Although there are numerous books, web sites, pamphlets and videos about advance care planning, I am only listing a few that I find most useful. In my talks about end of life care the following questions are often raised.

**How can I have the difficult conversation about death and dying with my loved ones?**

* [www.theconversationproject.org](http://www.theconversationproject.org). This was started by Pulitzer Prize winning author Ellyn Goodman. It could be your “one stop shop” for advance care planning.

**Advance Care Directives look complicated. Do I have to have one?**

* No you don’t have to have one, but you should! I hope after reading this book that you will.

**What’s the most important thing to do?**

* More important than completing the documents is finding your advocate. First have a heart to heart conversation with the person close to you and willing to be your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. Then sign, have witnesses and notarize the document given the requirements of your state. This advocate will speak for you when you no longer can speak for yourself. This is who I would turn to at the bedside when you can’t speak for yourself.

**Where can I find the forms?**

* [www.prepareforyourcare.org](http://www.prepareforyourcare.org). I have found this the most useful site. It has many helpful videos about your choices. This site has advance directive forms in English and Spanish for all states. The forms can be downloaded and printed or filled out and stored on line. It combines the value statement in a living will and your durable power of attorney into a single document valid in your state.

**Are there specific directives for dementia?**

* <https://dementia-directive.org/>. This is the least complicated one to complete and is proving to be popular and useful.

**Can I get help filling out the documents?**

* You can make an appointment with your medical provider to discuss and clarify your wishes about end of life care. Many hospitals or clinics offer classes. Organizations like Honoring Choices and Respecting Choices are available on line.

**Should I complete a POLST/MOLST form?**

* <https://polst.org/>. If you have a serious illness, are very frail or feel that you don’t have long to live, this form can express your wishes. It’s most useful in telling emergency responders what you would or wouldn’t want in terms of life support care. It needs to be signed by you and your medical provider. This document then becomes legal standing medical orders for your immediate care.

**I’m DNR status and want no CPR or ventilator. Will that be honored?**

* First make sure you complete the above POLST/MOLST form. Then make sure copies are given to your advocate and health care provider. Display the form in a prominent place. Consider buying a DNR bracelet. Approved bracelets vary from state to state but can clearly display your DNR status when the POLST/MOLST is not immediately available.

**What should I do with these documents?**

* Copies of your advance directives should be available in your home, your doctor’s office and with your advocate. It’s very useful to discuss them with all the members of your family. These documents should be updated at least every decade and certainly if there is worsening of your health, a divorce or some serious life event. Ask your doctor’s office or clinic to store them in your electronic medical record and ask how they can be accessed 24/7 in case of an emergency.

**How do doctors make decisions in the ICU? Will they listen?**

* <http://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hlr/vol36/iss2/13/>. Doctor’s work with you or your advocate to follow your wishes. A social worker and I published a method of using shared decision making in the ICU. This is when your advocate is so important. Ethically, doctor’s need to listen. But have you told them all they need to know?

**What are the legal concerns about end of life decision making?**

* <http://medicalfutility.blogspot.com/>. Law Professor Thaddeus Pope, in his legal blog, follows and comments on the evolving legal issues around end of life care.

**What other plans should I make?**

* It helps to think about what you want for funeral arrangements and a memorial service. It depends on you how detailed you want to be. Some choose the venue, music, readings and food ahead of time. Others leave it up to their loved ones.

**Where can I read more?**

* Being Mortal by Dr. Atul Gawande is my longtime favorite book. He talks about the issues of death and dying in a warm humanistic way.
* Dying Well by Dr. Ira Byock give very practice advice from a hospice physician
* Many other books can be viewed at <https://theconversationproject.org/tcp-blog/10-must-reads-about-death-and-end-of-life-care/>
* My blog: [www.endoflifeblog.com](http://www.endoflifeblog.com) has many stories from my years in practice, some of which are now in this book.

**Are there helpful videos or movies about death and dying?**

* The movies Endgame (Netflix) and Dying at Grace are both worthwhile.
* The video Extremis (Netflix) follows Dr. Jessica Nutik Vitter, both a critical care and palliative care physician, discussing death with patients.
* <https://speakingofdying.com/speaking-of-dying-film-dying-well/>. This video, in which I play a small role, follows several patients in their journey toward death.

**How do I contact hospice?**

* <https://hospicefoundation.org/Hospice-Care/Hospice-Services>. If you even think you might benefit from hospice services, ask your doctor to refer you, or call a local hospice yourself to get more information. Follow the dictum: think hospice, and think about it early on.

**How do I contact palliative care?**

* Your physician can refer you to a palliative care specialist. Please ask to see one if your pain or other symptoms are not well controlled.

**Where can I get information about MAID or VSED?**

* <https://compassionandchoices.org/>. This organization strongly advocates for end of life choices. They are willing to direct you to local resources and physicians. Volunteers are often willing to help you to understand your options and to provide support for your decisions.

**I have a family member in a nursing home. How do I find an Ombudsman?**

* <https://theconsumervoice.org/get_help>. Every state has protections for residents in nursing homes. Don’t hesitate to ask to see the Ombudsman in your area if concerns aren’t addressed.

**How does organ donation work? Can I be a donor?**

* <https://www.organdonor.gov/about/process.html>.

**I’d like to attend an event to discuss end of life issues with others. Is that possible?**

* Let’s Have Dinner and Talk About Death: <http://www.deathoverdinner.org/> . This is a popular organized somewhat scripted dinner with several others usually in a private home.
* Death Café: [www.deathcafe.com](http://www.deathcafe.com). This is a random meet up group posted on the internet meeting in a public café.
* <https://endwellproject.org/>. They share innovative ideas to inspire new thinking about the end of life