

[IMAGE]

## Dying the Right Way

By Editorial Staff

Imagine you're dying of a chronic disease – or even of natural causes (old age). How much effort – and time, and money, and emotion – should you, your loved ones and your health care team exert to prolong your life? It's an age-old question that's coming to the forefront of discussion with out-of-control health care costs and an emphasis on preserving life (even for a few days or weeks) no matter the costs.

It turns out many doctors actually have a different view; a perspective that suggests drugs and medical procedures that prolong life for a short time aren't the only answer. Consider a recent report published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that revealed doctors are less likely to die in a hospital, less likely to undergo surgery at the end of their lives and less likely to be admitted to intensive care compared to the general population. (What's more, a 2014 survey found nearly 90 percent of physicians surveyed chose "do not resuscitate" as their advanced directive.)

We're living longer and surviving more health scares, even in old age, due to medical technology. But is that always the right choice? If anything, these physician surveys make you ponder all that time, effort, money and emotion often exerted to prolong a life that's taken its natural course. More important, perhaps, is the need to ensure you live a full, healthy, happy life that's low on stress, poor nutrition, sedentary behavior and medical interventions – and high on healthy eating, physical activity and preventive care. Talk to your doctor for more information.

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