

Advance Directive

Care planning if you become unable to communicate your choices

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What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is a written document that helps explain your health care wishes to your loved ones and health care providers when you can't express them yourself.

You can accept all treatments, accept only treatments recommended by your health care provider, accept some treatments and refuse others, or refuse all recommended treatments.

You can choose to receive pain medication for comfort, even if you refuse other treatments.

What is an Advance Directive?

Advance Directive form

A legal document that can be used to assign someone you trust as your health care representative to make decisions for you. It also states how you want to be cared for if you are not able to make your own medical decisions.

Living will

A document providing specific instructions for your treatment, such as the use of breathing machines, blood transfusions and feeding tubes.

Medical Power of Attorney

A legal document that allows you to assign someone to make medical care decisions for you, if you are not able to. You should choose a family member, friend or other trusted person.

Do Not Resuscitate order

A document that states that you do not want anyone to attempt to resuscitate (save) you if your breathing or heart stops.

Portable orders for life-sustaining treatment (POLST)

This document filled out by you and your health care provider. It provides orders to be followed by all medical personnel — including emergency medical technicians. A POLST is not valid without your health care provider's signature.

Why should I create an Advance Directive?

If you do not have an Advance Directive, your providers may ask your family what to do. If they cannot or choose not to decide, you will receive the standard medical treatment for your condition.

Having your treatment decisions in writing will help you get the kind of care you want.

Am I required to have an Advance Directive?

Creating an Advance Directive is your choice.

Your health care providers cannot treat you differently based on whether or not you have an Advance Directive.

When should I create an Advance Directive?

You can become sick or injured at any age. It is important to have an Advance Directive if you are 18 or older, regardless of your health status.

What should I consider when creating an Advance Directive?

Talk with your family and friends about your personal beliefs on life-sustaining treatments and end-of-life care. Give your loved ones the details they need to make decisions for you.

Questions to think about:

- Would you want medical treatment to extend your life?
- When do you want medical treatment to stop?
- Does being pain-free or remaining independent affect your decisions?
- Do your religious, spiritual or moral beliefs affect the type of treatment you want?

What should I consider when creating an Advance Directive?

Questions to think about (continued):

- Do concerns about money affect your decisions?
- Would you want to receive fluids through a vein or food through a feeding tube?
- Would you want to be resuscitated if your breathing or heart stops?
- Would you want to be on a breathing machine for the rest of your life?
- What would you like done with your body when you die?

What should I consider when creating an Advance Directive?

Talk with your health care provider about questions you may have about life-sustaining treatments and end-of-life care.

You may want to know more about:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR): An emergency technique used if your heart or breathing stops.
- Comfort measures: Medical treatments such as pain medication and oxygen to keep you comfortable.
- Feeding tube: A device used to supply nutrition when you have trouble eating or drinking.
- Ventilator: A medical device that gives you oxygen if you can't breathe on your own.

How do I create an Advance Directive?

Get details about Advance Directives from your health care provider, local hospital, health plan or lawyer.

An Advance Directive must be signed before two adult witnesses who will not receive an inheritance after your death.

Download the form on the Oregon Health Authority's website at [**link.careoregon.org/oha-advance-directive**](https://link.careoregon.org/oha-advance-directive)

Does an Advance Directive expire?

Advance Directives do not expire. They remain in effect unless you decide to change them while you can speak for yourself verbally, in writing or in sign language.

Who should receive my Advance Directive?

Keep a copy for yourself and give copies to your family members. Give a copy to your health care provider to add to your medical record.

Your family and your provider can only follow your instructions if they have them.

What if my Advance Directive is not followed?

If your health care provider doesn't follow your advance directive, you can file a complaint. The complaint form can be found at [**healthoregon.org/hcrqi**](https://healthoregon.org/hcrqi)

Send your complaint to:

Health Care Regulation and Quality Improvement

Address: 800 NE Oregon St., #465, Portland, OR 97232

Email: mailbox.hclrc@state.or.us

Phone: 971-673-0540 (TTY 711)

Fax: 971-673-0556