



Having the Conversation

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Why have this conversation?

- To ensure your wishes for care through the end of life are understood and respected.
- To appoint a health care proxy that you trust to make decisions on your behalf if you become unable to make those decisions yourself.
- To help your health care proxy and loved ones understand what is most important to you through the end of your life.

It always seems too soon, until it's too late.



Who needs to be involved in your conversation?

- Spouse/significant other
- Adult children
- Parents
- Spiritual leader
- Friends
- Healthcare providers



Where do you feel most comfortable having this conversation?

- ▶ At home
- ▶ In the car
- ▶ On a walk
- ▶ Video chat
- ▶ Phone call
- ▶ At a safe place (i.e.: favorite restaurant, place of worship)



What can be included in this conversation?

- Worries about your health
- Fears, concerns or mistrust about health care
- Who you want (or not want) included in your healthcare
- Kinds of treatment you would (or wouldn't) want
- Your wishes for end of life (i.e: medical, spiritual)
- Issues for which you would like to be prepared:
 - Finances
 - Property
 - Legal documents
 - Health care situations



How do I have the conversation?

- ▶ Prepare yourself:
 - ▶ Think in advance about what matters to you
 - ▶ Write down your thoughts
 - ▶ Use Conversation Project workbook (or other online tools)

- ▶ Example conversation starters (page 9 of CP workbook)



Tips for your conversation

- ▶ Listen to what the other person has to say (even if you disagree); this can help promote discussion as well as help you decide who should be your health care proxy
- ▶ Some people may be nervous or uncomfortable talking about these issues; be patient and keep trying.
- ▶ You don't have to cover everything in one conversation; it's best to keep talking about it!
- ▶ Nothing you say or decide is permanent. You can change your mind in the future.



Your Conversation Starter Guide

How to talk about what matters to you and have a say in your health care.



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