

Easy Read

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Information

Although the decision about CPR is a medical decision, it is necessary for the clinician to discuss this decision with the patient and/or their family/carers/ Legal Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare to gain understanding of their views. This Easy Read information has been devised to support any conversations about Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) orders with people with Learning Disabilities and/or their carers.

The information is based on the Resuscitation Council Guidelines for patients but simplified language and images to aid understanding. This information has been produced with input from people with Learning Disabilities.

This information is designed to support clinicians to have these difficult conversations and to help patients and family/carers understand what DNACPR means.

After discussions this information should be shared with family/carers. The information may help to support the person to understand and retain information regarding DNACPR, so that the clinicians can assess their understanding.

If you are a clinician working with people with Learning Disabilities and you feel the situation would benefit from support from a Learning Disability Nurse please contact the Health Liaison Team on 01438 845372. Additional info on health needs of people with learning disabilities can be found at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ldmyhealth

What is Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)?



If your heart stops beating you will die unless you have CPR to get your heart beating normally again.



The person providing first aid will need to push down hard on your chest. This is CPR.



You will need a mask to help you breathe.



Sometimes an electric shock may be needed to try to re-start your heart.

When is CPR used?



If you are usually well and your heart stops beating the doctors will use CPR to try and start your heart again.

They will only do this if they will think you have a good chance of recovering after having CPR.

You will need to be fit and healthy to recover after CPR.



If you are very poorly and your heart stops the doctors may decide not to do CPR.

This may be because your body is too poorly and CPR won't make your heart start beating again. Or it might be because you have already



told them you don't want them to do CPR.

It is important you understand a Do Not Attempt CPR (DNACPR) order **ONLY** means you will not receive CPR if you stop breathing or your heart stops beating. All other treatment can continue and the doctors should discuss this with you.

Does CPR always work?



CPR does not always work and so the person may end up very poorly and then die.

Can CPR be harmful?



You can get bruises on your chest.

Your ribs can get broken.



Your lungs can get damaged.

Some people can get damage to their brain because their heart stopped beating. This can make it difficult for them to do things like walk, talk and eat.

Can I decide in advance that I DON'T want CPR if my heart or breathing stops?



Yes, you can talk to the doctor looking after you and tell them if you do not want to have CPR.



You can also write this down on a form called a "living will". You will need to tell your friends and family about this and put a copy in your health records.

Can I decide in advance that I DO want CPR if my heart or breathing stops?



This decision is one that the doctor must make as they understand what the risks may be. The doctor should speak to you to find out what you think about CPR.



If you don't agree with the doctor's decision you can always ask for a "second opinion". This means another doctor will tell you what they think about the decision.

If I make a decision about CPR can I change my mind later?



Yes, you should talk to your doctor about this and they may want you to write this down.

Do I have to make a decision about whether or not I want CPR in the future?



No, you don't need to talk about this at all. The doctor will make a decision at the time if needed.

What if I can't decide for myself?



The law lets you choose somebody else to make decisions for you. This could be a friend or family.

If I or my doctor decide I shouldn't have CPR will this mean they won't give me any treatment if I'm ill?



No, the decision about CPR is different than treatment to make you better.

Who else can I talk to about this?



You can talk to other people about this to help you decide what you want. There are Advocacy groups and counsellors you can talk to.

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This document and other useful health information is available at
hertfordshire.gov.uk/ldmyhealth