

Some Ideas about What to Discuss with Your Health Care Agent & Family

This is just a sampling of some ideas for you to consider.

1. Do not do anything that would imperil your soul—or my soul.
2. Make sure I get the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
3. I do not want my death facilitated or hastened. If I would benefit from medications to assist with my pain or other symptoms that may inadvertently hasten my death, I would like to discuss this with my family and health care provider.
4. I want my symptoms and pain treated. I believe a person should not have to agree to die in order to get symptoms and pain treated.
5. If you are asked to stop life-sustaining procedures—
 - a. Ask:
 - What is wrong with me?
 - What can be done about it?
 - What are the benefits and burdens?
 - b. Have the doctor tell you what the outcomes of treatments are.
 - c. Ask how sure the doctor is and whether a trial of treatment would help you be more certain.
 - d. Ask for a specialist if the doctor is not sure about the benefits, results or outcomes.
6. If asked to make a decision now, ask for more time to think about it or for relatives to come. (If they are going to die in the interim, then it is their time to die—and we can't feel badly about that.)
7. If you are really conflicted, pray for guidance.

Where to go for help in figuring out what to do:

- A trusted priest or a chaplain.
- Your parish nurse, if you have one.
- A Catholic doctor
{ You can search for a local referral at <http://www.cathmed.org> }
- Patients Rights Council
{ (740)282-3810; www.patientsrightscouncil.org }
- National Catholic Bioethics Center Emergency Hotline
{ (215) 877-2660, open 24/7-leave a message and they will call you. }
- A Christian doctor
{ You can search for a referral from the Christian Medical and Dental Associations (888)-230-2637, <http://www.cmda.org> }
- The patient's primary care physician will probably consult with the health agent even if he/she does not have hospital privileges.