

Types & Levels of DNR Orders

There are different degrees of medical intervention depending on the policy of the hospital or nursing home. It is a good idea to ask the facility for their policy regarding different levels of DNR care so you clearly understand the process when needed.

Some facilities use terms to describe how they handle DNR levels such as:

- comfort care – only comfort will be given in the event a person's heart stops beating
- comfort care arrest – may use life-saving measures before the heart stops beating but only comfort measures once it stops
- specified – written by doctor, dictates which methods can or cannot be used such as Do Not Intubate but can do chest compressions

Other facilities, especially long term care facilities, can define different levels of treatment in the event that a medical emergency occurs. You might see something like this in your care home.

- Level 1: Stay in the facility and be kept comfortable, but not given antibiotics or other medications to cure you.
- Level 2: Stay in the facility and receive all medications and treatments possible within the facility.
- Level 3: Be transferred to a hospital from a nursing facility but not given CPR or taken to intensive care.
- Level 4: Be taken to a hospital and given all possible medical interventions. Do everything possible.

Level 1 and 2 allow someone to die naturally in familiar surroundings.

Some states may use different terms such as these:

AND – Allow natural death, used in end of life situations to be clear that an end is anticipated and the natural consequences of the condition are allowed to proceed

DNAR – Do not attempt resuscitation, this should be accompanied by specifics of which forms of interventions can or cannot be used if the heart ceases beating

