

Your choices if your heart stops

Information for patients and carers

When you die your heart stops beating.

It is a natural part of life that people die because of old age. Sometimes people die because they are very sick and do not get better.

Thinking about dying can be hard. Some people can feel upset or frightened, but that's okay. We can help.

Sometimes hospital staff can make your heart start again if it stops. This is called CPR.

CPR can save people's lives. But CPR does not always work.

Text only



If you are very sick, the doctors and nurses will talk to you about trying CPR if your heart stops. They will make a decision with you, your family and carers.

If you do not have family or friends who can help you with this decision, please speak to your doctor or nurse. They will arrange for someone to support you.

It is important that you talk about your choices and what those choices mean for you. The doctors and nurses will be able to help you understand. They can answer your questions.

It may be a better decision for you not to have CPR.

If you decide not to have CPR, you will still have care and treatment.

If CPR is not the right thing for you, your doctor will fill in a form. This form is called a DNA CPR.

If you change your mind about CPR, speak to your nurse or doctor.

Your doctor or nurse can talk about a new plan with you, your family and carers.

It is important to make sure everyone knows what you think and your wishes. Tell your family and carers now what you decide.

If you do not want to talk about this now, that's okay you do not have to. But talking about it may help you to feel less worried.

We can help when you are ready. Or your doctor can make a decision for you.

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can help you.

You can ask a question or tell them if you are unhappy about something.

Phone: 01227 78 31 45 The team can phone you back.

Email: ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Post: Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
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Created together with people with a communication need, the experts by experience