



CPR

Live Well – Finish Well
ADVANCE CARE PLANNING



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This brochure can help you decide if you want CPR if your heart or lungs stop working.

WHAT IS IT?

CPR is an attempt to restart your heart if you stop breathing or your heart stops beating.

CPR may include:

- Someone pushing on your chest and breathing air into your mouth.
- Shocking your heart with electricity or injecting medicine into your bloodstream.
- Inserting a tube down your airway and into your lungs to help you breathe.

CPR often requires follow-up in a hospital emergency room – most likely an intensive care unit (ICU) – so that a breathing machine and a heart monitor may be used.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

How well CPR works depends on:

- why your heart stopped
- how healthy you were before your heart stopped
- how long your heart was stopped before CPR begins

A healthy person whose heart stops suddenly because of an accident or heart attack has the best chance (15-20 percent) to return to good health after CPR. CPR is also more successful in the hospital, where healthcare workers can act quickly.

Older people are less likely to recover and more likely to have a heart that does not respond to CPR.

- Only five percent of nursing home patients live after CPR, even when performed in a hospital.
- Two percent of dementia (memory loss) patients survive.
- People with late stage cancers have only about a one percent chance to live through CPR.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

CPR is not as easy as it seems in the movies and on television.

- Many people suffer broken ribs from CPR attempts.
- Half will have brain damage that will never get better.

Other complications may include bruising of the chest, burns on the skin from shocks, lung damage and bleeding in the chest, damage to the windpipe or esophagus and damage to lips and teeth from the breathing mask and tube.

It is important to think about your chances of living through CPR and what life might be like after CPR. If you choose not to have CPR, you would still be able to get all other medical treatments that you and your doctor think are right for you. If your heart were to stop, doctors would allow natural death.

If you do not want CPR, you should share your wishes with your doctors and family.