

# 5 Myths about palliative care

1

**Myth: Pain is a part of dying.**

**Fact:** Palliative care teams are specialists in managing a broad range of symptoms. If pain is experienced near end of life, there are many ways it can be alleviated.

2

**Myth: Doctors administer morphine to speed up death.**

**Fact:** Appropriate doses of morphine keep patients comfortable but do not hasten death. The founding tenet of palliative care is to neither hasten nor postpone death.

3

**Myth: People in palliative care who stop eating die of starvation.**

**Fact:** People with advanced illnesses don't experience hunger or thirst as healthy people do. People who stop eating die of their illness, not starvation.

4

**Myth: We need to protect children from being exposed to death and dying.**

**Fact:** Allowing children to talk about death and dying can help them develop healthy attitudes that can benefit them as adults. Like adults, children also need time to say goodbye to people who are important to them.

5

**Myth: Palliative care is only provided in a hospital/hospice.**

**Fact:** Palliative care can be provided wherever the person lives – home, long-term care facility, hospice or hospital.

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