

# Advance Medical Directive

An advance medical directive is a form that lets you plan ahead for the care you'd want if you could no longer express your wishes. This statement outlines the medical treatment you'd want or names the person you'd wish to make healthcare decisions for you. Be aware that laws vary from state to state, and it may be worthwhile to talk with an attorney.



## Writing down your wishes

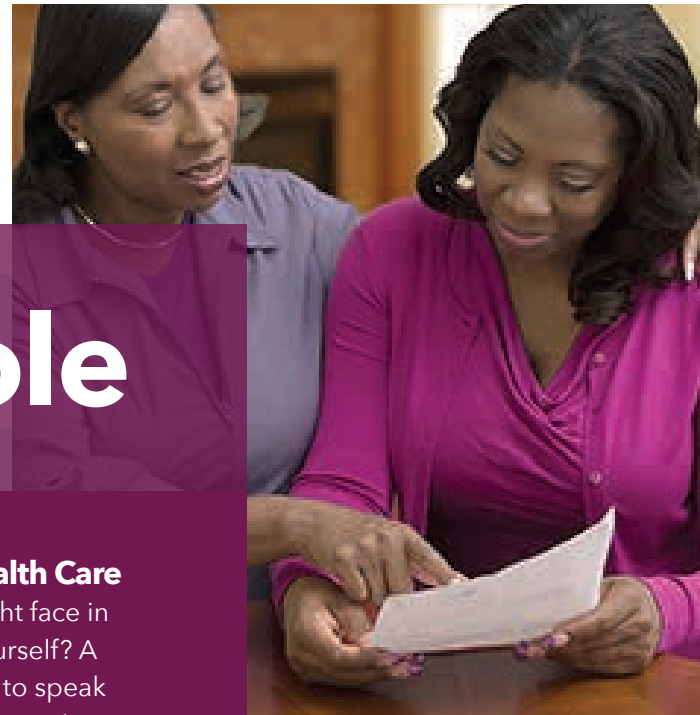
- An advance directive is important whether you're young or old. Injury or illness can strike at any age.
- Decide what is important to you and the kind of treatment you'd want, or not want to have.
- Some states allow only one kind of advance directive. Some let you do both a durable power of attorney for healthcare and a living will. Some states put both kinds on the same form.

## A durable power of attorney (POA) for healthcare

- This form lets you name someone else that you have chosen and trust to speak and make decisions on your behalf.
- This person can decide on treatment for you only when you can't speak for yourself.
- You don't need to be at the end of your life. They could speak for you if you were in a coma but were likely to recover.

## A living will

- This form lets you list the care you want at the end of your life.
- A living will applies only if you won't live without medical treatment. It would apply if you had advanced cancer, a massive stroke, or other serious illness from which you will not recover.
- It takes effect only when you can no longer express your wishes yourself.



# An Agent's Role

## An Agent's Role for Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care

It's impossible to know which medical treatment choices you might face in the future. What if you aren't able to make these decisions for yourself? A durable power of attorney for healthcare lets you name an agent to speak and carry out your wishes on your behalf. This happens only if you can't express your wishes yourself.

### An agent's duty

Your agent respects your wishes in the following ways:

- Your agent's duty is to see that your wishes are followed.
- If your wishes aren't known, your agent should try to decide what you want.
- Your agent's choices come before anyone else's wishes for you.
- A durable power of attorney for healthcare doesn't not give your agent control over your money.
- Your agent also can't be made to pay your bills.

### Find out what your agent can do

Restrictions on what an agent can and can't do vary by state. Check your state laws. In most states your agent can:

- Choose or refuse life-sustaining and other medical treatment on your behalf
- Consent to treatment, and then stop treatment if your condition doesn't improve
- Access and release your medical records
- Request an autopsy and donate your organs, unless you've stated otherwise in your advance directive

Find out whether your state allows your agent to do the following:

- Refuse or withdraw life-enhancing care
- Refuse or stop tube feeding or other life-sustaining care—even if you haven't stated on your advance directive that you don't want these treatments
- Order sterilization or abortion

### Learn More

**1-866-946-4458 (TTY 711)**

8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week, Oct. 1-March 31

8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday-Friday, April 1-Sept. 30

[www.myzinghealth.com](http://www.myzinghealth.com)