

THE BENEFITS OF HAVING AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

TRANSCRIPT

Writing an advance directive can be very difficult. It can be upsetting to envision your end of life. But it can also be powerful. There are many benefits to having an advance directive.

"People think it's a morbid document. But when there is an illness or an emergency, there's so many details that you need to take care of that it's comforting to know that you have help with those decisions, that they're already written down."

Having an advance directive gives you peace of mind. You have taken control of your end-of-life decisions, written them down, and made sure your friends and family members know what you want. With this document, you can avoid certain difficult situations that may come up in the future.

"Once you're laying there on the bed and hooked-up to that machine, you have no more control. Somebody has to make the decision, and if the decision's made already – and it's a joint decision – then there is no problem."

Emotionally, if a sudden accident happens or you do get an illness, your family and loved ones will know exactly what you want and can feel confident in carrying out your wishes. In such a stressful time, you have given them the gift of one less thing to worry about.

"You put your husband or your children in a terrible situation. They do not know what to do. So if my baby – now 11 months, but – if she grows I'm going to say, 'Listen, this paperwork has been done. It's here in this room.'"

And financially, your family will benefit from your advance directive as well. Because they know and understand what you want, and it's in writing, they will not spend legal fees and time in court fighting to ensure your wishes are fulfilled.

And they will not spend your life savings or their life savings to give you care that you do not want.

"My father – when he passed away, he didn't have anything written down. So we had to make split-second decisions. And you know, you always question yourself, 'Is this really what this person would have wanted?'"

When people love you and think they know what is best for you, it can be emotional and stressful. Don't leave them wondering what is best. Give them the benefit of peace of mind. Write your wishes down in an advance directive.