

What if I Do Not Want CPR?

For capable adults in hospital or other health care settings, consider completing a form called *Health Care Directive Goals of Care*, which allows you to record your wishes on receiving CPR, as well as other medical treatments. This form is completed after a discussion between you and your health care professional. You may also include your nearest relative, family and/or Proxy in these discussions.

You will always receive good medical care, regardless of your decision regarding CPR. You will receive all appropriate medical interventions, such as medications and treatment, in keeping with your wishes. We will provide physical, emotional and spiritual support.

The goal of the health care team is to respect your wishes, to provide the right care at all times during your illness and to assist those closest to you.

More About Health Care Directives

Health Care Directives are verbal or written instructions made while you are still capable. They describe what kind of care you would want (or not want) if you were unable to speak for yourself.

All people over the age of 16 can complete a Health Care Directive (also known as a living will or an advance directive). CPR is usually addressed in this directive.

The Five Hills Health Region encourages all capable adults over the age of 16 to:

Think about your wishes regarding your future health care;

Talk to your health care professional, family members and Proxy about your wishes;

Act by writing down those wishes and informing those closest to you.

Health Care Directive information including the *My Voice* workbook can be obtained from your health care professional.

To access resources on Health Care Directives:

www.fhhr.ca
inquiries@fhhr.ca
1-888-425-1111

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Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

Making Informed Decisions

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What is Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)?

CPR describes one of the medical interventions used in an attempt to restore oxygen and blood flow when a person's heart and lungs stop working unexpectedly. CPR interventions may include:

1. Pushing hard and repeatedly on the person's breastbone. The goal is to try to keep the blood circulating.
2. Inserting a breathing tube through the mouth to the lungs. The goal is to help the person breathe artificially.
3. Using an electric shock. The goal is to try to get the heart to beat more effectively.

What are the Possible Risks of CPR?

- Broken breastbone and ribs from pushing down hard and repeatedly on the chest during CPR.
- Bruised or punctured lungs from pushing on the chest.
- Brain damage may occur because the brain was without oxygen following the heart stoppage.

How Well CPR Works Depends On...

How quickly CPR is started after the heart stops. When a person's heart stops and they stop breathing, CPR must be started immediately. Research is clear that if the heart stops and is not restarted again within 2 to 5 minutes, the person may suffer brain and/or organ damage or may die.

The person's health prior to their heart stopping. If a person is quite healthy before their breathing or heart stops unexpectedly and if CPR is begun right away, it may be successful. In these cases, if CPR is successful, the person has a reasonable chance of being able to resume his or her previous lifestyle.

For individuals at the natural end of their lives or who have a serious injury or medical illness, restarting the heart is not effective in over 96% of cases and can cause additional suffering.

The side effects of CPR can be more of a burden than a benefit. In these cases, physicians may recommend No CPR, after discussions with you and/or your Proxy.

A Proxy is a person of your choice who you appoint to speak on your behalf if you are not able to.

How do I Decide About CPR?

You and those closest to you have the right to know the benefits and risks associated with CPR, as it pertains to your medical condition.

The following points may be helpful when making a decision about CPR:

- At any time during treatment, you have the right to change your decision about CPR or other life prolonging treatments.
- Think about the values you consider important for guiding your health care decisions. For example, how would your personal experiences or personal or religious beliefs impact your decision regarding CPR?
- Talk to a health care professional and those closest to you about CPR and how it pertains to you and your health.
- Health care professionals welcome your questions about CPR.