

How Can I Prepare and make informed choices when I have a serious health condition?

Learn More

Discuss your health status with your doctor and/or other healthcare providers. Based on your current condition ask what your future may hold.

Talk with those important to you

Talk to your family and support networks about your wishes, values and goals.

Determine who would make health care decisions on your behalf, (your Substitute Decision Maker SDM), in the event you are not able to make your own decisions.

- Understand who is your default SDM(s) or name a person(s) if you are not satisfied with your default SDM.
- If you not satisfied with your default SDM complete a Power of Attorney for Personal Care document to name your SDM(s).

Engage with your Health Care Team

Talk with your team about what is important to you. Ask questions about treatments on the plan being offered. Information should include understanding of your condition, details of the treatment, side effects, benefits, burdens and risks. Your questions should be answered and any alternative options explored.

We also encourage you to express your wishes about future care.

Learn about how sharing your wishes is linked to informed consent and decision-making.

The Speak Up Ontario website has resources and materials related to health care consent and advance care planning. There are links, information, workbook and supports for engaging in conversations with family, friends, health care providers and especially your SDM. Share your values and wishes for future health and personal care. Sharing your wishes can help prepare for decision-making on treatments and care.

Visit:

www.speakupontario.ca

-Workbook and quick guide.

<http://www.speakupontario.ca/resource/acp-workbook/>

- Tips sheets on consent and advance care planning.

<http://www.speakupontario.ca/resource/ace-tip-sheets/>

References:

1. Health Care Consent Act, 1996
2. Predictors of survival following hospital CPR, Canadian Medical Association Journal, August 20, 2002, 167(4).

Southwest Palliative Pain and Symptom Management
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DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN WE ASK

Making an Informed Decision about Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)



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Making Health Care Decisions

Although some discussions and decisions about your health care may be difficult, it is always best to be prepared. When it is time to make important decisions, we'll openly share information to help you make informed decisions.

One of the plans of treatment we'll discuss with you is related to Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation or CPR. CPR is not appropriate for everyone because it will not benefit people who have advanced illness or at the natural end of their lives. Based on each person's medical condition, it is a physician's role to determine and share whether or not CPR will be of benefit.

You have the right to know about what is involved in any treatments. If you don't want a certain treatment and choose to allow natural death, your health care team will offer alternatives to keep you comfortable. You will always be offered medical care. You have the right to change your mind about treatments at any time.

If I make a decision to not have CPR in my plan of treatment how is the information shared?

The health care provider will record the decision in your health record, specific forms may be completed and the information should be shared with your health care team. It is a good idea for you to share this decision with your family and Substitute Decision Maker(s) (SDM) so they can know your decision about CPR.

Understanding CPR

We'd like to share information to help you understand more about the medical treatment called Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation or CPR. You have the right to know what is involved in CPR, the expected benefits, risks and side effects. You have the right to refuse any treatment, including CPR.

What is CPR?

When a person's heart suddenly stops beating and/or lungs stop working, CPR is the medical treatment used to restart the heart and breathing.

CPR may include:

- Pumping on the chest
- Electric shocks
- Machines that breath for the person
- Intravenous medications.

CPR is an aggressive treatment that is not right for everyone whose heart or breathing stops.

When is CPR most effective?

CPR works best and can save lives when the:

- Heart and/or lungs unexpectedly stop due to:
 - Heart attack
 - Severe allergic reaction
 - Drowning
- Person is quite healthy
- Procedure begins right away.

Whenever you have questions about your care or treatment please speak with your doctor or nurse. If there is no decision regarding CPR in an emergency CPR will be initiated.

The reality about CPR

Many people believe that CPR saves everyone, even those at the natural end of their lives. This is not true. On television, CPR often looks easy and successful. The benefits of CPR are almost zero if a trained person does not begin CPR immediately.

The reality is that serious side effects often occur and patients could end up in worse condition. Success rates are low even in hospitals where only 12 in 100 live through the procedure and go home.

When is CPR not appropriate?

The results of CPR are never certain. Sometimes CPR does not work at all or the person may survive with brain and organ damage, broken ribs or other serious medical conditions.

Here are some guidelines health care teams use when discussing options with residents (patients), families and Substitute Decision Makers. CPR is usually not an appropriate treatment for people who:

- Have advanced or long-term medical illness
- Are at the natural end of their life.

