

The Importance of an Advance Directive

Why is an **Advance Directive** Important?

An **advance directive** is important when you're badly hurt or have a serious illness that keeps you from making medical decisions for yourself. It tells your doctors and other health care workers what type of care you would like to have.

What is an **Advance Directive**?

An **advance directive** is a form that lets you have a say about how you want to be treated if you get very sick. The form has three parts. It lets you:



Part 1: Choose a health care agent.

A health care agent is a person who can make medical decisions for you if you are not able to make them yourself.



Part 2: Make your own health care choices.

This part of the form lets you choose the kind of health care you want. This way, those who care for you will not have to guess what you want if you are not able to tell them yourself.



Part 3: Sign the form.

This must be signed before it can be used.

When should I create an **Advance Directive**?

The best time to create an **advance directive** is when you are over 18 years old and capable of making your own medical decisions.

How to Prepare an **Advance Directive**

☐ **STEP 1 - Think about what kind of treatment you do or do not want in a medical emergency.**

It is helpful to talk with your doctor about how your current health conditions might affect your health in the future. You can ask your doctor to help you understand and think through your choices before you put them in writing.



☐ **STEP 2 - Choose your health care agent.**

Also known as a medical decision maker, this should be a person you trust to make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to make them yourself.



☐ **STEP 3 - Fill out Parts 1 through Part 3 of the advance directive.**

Fill out only the parts you want. You may fill out only **Part 1**, only **Part 2**, or both. **Part 3** must be signed.



☐ **STEP 4 - Make copies of your advance directive.**

Share the form with your medical providers, family, friends, and health care agent. Talk with them about your wishes.



You can always make changes to your advance directive. Fill out a new form, tell those who care for you about your changes, and give the new form to your health care agent and doctor.



If you do not have an advance directive now, talk to your doctor as soon as possible!



Get Your **Advance Directive Here**

Want to start your advance directive now or study the form first? Scan the QR code on the left to access the form now!

Free **Advance Directive Services!**

Go to aamgdoctors.net/acp-service or scan the QR code for assistance on advance directives. You may also call (415) 533-6440 for questions and help.



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