

BEGIN AGAIN LIVING MINISTRIES

What to Expect When a Loved One Enters Hospice

A gentle introduction to comfort-focused care and family support

A COMPLIMENTARY GUIDE FOR HOSPICE FAMILIES

Compassionate guidance for caregiving, grief, and end-of-life transitions.

From Diagnosis to Goodbye™

A New Kind of Care

Hearing the word hospice can bring fear, uncertainty, and many questions. Hospice does not mean that your loved one is being abandoned. It means the focus of care is shifting toward comfort, dignity, quality of life, and support for the whole family.

Hospice is not about giving up. It is about surrounding the person and family with comfort, presence, and support.

What Hospice Usually Provides

- ☐ A care plan centered on comfort and the person's goals
- ☐ Nursing support and symptom-management guidance
- ☐ Medications and equipment related to the hospice diagnosis, as covered by the hospice plan
- ☐ Social-work support for practical and emotional concerns
- ☐ Chaplain or spiritual-care support according to the person's beliefs and preferences
- ☐ Home health aide assistance when included in the plan of care
- ☐ Bereavement support for family members after the death

The exact services, visit frequency, coverage, and after-hours procedures vary. Ask your hospice team to explain the plan in plain language.

What Families May Notice

1. Care is guided by comfort

The team will regularly assess pain, breathing, restlessness, nausea, anxiety, skin care, and other concerns. Report changes promptly rather than waiting for the next scheduled visit.

2. The family remains an important part of the team

Hospice professionals provide guidance, but family members often continue much of the day-to-day presence and care. Tell the team honestly what you can and cannot manage.

3. Emotions may change from day to day

Relief, fear, sadness, anger, gratitude, and exhaustion can exist together. These reactions do not mean you are failing; they mean the situation matters deeply.

4. The person may want different kinds of conversation

Some people want to talk openly about dying. Others focus on ordinary life, memories, faith, unfinished business, or simply being together. Follow their lead when possible.

5. The plan can change

Needs may increase or decrease. Ask whom to call, what symptoms require immediate contact, and what to expect if the person's condition changes.

Questions to Ask the Hospice Team

- ☐ Who should we call during the day, at night, and on weekends?
- ☐ Which medications and supplies are included, and how are refills handled?
- ☐ What changes should we report immediately?
- ☐ How often will each team member visit?
- ☐ What should we do if symptoms are not controlled?
- ☐ What support is available for children, caregivers, and spiritual concerns?
- ☐ What should we expect as death approaches?

A Gentle Family Reminder

You do not have to say everything perfectly. Presence can be as meaningful as words. Sit nearby, listen, offer reassurance, share memories, play familiar music, pray if welcomed, and allow quiet moments.

You do not have to carry this journey alone. Support is available, and asking for help is an act of care.

About Begin Again Living Ministries

Begin Again Living Ministries offers compassionate education and support for individuals, families, caregivers, churches, and organizations navigating grief, caregiving, stress, and end-of-life transitions.

Visit: balministries.org

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