

# Resources

## Where can I find forms and other resources for preparing an advance directive?

- [UFHealth.org/advance-directives](http://UFHealth.org/advance-directives)
- [aarp.org](http://aarp.org) (Type “advance directives” in the website’s search engine)
- [agingwithdignity.org](http://agingwithdignity.org)  
Phone: 1.888.594.7437
- [aha.org/putitinwriting](http://aha.org/putitinwriting)
- [caringinfo.org](http://caringinfo.org)
- [floridabar.org](http://floridabar.org)
- [FloridaHealthFinder.gov](http://FloridaHealthFinder.gov)
- [nhdd.org](http://nhdd.org)
- [theconversationproject.org](http://theconversationproject.org)



***Please provide  
a copy of your  
living will to your doctor,  
spiritual counselor, attorney,  
loved ones, and/or  
health care surrogate.***

# Who will speak for you?



## **Life happens. Accidents happen.**

What do you want to happen if you become unable to make your own medical decisions?

You’re not too young to start thinking about preparing an advance directive.

Make your wishes known.

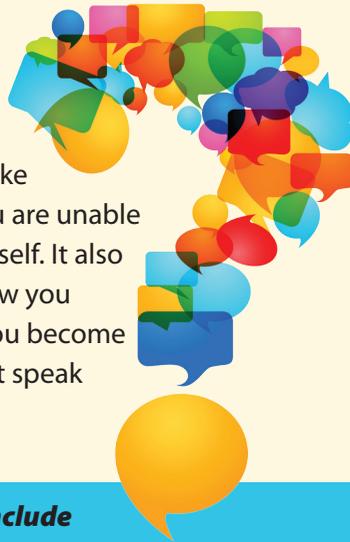


**Prepare an advance directive.  
Learn more at [www.nhdd.org](http://www.nhdd.org)**

# Advance directives

## What is an advance directive?

An advance directive lets you indicate who you would want to make decisions for you if you are unable to make them for yourself. It also lets you say exactly how you wish to be treated if you become seriously ill and cannot speak for yourself.



**Advance directives include a living will and the designation of a health care surrogate.**

## How can an advance directive help you and your family?

Completing an advance directive helps guide conversations with your family, friends and physicians about how you want to be treated if you become seriously ill. In addition, your family members will not have to guess what you would want, because an advance directive makes your wishes clear when you cannot speak for yourself.

## Who should consider having an advance directive?

Everyone age 18 or older is encouraged to prepare an advance directive.

## Do I need a lawyer to help me prepare an advance directive?

No, but a lawyer might be helpful.

# Living will

## What is a living will?

A written or verbal statement that expresses your wishes regarding the type of medical care you choose to receive, including **life-prolonging procedures and treatments**, if your doctor and another agreeing doctor find that you have a **terminal illness**, a **persistent vegetative state** or an **end-stage condition**. Your living will must have two witnesses, one of whom cannot be your spouse or blood relative. Your living will does not need to be notarized, but you must sign and date it. If you are unable to sign you can direct someone to sign for you, in your presence.

## What are life-prolonging procedures or treatments?

Procedures or treatments that are not expected to cure your terminal condition, but can artificially delay death.

## What is a terminal illness?

A condition caused by injury, disease or illness from which there is no reasonable medical probability of recovery and which, without treatment, can be expected to cause death.

## What is a persistent vegetative state?

A permanent and irreversible condition of unconsciousness in which there is the absence of voluntary action or cognitive behavior of any kind and/or the inability to communicate or interact purposefully with the environment.

## What is an end-stage condition?

An irreversible condition caused by injury, disease or illness that has resulted in progressively severe and permanent deterioration and for which, to a reasonable degree of medical probability, treatment would be ineffective.

# Health care surrogate

## Who is a health care surrogate and when does the designation take effect?

Your health care surrogate is a person you authorize via a Designation of Health Care Surrogate form to make medical decisions for you when you are unable to make your own decisions. It is important that you discuss your wishes in advance with your health care surrogate. If your health care surrogate does not know the decisions you would have made, he or she should make decisions based on what is in your best interest.

## Who can be a health care surrogate?

Any competent adult who is at least 18 years old can be your health care surrogate. Ask that person whether he or she agrees to act for you before you complete your advance directive. You may also want to choose a second person as an alternate in case your first choice is unavailable or otherwise unable to make decisions on your behalf. If you appoint your spouse as your health care surrogate and you later divorce, the appointment of your spouse is revoked unless you say otherwise in your advance directive.

## Does my Designation of Health Care Surrogate form have to be signed and witnessed?

Yes, you must sign and date the form or have someone else sign for you in your presence and at your direction if you are unable to sign. It must also be witnessed by two adults. Neither witness can be your designated surrogate, and at least one witness cannot be your spouse or a blood relative.