer any questions you may have.

Medication, equipment, and supplies

Once you are admitted into the Hospice Program, you will be provided with medical appliances, medical supplies, and medications for symptoms and pain relief. For details of your coverage, see your *Evidence of Coverage* booklet.

Physician

Your personal physician continues to provide your care while you're in the Hospice Program. A hospice physician works closely with your personal physician and is available for consultation.

Nurse

A nurse visits during the week to instruct your caregivers and to coordinate your care. A nurse informs the hospice physician of your condition on a regular basis.

Social worker

A social worker helps you and your caregiver by offering emotional support; assisting with practical matters, such as finding additional help in the home; and providing grief counseling for family members and loved ones.

Other services

Home health aide/Homemaker services

A home health aide visits during the week as needed to assist you and your caregiver with personal care, such as changing linens, giving you a bath, or helping you get dressed. Homemaker services include light, patient-related housekeeping. The hospice team will work with you to determine if a hospice aide is necessary.

Chaplain

The chaplain is a minister or counselor dedicated to meeting the spiritual needs of you and your family, regardless of your religious affiliation. The chaplain is available upon your or your family's request, and can work with your personal clergy person. If you have your own minister, rabbi, or priest, that person may also be involved in your hospice care plan.

Volunteer

A volunteer is someone from the community who has been trained by our Hospice Program to act as a helper or companion to you and your family. Volunteers provide services under the direction of a hospice staff member.

What about medical appointments?

Your personal physician is in charge of your care, even after you're admitted to our Hospice Program. A hospice physician will work with your personal physician to provide you with the care that you need.

What kinds of care needs might arise?

At some point, you may become confined to bed and be unable to turn over or eat without help. Your caregiver may need to change diapers and linens and care for your skin to prevent bedsores. Hospice nurses will teach caregivers how to perform these tasks.

What if a difficult situation arises?

We understand that caregivers may face very difficult situations. A 24-hour phone line puts the caregiver in touch with a hospice-trained nurse who can give advice over the phone or make a home visit when necessary.

When will inpatient care be provided?

Inpatient care is provided in a skilled nursing facility or hospital if medically necessary. We may also provide short-term inpatient care in order to provide relief for your caregivers.

When is the best time to choose hospice?

When your physician determines that you have a terminal illness, you, your family or caregiver, and your personal physician can decide whether hospice is appropriate. Choosing hospice is a very personal decision, and you do not need to be confined to bed before making the choice.