

Is CPR right for me?

This fact sheet will help you decide if CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) is right for you. The best time to make these decisions is when you are feeling well. You should discuss the side effects and advantages with your health care providers and family.

Write down your questions for your doctor. If you are a person with serious life limiting disease CPR may not be an option you choose. One thing to think about as you make this decision is: "What does living mean to you?"

What is CPR?

During CPR the chest of the person is pressed on forcefully and breaths are given to the patient by placing a tube through the mouth or nose into the windpipe. Sometimes electrical shocks are given to the chest to try to restart the heart. Medications are also given.

When do we perform CPR?

CPR is done when a person stops breathing and the heart has stopped beating.

Does CPR work?

CPR works best if

- You are healthy and young
- It is given to you within the first few minutes of when your heart stops

CPR does not work best if:

- You are older and weak
- You have chronic health problems

What are my chances of leaving the hospital alive after CPR?

Few patients (less than 10 %) in the hospital who have CPR done survive and return to their life as before CPR. Many patients live for a short time after CPR, but still die in the hospital. Patient who have many illnesses usually do not survive. Few patients with advanced cancer survive CPR and live long enough to leave the hospital and those who do often are very weak. If you are older, weak, or living in a nursing home, your chances of leaving hospital alive are 3%.

What are the benefits of CPR?

If you have better health status or are younger CPR may prolong life if it is done within 5-10 minutes of a person's heart stopping. If you have advance illness there may not be any real benefit.



