

Sample Addendum to Living Will

ADDENDUM TO THE ADVANCE DIRECTIVE FOR HEALTHCARE OF _____

I. My Wishes

I have prepared my advance directive for healthcare including this addendum after much reading, thought, and discussion with my family. I have enjoyed a wonderful life full of joy, love, family, and friends. It gives me peace of mind to know that, to the extent possible and with the help of my family and friends, I will not linger when my body and/or mind are failing, as I have outlined below. The greatest gift my family and friends can give me is to let me leave this earth with dignity and on my own terms. I am ____ years old and my mind is sound as I write this advance directive for healthcare, including this addendum. I understand that my healthcare proxy will need to use judgment regarding when to implement my advance directive for healthcare.

II. Conditions Activating This Addendum

If I have reached any of the following conditions, I want my wishes, outlined in Part III below, implemented.

A. I am in Severe Cognitive Decline. By Severe Cognitive Decline, I mean a stage of dementia in which I have difficulty speaking coherently, forget names of close family members, have difficulty remembering recent events, have trouble finishing most tasks, and may have incontinence (loss of bladder and/or bowel control). In this stage I would need extensive help with activities of daily living, like bathing, toileting, dressing, and eating, and I would not be able to live alone.

AND/OR

B. I am confined to a bed or wheelchair for the majority of my waking hours, and need help dressing or eating, and have difficulty controlling my bladder or bowels, and have difficulty seeing, reading, or speaking.

AND/OR

C. I have been given a diagnosis of a fatal disease or likely paralysis where the recommended medical treatment is a route I do not choose. For example, this condition would be met if I am facing a diagnosis of cancer for which the recommended medical treatment is physically grueling chemotherapy, radiation therapy, immune therapy, or any medical treatment.

III. Measures to Implement

If I have reached any of the conditions outlined in Part II above, I choose as follows:

A. I want no measures taken to prolong my life. For example, I do not want the following measures to keep me alive:

☐ *Heart resuscitation (cardiopulmonary resuscitation or defibrillation)*

☐ *Artificial breathing (ventilation)*

☐ *Antibiotics for infections*

☐ *Artificial hydration (IV fluids or nasogastric tube)*

☐ *Artificial nutrition (nasogastric tube, PEG tube, or jejunostomy tube)*

B. I wish to receive comfort care as follows:

___ I wish to be kept comfortable, free of pain, and maintained in a dignified state.
___ I wish any medication that is used to keep me comfortable and free of pain or other distress to be in sufficient dosage that distress, physical or psychological, is relieved, even if such medication hastens my death.
___ Tend to my lips and mouth with lip balm and moist swab, ideally on an hourly basis around the clock.

C. Regarding eating and drinking once I am in any of the conditions described in Part II above:

___ If I am receptive to eating and drinking (i.e., show signs of anticipation and enjoyment), I want comfort feeding only. This means that I want the focus of eating and drinking to move away from maintaining adequate nutrition and move toward providing comfort.
___ If I seem indifferent to food or drink, I do not want to be encouraged, cajoled, harassed, or in any way forced to eat or drink. Do not spoon-feed me, meaning do not place a spoon or any other utensil or food or nutritional item into my mouth.
___ If I seem indifferent or opposed to food, solid or liquid, stop offering it.
___ Continue to offer water only, offered orally, but do not try to encourage drinking beyond what I clearly desire.
___ If I decline water, stop offering water and continue comfort care in B, above.
___ If I seem indifferent to water, stop offering water and continue comfort care in B, above.

Adapted From Appendix B of [Thorn, B.E. Before I Lose My Own Mind: Navigating Life as a Dementia Caregiver, 2025, Girl Friday Books.](#)