

# My Advance Care Plan: My wishes for care at the end of Life

There are some circumstances when an injury or illness cannot be reversed or cured. In some cases medical procedures, called **interventions**, will only prolong life and delay death. These procedures could include mechanical ventilation, tube feeding, intravenous fluids or other treatments (see our Word List on pages 11 and 12 of this workbook for more information). It is important to think about your wishes should you have a life limiting condition that cannot be reversed or cured. Would you want to be treated with these types of medical procedures?

You may also have other wishes related to your care at the end of life – such as specific spiritual rituals you may want to have performed or to have music playing. You can use the questions below to document your wishes for care.

Consider answering the following questions to help guide you and your Substitute Decision Maker(s) in discussions. Remember that you can change your mind at any time – just be sure that you communicate any changes to your Substitute Decision Maker(s).

1. What do I value most in terms of my mental and physical health? (For example, being able to live independently, being able to recognize others, being able to communicate with others.)

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2. What would make prolonging life unacceptable for me? (For example, not being able to communicate with those around me, being kept alive with machines but with no chance of recovery, not having control of my bodily functions.)

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3. When I think about death, I worry about certain things happening. (For example, struggling to breathe, being in pain, being alone, losing my dignity.)

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4. If I were nearing death, what would I want to make the end more peaceful for me? (For example, family and friends nearby, dying at home, having spiritual rituals performed.)

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5. Do I have any spiritual or religious beliefs that would affect my care at the end of life? (For example, certain beliefs about the use of certain medical procedures.)

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6. Other wishes and thoughts. (Write down anything that would help others understand and support you at the end of life.)

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Note: You might also consider using the following tools to help you better understand your wishes:

Ottawa Hospital Research Institute Patient Decision Aids: features an A-Z directory of decision aids or a range of illnesses and treatments.  
<http://decisionaid.ohri.ca/index.html>

CANHELP is a tool that measures both what is important to an individual at the end of life and how satisfied they are with that aspect of care. When the questionnaire is completed (by the patient nearing the end of life, the caregiver or a health professional), a customized report is produced that provides guidance for communicating wishes to the health care team.  
[http://www.thecarenet.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=54](http://www.thecarenet.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54)

## My other planning documents:

In addition to this Advance Care Plan, I have also completed the following documents:  
(check all that apply, and note the location of each document)

<input type="checkbox"/> Written statement of my wishes about health care (e.g., Living Will, hand written note)	Location: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney for Personal Care	Location: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney for Property	Location: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Will	Location: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g., organ donation, specific bequests)	
_____ Name of Document:	Location: _____
_____ Name of Document:	Location: _____

## Now that you've made your plan...

### Congratulations on beginning the process!

Now that you've made your plan, it's time to tell others about it.

Continue the conversation about end-of-life care.

Talk to your future Substitute Decision Maker(s) about your plan and your wishes. They may have questions about your wishes about future care or want more details about what you have written in your plan. That conversation can give them the information and confidence to make decisions about your care during a difficult time.

Talk to your family members and friends – they need to know your wishes if you cannot communicate for yourself. Share your conversation and wishes with your doctor and health care providers as you see fit. Talking now will help reduce any anxiety and will help them better understand and honour your wishes at the end of life.

The choices you make at the end of life – for yourself and others – are important. Make sure that your voice is heard.

For more information about advance care planning, please visit:

[www.advancecareplanning.ca](http://www.advancecareplanning.ca)



