

**A Letter to My Doctor
Concerning Decisions To Be Made At The End Of My Life**

Dear Dr. _____,

It is important to me to have excellent and compassionate care throughout my life. As the end of my life approaches, I hope that you will honor my wish that all treatments or interventions should maximize my comfort and enhance the quality of my life, so that I am able to realize my goal of a peaceful and dignified death. If treatment options aimed at extending my life are considered, I want to know their chance of "success," the expected risks and benefits, and, most importantly, how they will impact the quality of my life.

If my medical condition becomes incurable and death is the only predictable outcome, I would prefer not to suffer, but die in a humane and dignified manner. I would like the reassurance that:

- If I am able to speak for myself, my treatment wishes will be honored; if not able to participate in treatment decisions, choices made by my health care representative or written instructions in my advance directives will be honored;
- You will make a referral to a local hospice when I request that care;
- You will help with all legal options for a gentle death, including ordering appropriate pain medications so that my suffering is minimized.

I am not requesting that you do anything unethical while I am in your care, but the understanding of what is ethical in this regard is rapidly changing as medicine strives to become more responsive to the personal choices of dying patients. Even the Supreme Court Justices have confirmed that a physician may administer or prescribe medications in such amounts to relieve pain and suffering even though this may hasten death.

I hope you will accept this statement as a fully considered decision and an expression of my deeply held views. If you feel you would not be able to honor such requests, please tell me now while I am able to make choices based on that knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____