

PLANNING YOUR CARE



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IMPORTANT CONCEPTS YOU SHOULD KNOW



What is CPR?

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR tries to get the heart to beat again if it stops. This involves pressing on a patient's chest and sometimes using an electric shock to restart their heart.

Frequently, CPR does not work. Most of the time in patients with an advanced diseases, CPR does not work.

What is a Ventilator?

Sometimes patients cannot breathe on their own. A ventilator involves putting a tube down the throat and connecting the patient to a machine that pushes air into their lungs.

Patients cannot talk or eat while on this machine. They also usually need very strong medicines while connected to a ventilator.



What is the ICU?

The Intensive Care Unit or ICU is place where very sick patients are cared for by specially trained staff. In the ICU patients receive the highest level of care. Special equipment is used to very closely monitor patients.

WHAT ARE THE THREE GOALS OF CARE?



LIFE PROLONGING CARE



LIMITED MEDICAL CARE



COMFORT CARE

WHAT IS LIFE PROLONGING CARE?

The main goal of this approach is to prolong life. Doctors do everything they can to keep patients alive, including CPR and placing them on a ventilator.

WHAT IS LIMITED MEDICAL CARE?

With this approach, prolonging life is still important, but not if it means having CPR or being placed on a breathing machine. The main goal is to get patients back to the way they were before they got sick.

Patients still receive different medical treatments for treatable problems such as antibiotics, medicines for treatable problems, and fluids through a vein.

WHAT IS COMFORT CARE?

The main goal of this approach is to maximize comfort and relieve symptoms. Doctors control uncomfortable symptoms such as pain, trouble breathing, or nausea. Care can take place at home, in hospice, at a nursing home, or sometimes in a hospital.

How do I start the conversation?

Think about what might be important to you at the end of life.

Talk with your loved ones and doctor about your values. Put this information in writing.



Once I make a decision about the kind of medical care I want, can I change my mind?

Of course! You can change your mind at any point.

It is a good idea to have several conversations with your family, friends and healthcare providers about these issues.