

The Importance of Advance Directives

Why is an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE** important?

An advance directive is important when you're badly hurt or have a serious illness that keeps you from making medical decisions for yourself. It tells your doctors and other health care workers what type of care you would like to have.

What is an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE**?

Two parts of advance directives:

Part 1: Living Will - a form that states the type of medical treatment you want to receive as you near the end of your life and if you can no longer speak for yourself.



Part 2: Health Care Power of Attorney (POA) - allows you to name a person to make treatment decisions for you when you can't speak for yourself. This person can be a spouse, partner, parent, friend, or someone you trust to make health decisions for you.

When is the best time to create an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE**?

The best time to create an advance directive is when you are over 18 years old and capable of making your own medical decisions.

How to prepare an **ADVANCE DIRECTIVE**

❑ **Step 1**

Think about what kind of treatment you do or do not want in a medical emergency. (It is helpful to talk with your doctor about how your current health conditions might influence your health in the future. You can ask your doctor to help you understand and think through your choices before you put them in writing.)

❑ **Step 2**

Choose your health care agent. (This should be a person you trust to make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to make them yourself.)



❑ **Step 3**

Fill out the POA and Living Will forms.

❑ **Step 4**

Give copies of your Advance Directive to your family, doctor, and health care agent.

If you do not have an Advance Directive now, talk to your doctor as soon as possible!



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