

Ira Byock, MD

# The Best Care Possible

A PHYSICIAN'S QUEST TO TRANSFORM CARE THROUGH THE END OF LIFE

A doctor on the front lines of hospital care illuminates one of the most important and controversial ethical issues of our time.

**Ira Byock**, one of the foremost palliative-care physicians in the country, argues that how we die is among the biggest national crises facing us today.

In addressing the sorry state of dying in America, politics has trumped reason. Dr. Byock explains that to ensure the best possible care for those we love—and eventually ourselves—we must not only remake our healthcare system, we must also move past our cultural aversion to talking about dying and acknowledge the fact of mortality once and for all. In so doing, we can live emotionally authentic, healthier, and more joyful lives.

**Dr. Byock describes what palliative care really is**, and with a doctor's compassion and insight, puts a human face on the issues by telling richly moving, heart-wrenching, and uplifting stories of real people during the most difficult moments in their lives.

**Dr. Byock takes us inside his busy, leading-edge academic medical center** to show what the best care through the end of life can look like and how doctors and nurses can profoundly shape the way families experience loss.



**Dr. Byock** is a practicing Palliative Medicine physician and Professor at Dartmouth Medical School.

**Dr. Byock** has been a consistent advocate for the voice and rights of incurably ill patients and their families. His essays have appeared in the *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal*. His work has been featured on *All Things Considered*, *Talk of the Nation*, *Nightline*, *The NewsHour*, and HBO's *Letting Go*.

In November 2009, Dr. Byock and his team were featured on *CBS 60 Minutes* in a segment, *The Cost of Dying*, which won a Peabody award for journalism. He has been involved in hospice and palliative care since 1978. He is a Past President (1997) of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and widely acknowledged as one of the leaders who has shaped the field.



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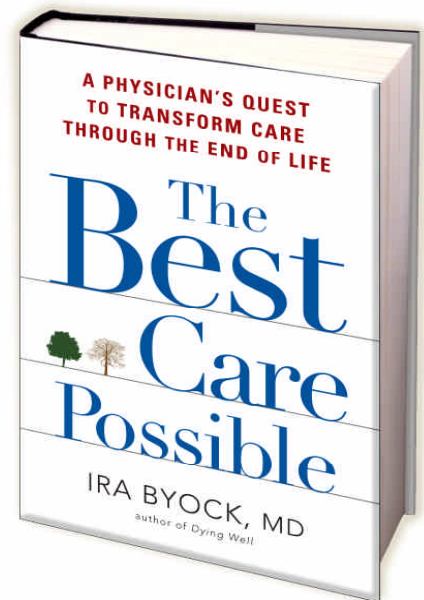
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#### Previous books:

*Dying Well*, ISBN 1-5732-2657-2, Riverhead Books, 1998

*The Four Things That Matter Most*, ISBN 074324909, Simon & Schuster / FreePress, 2004

*A Few Months to Live*, with co-authors Jana Staton and Roger Shuy, ISBN 0-87840-840-1, Georgetown University Press, 2001

*Palliative and End-of-Life Pearls*, co-edited with John E. Heffner, M.D., ISBN 1-56053-500-8, Hanley and Belfus, 2002

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