

Making the Decision

If you are reading this page, it is probably because you and your family are faced with making a decision about whether it is time to choose hospice. You may be making this decision for yourself or for a loved one. We know you must be experiencing feelings of disbelief, denial, anger and even overwhelming sadness. Please understand that all of these feelings are normal. It is important to remember that hospice is not about giving up. Hospice is about getting the help, the medical care and emotional support that you and your family need right now.

Don't worry, we are here to help you

Deciding when to begin hospice is a very personal decision. It often becomes clear when tests, treatments and constant hospital stays bring more distress than progress. Most of the time, families must first mention hospice to their doctors. Once families ask about hospice, most physicians often find it easier to talk about. There are some instances where it is very difficult for a doctor to recognize that a treatment isn't working or that the treatment is causing more distress than benefit. They too, want to provide healing and help the patient keep fighting. Hospice Care is doing away with treatments that are not working or cause distress but have no lasting benefit. The focus now becomes comfort rather than cure.

These are some signs to look for:

- An increased amount of time sleeping
- Decrease in eating or drinking
- Noticeable weight loss
- Shortness of breath
- Frequent trips to the emergency room

We know that making the decision for hospice is very difficult, but it is one of the most loving decisions that you can make. In many situations, this is a very special time for a family. It becomes a time where families can have conversations that are long overdue or do some of those things that have been delayed or put off. It's an opportunity to listen to family stories and a time to tie up loose ends. This time is precious and to honor it requires a lot of courage. Having a hospice team to walk through this with you makes all the difference.