

## MEDICAL DECISIONS WORKSHEET

This worksheet is **not** an advance directive document. However it may help you talk with others about what treatments you would or would not want in situations where you could not speak for yourself.

**To ensure that you understand and make informed decisions about the situations and treatments below, you may want to discuss them with a knowledgeable person (e.g. a medical professional) before indicating your choices.**

Check the boxes that indicate your wishes regarding treatments for each of the A through F situations below.

<b>Situation A: If I have a chronic illness that causes physical suffering or minor mental disability and will ultimately cause death, and then I develop a life-threatening but <u>reversible</u> illness:</b>			
Treatments	I want	I do not want	I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through:			
• a tube inserted in a vein,			
• down the nose, or			
• through a stomach opening			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

<b>Situation B: If I am aware but have brain damage that makes me unable to recognize people, to speak meaningfully, or to live independently, and I do <u>not</u> have a terminal illness:</b>			
Treatments	I want	I do not want	I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through:			
• a tube inserted in a vein,			
• down the nose, or			
• through a stomach opening			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

**Situation C: If I am aware but have brain damage that makes me unable to recognize people, to speak meaningfully, or to live independently, and I have a terminal illness:**

<b>Treatments</b>	<b>I want</b>	<b>I do not want</b>	<b>I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.</b>
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tube inserted in a vein,</li> <li>• down the nose, or</li> <li>• through a stomach opening</li> </ul>			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

**Situation D If I am in a coma and have a small but uncertain chance of regaining awareness and higher mental functioning:**

<b>Treatments</b>	<b>I want</b>	<b>I do not want</b>	<b>I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.</b>
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tube inserted in a vein,</li> <li>• down the nose, or</li> <li>• through a stomach opening</li> </ul>			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

**Situation E: If I am in a coma or persistent vegetative state and have no known hope of recovering awareness or higher mental functions:**

Treatments	I want	I do not want	I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tube inserted in a vein,</li> <li>• down the nose, or</li> <li>• through a stomach opening</li> </ul>			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

**Situation F: If I am in my current state of health (describe briefly) \_\_\_\_\_**

**and develop a life-threatening but reversible illness:**

Treatments	I want	I do not want	I want a test. If no clear improvement, stop treatment.
1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The use of pressure on the chest, drugs, electric shocks, and artificial breathing to revive me if my heart stops			
2. Mechanical respiration. Breathing by machine, through a tube in the throat			
3. Artificial feeding. Giving food and water through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tube inserted in a vein,</li> <li>• down the nose, or</li> <li>• through a stomach opening</li> </ul>			
4. Major surgery. For example, removing the gall bladder or part of the intestine			
5. Kidney dialysis. Cleaning the blood by machine or by fluid passed through the abdomen			
6. Radiation, Chemotherapy. Drugs to fight cancer			
7. Minor surgery. For example, removing part of an infected toe			
8. Invasive diagnostic tests. For example, examining the stomach through a tube inserted down the throat			
9. Transfusions of blood or blood components			
10. Antibiotics. Drugs to fight infection			
11. Simple diagnostic tests			
12. Pain medications even if they dull consciousness and indirectly shorten my life			

Notes:

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Some medical terms used when talking about serious illness

### Advance Directives

Advance Directives are written instructions stating how you wish your medical decisions to be made if you become unable to make decisions for yourself.

In Texas, the directive often referred to in other states as a *Living Will* is called the **Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates**.

In Texas, the directive appointing a healthcare agent (or proxy) to speak for you when you are unable to speak for yourself is called the **Medical Power of Attorney**.

### Antibiotics

Antibiotics treat some infections (such as pneumonia) that can develop when a person is seriously ill. Antibiotics may also treat symptoms (such as with a bladder infection).

### Artificial nutrition

When a person can no longer eat or drink by mouth, liquid food can be given to them by tube.

### Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

CPR attempts to restart breathing and/or the heartbeat of a person who has no heartbeat and/or has stopped breathing. It typically involves “mouth-to-mouth” and forceful pressure on the chest to restart the heart. This procedure may also involve electric shock (defibrillation) or a plastic tube down the throat into the windpipe to assist breathing (intubation).

### Comfort measures / Palliative Care

Comfort measures describes care that is undertaken with the primary goal of keeping a person comfortable (rather than prolonging life).

### Intravenous (IV) fluids

IV fluids are administered directly into the vein via a small plastic tube (catheter). Typically, they are given on a short-term basis.

### Mechanical ventilation/respiration

When a person is no longer able to breathe on his/her own, a plastic tube is put down the throat and a machine pumps air in and out of the lungs through the tube.

### Tube feeding

On a short-term basis, fluids and liquid nutrients can be given through a tube in the nose that goes into the stomach (nasogastric or “NG” tube). For long-term feeding, a tube can be inserted through a surgical procedure directly into the stomach (gastric or “G” tube) or the intestines (jejunal or “J” tube).

Source: [www.polst.org/advance-care-planning/](http://www.polst.org/advance-care-planning/)