

# 10 Signs It May Be Time for Hospice

Recognizing when comfort-focused care is the most loving choice for your family

◆ Westlake Village Hospice, INC

◆ Written by our Hospice Care Team

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Many families wait too long to consider hospice. The signs below — when they appear consistently — are our care team's most reliable indicators that hospice care would improve your loved one's quality of life right now.

**Remember:** Choosing hospice is not giving up. It is choosing to prioritize comfort, dignity, and quality time — and it is almost always available sooner than families expect.

## The 10 Signs

### 1 Multiple hospitalizations in the past 6 months

If your loved one has been admitted to the ER or hospital repeatedly for the same condition — and is not improving — the illness is progressing despite treatment. Hospice can often prevent these stressful hospitalizations.

### 2 Physician says "there is nothing more we can do"

If the primary physician or specialist indicates that curative options have been exhausted, or that treatment is causing more harm than benefit, it is time to ask about hospice eligibility.

### 3 Uncontrolled pain, shortness of breath, or nausea

Symptoms that are difficult to manage at home — despite medications — are a hallmark sign. Hospice teams specialize in exactly this. We bring palliative medication expertise directly to your home.

### 4 Significant, unintended weight loss (10%+ in 6 months)

Unexplained weight loss signals that the body is no longer able to absorb nutrition effectively — a common pattern in terminal illness progression across many diagnoses.

5

**Increasing difficulty swallowing food or medications**

Dysphagia (difficulty swallowing) is a late-stage symptom in many illnesses. It signals reduced neurological or muscular function and increases risk of aspiration pneumonia.

6

**Increased time sleeping — sleeping most of the day**

As the body conserves energy due to illness, sleep increases dramatically. Extended periods of sleeping or unresponsiveness are a natural part of the body's preparation process.

7

**Increasing confusion, disorientation, or withdrawal**

Cognitive changes — confusion about time, place, or person; hallucinations; or quiet withdrawal from loved ones — are common in advanced illness and can be managed with hospice support.

8

**Loss of ability to perform daily activities (bathing, eating, walking)**

When a person can no longer independently manage two or more activities of daily living (ADLs), this indicates functional decline that hospice can directly support through aide services.

9

**The patient is saying "I'm ready" or refusing further treatment**

When patients themselves express that they are tired of fighting, ready to focus on peace, or declining further treatment — they deserve to be heard. Hospice honors this decision with dignity.

10

**Family caregiver is overwhelmed and exhausted**

Caregiver exhaustion is a valid medical signal. When the primary caregiver can no longer safely manage care alone, hospice provides professional support that benefits both patient and family.

**If you recognized 3 or more of these signs in your loved one**, we encourage you to call us today. A free, no-obligation consultation with one of our care coordinators takes about 20 minutes and will give you an honest assessment of whether hospice is appropriate right now.

**One Call Changes Everything**

Let our team answer your questions — no commitment, no charge.

**(818) 791-0611**

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