DEATH AS A "STAGE OF LIFE". EXPERIENCE OF PALLIATIVE CARE.

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When treatment becomes ineffective and there is no hope of a cure anymore, the goals of healthcare change.

Early planning of end-of-life care can reduce the manifestation of symptoms, ensure informed decision-making and focus on the quality of life of the patient and his family.

It is impossible to predict exactly what events will occur in the last stages of the disease. Planning can help reduce fear and uncertainty.

Relief of pain and symptoms.

Patient comfort is important at all stages of your child's cancer treatment. Common symptoms in the last stages of the disease include

- Excessive fatigue and lack of energy
- Emotional disorders such as depression, anxiety and irritability.
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Sleep disorders
- Changes in respiratory rhythm, heart rate and blood pressure
- Reduction of urine excretion during urination
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Incontinence of feces or urine
- Fever
- Convulsions (convulsions)
- Confusion or other changes in the brain

Palliative care plays an important role in relieving pain and symptoms in the last stages of the disease. Each situation is individual, but there are a number of tried and tested approaches that will help your child feel comfortable. Doctors may recommend specific medications, palliative care, or additional therapies.

The palliative care team includes a number of specialists who provide support to the child and family. Specialists in psychology, child development, spiritual care and social work can join a multidisciplinary treatment team, depending on the needs of individual patients in the last stages of the disease.

Advance care planning

of the disease. However, planning ahead can help reduce fear and anxiety. It can also give your family time to make decisions that match their priorities and values. Palliative care professionals can prepare families for the various options they may face. Honest and open communication can help the patient's family make an informed decision about treatment, taking into account the benefits and consequences.

In the last stages of the disease, medical treatment pursues one of two main goals

- 1. medical care for life extension
- 2. medical care to maintain comfort.

Medical intervention at the last stage of the disease includes

- Surgery or radiotherapy to treat symptoms caused by a tumor
- relief of breathing with oxygen therapy or artificial respiration
- medical nutrition (enteral nutrition)
- Intravenous fluids to maintain fluid balance in the body.
- Blood transfusion
- Administration of antibiotics to fight infection
- Administration of anticonvulsants
- Life-prolonging chemotherapy

A team of palliative care specialists can help the patient's family consider other important end-of-life care decisions. The family can ask the palliative care team to help them develop preliminary medical guidelines according to their wishes. Having documented them, the family can be sure that these requests and wishes will be taken into account. Such written instructions include refusals from resuscitation and POST forms.

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