

VITAS Knows How to Control Pain to Make Your Days Better



VITAS[®]
Healthcare

Pain can be controlled

Pain is the most feared and often the most undertreated symptom patients experience near the end of life. Uncontrolled pain can diminish quality of life and cause undue stress on patients and loved ones. Pain can take control of day-to-day activities and prevent patients from enjoying friends and family at this important time. It doesn't have to be this way.

VITAS' hospice patients don't have to fear pain. We educate patients and families to take away the fear of the unknown. We empower them to address many symptoms on their own. We provide expert support for pain management. The VITAS hospice team is available around the clock so patients never have to worry about bearing this burden alone.

Pain control is a specialty

VITAS believes the last months, weeks and days of life should be spent in comfort. Sometimes, this requires the expertise of hospice physicians who are trained to manage pain and symptoms.

For more than 35 years, the experts at VITAS have helped terminally ill patients find the best method of pain control. This means finding the most effective medications with the fewest side effects, in doses that do not impact mental clarity. We also offer patients non-medical treatments designed to ease pain and stress, including music and massage therapies.



How VITAS controls pain

VITAS clinical care experts focus on time-tested methods that minimize pain.

- At each visit, a thorough assessment is conducted to identify the type and degree of pain.
- Medication and dosages are continually adjusted based on the characteristics of the patient's pain.
- Our pain experts choose the most appropriate, least invasive route of therapy; whenever possible, oral medications are prescribed.
- Patients are taught how to self-administer medications so they can manage their own pain.
- Family members and caretakers are also instructed on how to safely and easily administer pain medications.
- Extra medications are provided for emergency management of symptoms.

- Patients and loved ones are informed of the disease process and the signs and symptoms that the disease is progressing.
- Patients are taught breathing and relaxation techniques to help cope with symptoms.
- Massage, music and other alternative therapies are offered as a complement to clinical care. (Availability varies by location.)
- With the VITAS Telecare® line, hospice experts are available around the clock for advice, reassurance and emergency home visits.

Beyond physical pain

Because end-stage illnesses often involve more than physical pain, VITAS offers a multidisciplinary-team approach to address emotional, social and spiritual needs and financial concerns. The team members vary according to patients' needs, but may include:

- **Physicians** who work with the patient's primary care physician in controlling pain and symptoms
- **Registered nurses** skilled in assessing and managing pain
- **Social workers** who provide emotional support and help with financial issues and planning
- **Hospice aides** who can help with personal care and hygiene, light housekeeping, light laundry and occasional shopping
- **Chaplains** who work with the patient's own clergy and offer spiritual support

- **Community volunteers** trained by VITAS to offer time and companionship
- **Bereavement specialists** who offer grief and loss support and help with memorial services and other care for loved ones

Help wherever you are

It is not necessary to be hospitalized to take advantage of VITAS' services. Our hospice physicians work with patients at home, in one of our dedicated hospice units, in a hospital, nursing home, assisted living community or other residential care facility.

Who pays for VITAS services?

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



What to do next

Without the support of hospice, patients near the end of life may not get the benefit of expert pain management. If you think hospice care may be the right decision for you or your loved one, talk with your physician.

You or your loved ones have the right to request an evaluation to see if hospice is an appropriate option to manage pain and symptoms. VITAS can also provide an informational visit simply to review options. Call now to see how we can help.

Guided by VITAS Values

Four VITAS Values are at the heart of everything VITAS does; they are the basis for every interaction with every patient and family every day:

- Patients and families come first.
- We take care of each other.
- I'll do my best today and do even better tomorrow.
- I am proud to make a difference.



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

Go to HospiceCanHelp.com

For more information call 800.723.3233

VITAS.com 

VITAS[®]
Healthcare