

ADVANCED DIRECTIVE / LIVING WILL ...

PLANNING AHEAD: DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR LIVING WILL and/or A "MEDICAL or ADVANCED DIRECTIVE"

A Living Will ~~ is a document that specifies an individual's wishes regarding care and treatment if he or she becomes incapacitated, such as limiting life support that only prolongs dying. Most states have enacted laws regarding living wills, so it is important that the document be in accordance with the statutes of the state in which the subject resides. SOURCE: WEBSTER's Pocket Medical & First Aid Dictionary, rev. ed 1977, p.124

Living will declarations are intended to ease the burden on aggrieved family members who-in the absence of such a "will"-could be faced with making difficult medical decisions for their loved ones.

Click here for a copy of an: [Advance Directives Package](#)



An Advance Directives ~~ What kind of medical care would you want if you were too ill or hurt to express your wishes? Advance directives are legal documents that allow you to convey your decisions about end-of-life care ahead of time. They provide a way for you to communicate your wishes to family, friends and health care professionals, and to avoid confusion later on.

A living will tells how you feel about care intended to sustain life. You can accept or refuse medical care. There are many issues to address, including

- The use of dialysis and breathing machines
- If you want to be resuscitated if breathing or heartbeat stops
- Tube feeding
- Organ or tissue donation

A durable power of attorney for health care is a document that names your health care proxy. Your proxy is someone you trust to make health decisions if you are unable to do so. Source: *National Cancer Institute*

The law provides a statutory basis for individuals to declare their "will" regarding the use of artificial life support devices or extraordinary medical treatment-prior to the time when they become terminally ill and/or lapse into an irreversible coma or permanent unconsciousness. Read more "About Pennsylvania's Living Will Law" at www.fumo.com/State_Services/livingwill.htm; for a copy of Pennsylvania Advance Directives/Living Will endorsed by Governor Ed Rendell and Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Secretary of Aging,

Life-end Planning ~~ here are some tips for life-end planning:

- Talking to your doctor about your wishes and values concerning end-of life care. What would make life not worth living for you? Ask your doctor to note your views on your chart.
- Give a family member or trusted friend the legal authority to make medical decisions for you if you are unable. Talk to that person about your values and wishes.
- **Consider a living will.** If you do, be as specific as possible. You might include information about whether you want life-sustaining treatment; types of treatment you would or would not want and under what conditions; preferences about artificial nutrition and hydration; what if any pain control medication you want and under what circumstances; and whether you want to be an organ donar.
- Keep your living will in an accessible, easy-to-find spot. Tell your family where to find the document. Give copies to your doctor, family members likely to be involved in decision-making, hospitals that might treat you and your lawyer.

SOURCE: Associated Press, O-R, 11/26/04, p.B5

January 2007 ~~ PITTSBURGH: A new state law taking effect January 29, 2007, will determine how end-of-life decisions are made for Pennsylvanians who don't leave a living will or other instructions should they become incapacitated. Click here to [read the complete article here](#). Source: *Associated Press*, 1/29/07