

Important Terms to Know

TERM	DEFINITION
Advance Care Planning (ACP)	<p>Advance care planning (ACP) is a process to help you reflect on and understand possible future healthcare choices based on your personal values. ACP will help you and those closest to you, as well as the health professionals who care for you, to make a plan for your future healthcare situations, including choosing the person(s) who will make decisions for you if you can't speak for yourself. Effective, early planning allows your choices to be known and will guide decision making. This process will provide great comfort to those who make decisions for you. Good ACP improves the quality of your life.</p>
Advance Directive (AD)	<p>An advance directive (AD) is how you document your wishes for future healthcare. An AD provides instruction about your preferred choices for future healthcare. The AD lists the person you have appointed to make medical choices for you if you are unable to make them yourself.</p> <p>Your AD may be a formal, legal document, or you may choose to communicate your choices more informally in a letter or by simply talking. In many circumstances, however, a formal, legal document that clearly reflects your goals and values may be the best way to ensure that your choices can be followed in the future. As long as you are capable of making your own decisions, you remain in control of your own medical care. When you become unable to make decisions, the choices listed in your AD will guide decision making.</p>
Antibiotics	<p>Antibiotics [an-ty-by-AH-tiks] are medicines used to treat infections caused by bacteria.</p>
Artificial Hydration	<p>Hydration is given through an IV or feeding tube when you cannot drink enough to give your body what it needs. Fluids are needed to keep the body hydrated.</p>
Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	<p>Cardiopulmonary [car-dee-oh-PULL-mon-air-ee] resuscitation [ree-suh-seh-TAY-shun] (CPR) is an emergency procedure to try to restart your heart and breathing if they stop. CPR can include pressing hard on your chest, mouth-to-mouth breathing or a tube to help get oxygen into your body, an electrical shock, and medicines.</p>
Code Status	<p>Code status is a term used by doctors and other healthcare professionals to describe procedures that can be performed if a person's heart stops or lungs fail. Code status can include the terms DNR or CPR. See <i>Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)</i> and <i>Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</i>.</p>
Comfort Care	<p>Comfort care is medical care and treatment, including oxygen and medicine, for immediate relief of pain and symptoms. It does not include ventilator support, artificial hydration and nutrition, or re-hospitalization. It is usually provided at a community care setting or home, rather than at the hospital, but can be provided in any setting.</p>

TERM	DEFINITION
Dialysis	Dialysis [die-AL-eh-sis] is when a machine is used to clean your blood if your kidneys are not working normally. Healthy kidneys clear waste products and extra fluid in your blood.
Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)	A Do Not Resuscitate [re-SUSS-eh-tate] (DNR) order is issued by a doctor. It tells emergency medical technicians, first responders, or emergency department staff that a person has decided they do not wish to be resuscitated.
End-of Life Care	End-of-life care is care provided to a patient who is nearing the end of their life. End-of-life care is often provided by hospice.
Feeding Tube	A feeding tube is a medical device used to provide nutrition. A gentle pump or large syringe is used to put liquid food into the body through a tube. It is usually given through a tube that is put through your nose into your stomach (for short-term use) OR through the skin into your stomach (for long-term use).
Healthcare Agent	A healthcare agent is a person selected by you who will know, understand, and honor YOUR wishes for personal medical treatment if an accident or illness keeps you from expressing those wishes yourself.
Hospice	Hospice is care provided by a team of specialists who promote quality of life when a person nears the end of life. A hospice team offers relief from the physical, emotional, and spiritual pain that can come with a terminal illness and other conditions. Hospice care can be provided in most settings.
Intravenous Line	An intravenous [in-trah-VEEN-us], or IV [eye-VEE] line, is a narrow, flexible, plastic tube placed in a vein using a needle. An IV line delivers fluids, medicine, blood, and nutrition.
Living Will	See Advance Directive .
Palliative Care	Palliative [pal-LEE-uh-tiv] care is specialized medical care for people with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms of a serious illness, rather than trying to cure it or extend life. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.
POLST / POST	A POLST and/or POST is a medical order that your doctor may recommend in order to record your healthcare wishes. A POLST provides specific instructions for emergency medical responders and other healthcare providers. A POLST form is not a replacement for a Health Care Directive and does not name a healthcare agent.
Ventilator	A ventilator [VEN-teh-lay-tor] is a machine that helps your lungs work. It pushes oxygen into your lungs and removes carbon dioxide. The machine connects to a tube that goes through your mouth and down your windpipe at the back of your throat.

Intermountain Health complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Se proveen servicios de interpretación gratis. Hable con un empleado para solicitarlo. 我們將根據您的需求提供免費的口譯服務。請找尋工作人員協助。

© 2020–2024 Intermountain Health. All rights reserved. The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns.

ACP520-E - 02/24 (Last reviewed - 02/24) Also available in Spanish.