

**Advance Directives:  
Making Your Wishes Known – Creating an Advance  
Directive**

**Becky Higgins, Patient**

It makes me feel like my best interests will be looked out for because my family and the people I've chosen are there to make those for me.

**Narrator**

Only in her 30s, Becky Higgins is not one you might expect to "have her affairs in order." But as a 2-time cancer survivor, advance directives are important to her. She wants her family to know what medical care she does, or does not want, if she can't speak for herself.

**Eido Walny, Estate Planning Attorney**

You want the doctors to know what your wishes are.

**Narrator**

Estate planning attorney Eido Walny says Becky is very wise.

**Eido Walny, Estate Planning Attorney**

You can have conflicting interests not only with what your family wants but there could be differences between what your spouses want as opposed to your parents or your siblings or any number of people involved in your life.

If you don't as a legal adult over the age of 18 give some direction to the doctors as to what you want to have happen, they're going to do whatever their defaults are and whether you're 18 or 88 that's still going to be the case. And so, we definitely recommend that anyone over the age of 18 get their advanced directives done.

**Narrator**

Whether it's end-of-life care or just designating someone to temporarily make medical decisions for you, it's important to decide what you want, and write it down.

**Sue Moser, Social Worker**

I would encourage whether you are in good health or bad health, young or old to get an advanced directive because it's the best way to make sure that your voice is heard and that you have someone that you know and trust that will advocate for you and be your voice.

**Narrator**

How detailed you want your advance directives to be is completely up to you. They could include organ or tissue donation, for example. Or they might include orders to your doctors not to take extraordinary measures to save you.

**Eido Walny, Estate Planning Attorney**

Things like do-not-resuscitate or do-not-intubate orders. That's simply an opportunity for you as the patient to say you know if I'm in a situation where those procedures are going to be the only things that keep me alive I'd rather you not do that. And let me pass away.

**Narrator**

Each state has different forms that you can either fill out with an attorney or on your own.

**Sue Moser, Social Worker**

If patients want to do it themselves they can certainly get the forms from their state web sites. Another option would be to contact your local aging and disability resource center.

Typically, people will or patients will talk to their family members or close family members that they trust to convey what their wishes are and to then take the next step on putting it down on paper. If you don't put it down on a paper it doesn't exist.

**Eido Walny, Estate Planning Attorney**

Lawyers are always happy to help you but if your if your options are I'm either not going to do it or I'm going to look online. By all means, find these documents online. Just make sure you follow the directions very carefully.

**Becky Higgins, Patient**

It's very easy, it's about four simple questions. Yeah. And you just name one or two people who you trust to make your decisions for you and then you sign it. It's very easy.

**Narrator**

Walny recommends you look over your advance directives every 3-5 years, and update them if necessary to make sure they still reflect your wishes.