

Important Facts about Advanced Directives

It's hard to think about being so sick that you cannot decide what health care you want. But it is important for everyone to get ready if that time comes.

Advanced Directives are forms you sign. You can name someone to make medical decisions for you if in the future you are unable to make these decisions yourself. They tell what health care you want or don't want, in case you cannot make your own choices. You can also say what treatment you want and what medical treatment you don't want if in the future you're unable to make your wishes known.

There are a number of types of advanced directives:

Living Will

A paper that spells out the medical treatments you would want if you were very sick. Some kinds of treatments that you may choose to have or not have are:

- Tube feeding
- Machines that breathe for you
- CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)

Health Care Proxy

You may hear this called a durable power of attorney (**DPA**) or a medical power of attorney (**POA**). A Health Care Proxy names the person you have chosen to make health care choices for you if you cannot make them yourself. Your doctor will decide when that time is. Choose someone you trust. Talk to that person honestly about treatments you would want and ones you wouldn't want.

DNR (Do Not Resuscitate)

A DNR order says that you do not want to have CPR if your heart stops or if you stop breathing.

We feel strongly that you must talk to your family and doctor about having an advanced directive. Your doctor can give you the forms and can answer any questions that you have.

If you want any more facts on advance directives, call Social Work Department at 718-794-6559.