

Hospice Care for Heart Disease Patients

VITAS Can Help.

VITAS[®]
Healthcare



When is the right time to ask about hospice?

VITAS offers those whose lives are limited by a weakened heart the opportunity to live more comfortably. Hospice care addresses the physical, emotional and spiritual needs that may accompany a terminal illness.

In the case of end-stage heart disease, it can be difficult for patients, families and even physicians to determine when it might be time for hospice. The progress of heart failure in its final stages is often unpredictable, and symptoms can vary. As a result, the majority of heart disease patients who could benefit from hospice never receive this essential emotional and physical support.

Patients are considered to be in the end stages of heart disease when they have a life expectancy of six months or less. Generally, a patient is hospice eligible if he or she:

- Has advanced congestive heart failure or advanced coronary disease with frequent episodes of angina (chest pain resulting from insufficient supply of blood and oxygen to the heart)
- Has an abnormal heart due to disease, and suffers significant symptoms of fatigue, shortness of breath or functional decline
- Has already received optimal treatment for his or her disease and is not a candidate for further surgical or medical intervention
- Has already received optimal treatment for his or her disease and has chosen not to pursue advanced specialized treatment

Anyone can inquire about hospice services. You, your loved one or your physician may request an evaluation to see if hospice is an appropriate care option. Call now to see how VITAS can help.

Hospice for end-stage heart disease

VITAS has set the standard for palliative treatment of end-stage heart disease in all its various forms. The hospice plan of care is designed for the treatment of a wide range of physical symptoms, including:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Weakness and fatigue
- Functional decline
- Hypertension

The collaborative approach at VITAS is designed to do more than manage the physical condition. We promote comfort and preserve dignity while offering patients and families greater options and resources to address the enormous need that can accompany a terminal illness.



Only hospice can implement a plan of care that provides:

- Interdisciplinary teamwork
- Emotional and spiritual support
- Medications, medical supplies and equipment related to the hospice diagnosis
- Training so loved ones can assist in caring for the patient
- Grief support to surviving loved ones

Levels of hospice care

A pioneer in the field of end-of-life care, VITAS is proud to offer unsurpassed service across all four levels of hospice care:

- **Routine Home Care:** available wherever the patient calls home (residence, nursing home, assisted living community)
- **Intensive Comfort Care®** (Continuous Care): medical management in the home for up to 24 hours per day when medically appropriate
- **Inpatient Care:** when medical needs cannot be managed at home
- **Respite Care:** allows the patient a brief inpatient admission to provide caregivers a “respite”

Who pays for VITAS services?

VITAS accepts Medicare, Medicaid/Medi-Cal, private insurance and other forms of reimbursement for its hospice services.

All hospice organizations are reimbursed in the same way, so they do not compete on cost. It is the quality of service and spectrum of choices that differentiate one hospice from another.

VITAS Healthcare can help.
Call VITAS at 800.723.3233
or visit VITAS.com

Your VITAS care team

Because patients who have end-stage heart disease have a broad range of needs, their care is coordinated by a highly trained interdisciplinary team.

- **Physician** who works with the patient’s primary care physician in controlling pain and symptoms
- **Registered nurse** who is skilled in assessing and managing pain
- **Social worker** who provides emotional support and helps with financial issues and planning
- **Hospice aide** who can help with personal care and hygiene, housekeeping, light laundry and occasional shopping
- **Chaplain** who works with the patient’s own clergy and offers spiritual support
- **Community volunteer** trained by VITAS to offer time and companionship
- **Bereavement specialist** who offers grief and loss support and helps with memorial services and other care for loved ones



Download Our Free Hospice Discussion Guide



- Make the right decisions for you and your loved ones
- Get answers to your hospice questions
- Learn how to start the hospice conversation

Find out more at HospiceCanHelp.com

For more information call 800.723.3233

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