

Your Living Will, Health Care Surrogate & HIPAA Authorization

In short: These three documents make your medical wishes known and let the people you trust help you if you can't speak for yourself.

Living Will WHAT care you want	Tells your doctors whether you want life-prolonging treatment if you can't communicate and have no reasonable chance of recovery (see below).
Health Care Surrogate WHO decides	The person you choose to make medical decisions for you if your doctor determines you can't make or communicate them yourself.
HIPAA Authorization WHO can be told	Lets the people you choose talk with your doctors and see your medical records. It does <u>not</u> give anyone power to make decisions.

Your Living Will

Applies only if you can't communicate **and** have a terminal condition, an end-stage condition, or are in a persistent vegetative state.

Life-prolonging treatment includes:

- Breathing machines (ventilators)
- Feeding tubes
- IV fluids (artificial hydration)
- Other treatment that only prolongs the dying process

It does **not** apply if:

- You are expected to recover
- You can communicate your own decisions
- Treatment will improve your condition

It **never** stops comfort care, such as pain medication, oxygen, and hygiene and personal care.

Your Health Care Surrogate

You stay in control as long as you can make your own decisions. Your surrogate steps in only after your doctor determines you can't, and must make the decision *you* would make. Choose someone who knows your wishes and will speak up for you. Depending on your document, your surrogate may:

- Talk with your doctors
- Consent to or refuse treatment
- Authorize surgery or procedures
- Carry out your Living Will
- Choose hospitals or rehab facilities
- Arrange home health care
- Review your medical records

Your HIPAA Authorization

HIPAA is a federal privacy law. Without your permission, doctors may not be allowed to discuss your condition with your family. This form lets the people you name get information and records and help coordinate your care.

Good to Know

- **You can change or cancel** any of these documents at any time while you are mentally competent.
- **Tell your Health Care Surrogate** where the originals are and how to get them in an emergency.
- **Bring copies** to the hospital or before surgery so they go into your medical record.
- **Review them** every few years and after marriage, divorce, a birth, or a death in the family.