

# CPR GUIDE

**This guide explains what CPR is. It helps you decide if you want CPR attempted in a hospital or health care facility.**

*Talk to your health care provider about the benefits and risks that apply to you.*

## What is CPR?

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation or CPR is a procedure used when your heart or breathing stops. CPR includes a breathing tube to help get oxygen into your body and deep pushing on your chest to move the blood. Electric shock to the heart using a defibrillator or AED may be used. Medications may also be used to restart the heart and help blood flow through the body.

## Will CPR work for you?

- CPR works best if your body is healthy and CPR is started right after your heart stops.
- CPR is less likely to be successful if you are weak, elderly, or have a chronic illness.
- National studies show that 18-30% of people who receive CPR in a hospital survive and are discharged; 28% of those who survive have significant neurological disability.
- National studies show that 2% of nursing home residents who receive out-of-hospital CPR survive.

## What does CPR feel like? What happens after CPR?

Most people do not feel CPR because they are unconscious. Deep compressions can break ribs, causing bruising and pain.

If you survive, you may return to your current health. You may also experience complications.

- You might need a ventilator (breathing machine) because of weakened lungs.
- You might have bruised or broken ribs from the chest compressions.
- You might have brain damage because your brain did not get enough oxygen.



## Your decision about whether you want CPR attempted may fall into one of the following categories.

### Yes

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**I want to have CPR attempted if my heart or breathing stops.**

### Maybe

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**I want to have CPR attempted if my heart or breathing stops, unless I have:**

- An injury or disease that cannot be cured and I am likely to die soon; or
- Little chance of survival if my heart stops; or
- Little chance of any long-term survival if my heart stops and the efforts to bring me back to life would cause me suffering; or
- Little chance of returning to the quality of life I have defined and discussed with my health care agent.

### No

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**I do not want to have CPR attempted if my heart or breathing stops. I want to allow a natural death.**

If you choose "Maybe" or "No," ask your doctor if you should also complete a physician order for life sustaining treatment (POLST). A POLST is a medical order that is used to communicate medical care decisions to health care providers and emergency responders.

**It is important to talk to your health care agent, loved ones, and health care providers about your CPR wishes.**

*Additional resources can be found at [www.honoringchoicespnw.org](http://www.honoringchoicespnw.org) including an advance directive to record and share your wishes.*

