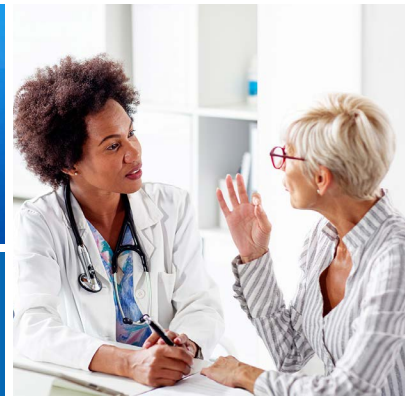


# Goals of care

## Preparing for the conversation



Have you ever discussed your goal of care with your medical team? This sheet explains when it's advisable to do so, why it's important, and how to prepare for the conversation.

### Who is this fact sheet for?

It's intended especially for all persons whose health condition, quality of life, or autonomy is at risk of deteriorating or has deteriorated, as well as for their loved ones.

### What is a goal of care?

It's a package of care deemed best and most appropriate for you, following a conversation with your doctor or specialized nurse practitioner.

There are 4 main goals of care:

<b>A</b>	All care deemed appropriate by the treating team, without restriction.
<b>B</b>	All care deemed appropriate by the treating team, with some restrictions.
<b>C</b>	All care deemed appropriate by the treating team to stabilize the health condition (no cardiac resuscitation, no intubation, and no admission to intensive care).
<b>D</b>	All care deemed appropriate by the treating team for the sole purpose of maintaining comfort.

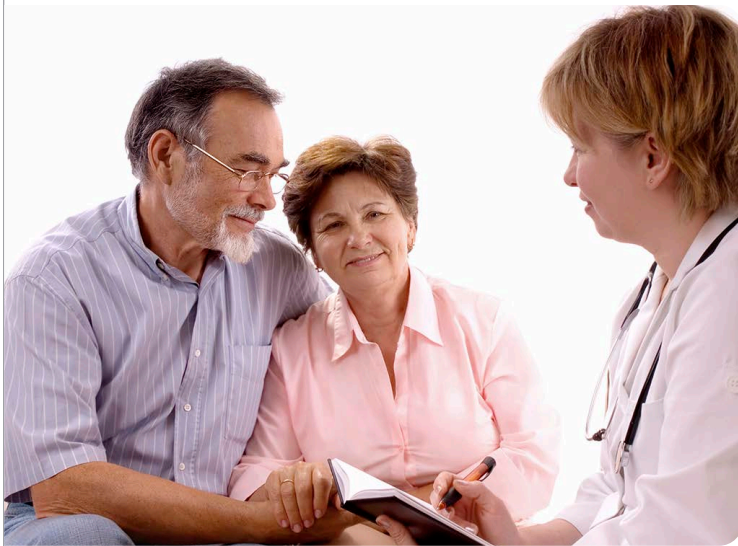
### How is the goal of care chosen?

The choice is made with your doctor or your specialized nurse practitioner, taking into account:

- your values and what gives meaning to your life
- the benefits, the risks, and the effects that the care can have on you
- the conditions or state of health that you're prepared to find yourself in following treatments
- the medical possibilities and limitations

Once the goal of care is selected, it's noted in the medical record.





## What are the advantages of discussing the goals of care with my medical team and my loved ones?

Advantages for you:

- being part of the care decisions that concern you
- making your wishes known and respected, for example if you become incapacitated
- avoiding care you don't want

Advantages for your medical team and your loved ones:

- having guidance about the extent of the means to be used to treat you
- knowing what to do, and not to do, in the case of an emergency or incapacity

## When should we talk about it?

There are several situations where it would be important to talk about it:

- your health status has changed
- your current illness is progressing
- your autonomy is becoming more limited
- your life expectancy is decreasing
- your life plans have changed

It's always better to talk about it before an emergency happens, while you're still able to do so.

## Can we change the goal of care?

Yes, and it can be done at any time. It's important that your goal of care reflects, as much as possible, your current health status, what you expect from the care, and what's most important to you in your life.

## A delicate topic that needs preparation

Pausing to reflect on your care goals isn't easy. It's a good idea to have someone you trust help you through the process. If you wish, this person can participate in the discussion with your care team. Use the readings and videos available to prepare for this discussion (see Appendix for helpful resources).

**Our aim in this is to offer you the best care, most suited to your situation.**



**You have questions? Feel free to ask your care team and to talk about them with your loved ones.**



### USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our website [chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante](http://chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante)

*The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.*

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal [chumontreal.qc.ca](http://chumontreal.qc.ca)

Here are some resources to help you prepare to talk about your goal of care (formerly called “level of care”) with your family and your medical team.

### Readings

#### Goals of care - Patient questionnaire (in French only):

The purpose of this questionnaire is to get to know you better and to better plan your care with you.

> Click [here](#) to open it.

#### A practical guide to discussing levels of care with patients and their families (French only - Guide pratique d'aide à la discussion sur les niveaux de soins avec les patients et leur famille):

By the Montreal Heart Institute Clinical Ethics Committee.

> [icm-mhi.org](#)

Type “niveaux de soins” in the search engine  
→ Click on RCR

#### The Conversation Project:

This organization is a grassroots initiative to help people think about their wishes and prepare to discuss them with their care team. Several guides are available for free in the Get Started section:

*Your Guide for Talking with a Health Care Team*

*What Matters to Me*

*Your Conversation Starter Guide*

> [theconversationproject.org](#)

Click on Get Started

#### Advance medical directives:

Another way to express your wishes regarding care, in anticipation of the day when you will no longer be able to do so.

Read our health fact sheet: [Advance medical directives \(AMD\)](#).

### Videos

[Discutons de niveaux de soins](#). For help in understanding what a level of care is, and how it's chosen. By Dr. Geneviève Bois and Dr. René Wittmer.

> [youtube.com](#)

In the search box, type the video title.  
[In French only.]

Video time: 11 min. 27 s.

[5 Steps of Advance Care Planning](#). Illustrates how to express your wishes about care you might receive in the future. By the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association.

> [advancecareplanning.ca](#)

Scroll down main page to video.

Video time: 2 min. 20 s.

[Cardiopulmonary resuscitation: Let's talk about it!](#) To learn more about cardiopulmonary resuscitation and its potential consequences. By the Montreal Heart Institute.

> [icm-mhi.org](#)

Type “niveaux de soins” in the search box  
→ Click on RCR, select ICM\_RCR\_En

Video time: 7 min. 42 s.



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