Advance Directives
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Advance Directives
Do Not Resuscitate

• Reference: ACP Website
www.acponline.org
Physician Information and Education
Resource (PIER)

Advance Directives

• Made when person is mentally competent
• Operative if person becomes mentally incompetent

Advance Directives
Ethical Standards

• Patient autonomy
• Self-determination

Advance Directives
Legal Standards

• Karen Ann Quinlan case – 1975
• Nancy Cruzan case – 1990
• Terri Schiavo case – 2005

Patient Determination Act of 1995

Advance Directives
Living Will
• Prevents death-delaying procedures
Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care
• Appoints representative to make decisions for patient
**Advance Directives**

**Indications**
- All competent adults
- Competent adults with serious or terminal illness

**Physicians’ Role**
- Discuss and explain to patients
- Be truthful, compassionate, hopeful
- Ask about desired quality of life
  - Independence, Mobility, Communication
- Advise that patient discuss with family and choose representative
- Document on forms and in chart

**What patients want at end of life**
- Compassionate care
- Communication with caregivers
- Comfort
- Relief of pain
- Avoidance of futile technology

**Status and Barriers**
- Only 25% in U.S. have Advance Directives
- Excessive regulations in some states
- Patients may be reluctant to discuss
- Patients may not have primary care physician
- Doctor commitment to process may be lacking
- Other resources – senior centers, social workers, religious advisors

**Do Not Resuscitate Order**
- Withholds cardiopulmonary resuscitation if patient is terminally ill
- If patient is competent, discuss with patient and family
- If patient is incompetent, refer to Living Will or appointed Representative