

Advance Directive

According to the recommendation from *smarter medicine / Choosing Wisely*, you should discuss your health goals and wishes early on with your care team and your loved ones. This helps ensure that you are offered treatments that align with your preferences and helps in the process of setting up an advance directive.

Timing

It is never too early nor too late, to reflect on your wishes and goals. You never know when fate might strike and leave you unable to make decisions. This can happen regardless of age or your current health condition. After talking to your loved ones and your primary care provider, you should put your thoughts in writing to avoid uncertainty in the event of an extreme situation.

Advance Directive

Your personal advance directive reflects your wishes regarding medical treatments. You can designate a representative to make medical decisions on your behalf. Your advance directive only comes into effect if you are no longer capable of making decisions or communicating your wishes to the medical team. The advance directive can be updated at any time.

Advantages and Disadvantages of an Advance Directive

Advantages:

- Awareness and respect for personal wishes and values
- Relieves the burden on loved ones
- Can be updated at any time

Disadvantages:

- Time consuming
- Emotionally challenging to create

Next steps

An advance directive is useful for everyone, regardless of age and state of health. The goal is to ensure that decisions made during a situation of incapacity reflect your wishes and values, without burdening your loved ones. Discuss your preferences, goals, and questions with your loved ones and your primary care provider. Once everything is clear, complete your advance directive, date it, and sign it. In the event of significant changes to your health or at least every two years, review your advance directive and consider if your wishes have changed.