



LaPOST

Guide To Medical Treatments & Conditions

LOUISIANA PHYSICIAN ORDERS FOR SCOPE OF TREATMENT

When designing our treatment strategies through advance care planning, it's important for us to understand what the following medical treatments and conditions mean, so we should talk to our doctors before we make any decisions. We can then choose which treatment options we want and don't want and which ones meet our goals for care.

Treatments



- **Resuscitation:** Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, is an emergency effort to restore breathing and heartbeat, and it may or may not be successful. The process can involve the use of chest compressions, an automatic defibrillator or mechanical ventilation. CPR can be beneficial to healthy people who die suddenly, but may not always be helpful for those who are older or who have serious advanced illnesses. CPR may present risks such as a lack of oxygen to the brain or decreased physical or mental ability in these situations.
- **DNR:** Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) is a medical order to not attempt resuscitation because it isn't wanted or because it will not help. DNR is also sometimes called 'Allow Natural Death.' It does not mean 'Do Not Treat.' Comfort will always be provided and basic needs will be met.
- **Comfort Measures:** These medical treatments are always provided. They are meant to provide comfort and reduce pain and other symptoms. They are not meant to extend life, although some studies have shown that they may.
- **Antibiotics:** Antibiotics are used to fight infections like pneumonia or urinary tract infections, and may reduce the symptoms and pain caused by those infections. They do not usually improve other health conditions which are causing health to decline.
- **Intravenous (IV) Fluids:** These are sterile fluids that are put into the body through a tube placed in a vein in the arm or the neck. IV fluids can be given for short periods of time for a specific illness or reason (goal).
- **Artificial Nutrition/Tube Feeding:** This is a way of providing nutrition through a tube either in the nose or directly through the skin into the stomach. Tube feeding can help people who cannot swallow now, but who are expected to get better. Tube feeding can cause pneumonia and may result in swelling and infection. It may not accomplish the goals we want.

Conditions



- **Terminal Condition** is one in which there is no cure available and medical treatment will prolong the dying process. With or without treatment, death will occur in a short period of time.
- **Persistent Vegetative State** is a medical term used to describe a chronic neurological disorder of consciousness characterized by appearing awake at times without awareness. This is relatively rare. Only the brainstem maintains function. Common causes of this are traumatic brain injury, stroke, and not receiving oxygen and blood flow after cardiopulmonary arrest.

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