

Deciding together

You can decide together with your doctor or healthcare provider about your test, treatment or procedure. You have the right to be involved in these decisions.

You can also choose to involve a family member, carer or close friend to help you make your decision and remember information.

Good questions to ask:

Do I really need this test, treatment or procedure?

What are the risks?

Are there simpler, safer options?

What happens if I don't do anything?

Is there any cost?

Can I have some time to discuss my options with my family before I decide?

(For surgery): What anaesthesia will I have? Who will do it, and how long will it take for me to recover from it?

What can I do to prepare for the test, treatment or procedure?

For more information

About informed consent:

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/informed-consent>

About your healthcare rights:

<https://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/hospitals/wollongong-hospital/patients-and-visitors/your-rights-and-responsibilities>

This information is also available in [Arabic](#), [Italian](#), [Macedonian](#) and [Portuguese](#), and in [Easy Language](#).

Also:

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/consumers/working-your-healthcare-provider/australian-charter-healthcare-rights>

For tips on communicating with your doctor or healthcare provider:

<https://checkback.org>

Need an Interpreter? Professional interpreters are available if you need help to communicate with staff. Our staff can also ask for an interpreter. The service is free and confidential. We will book the interpreter for you. You can also call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 if you need to speak to us before your appointment.



This information
has been tested
with Consumers

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Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Giving your informed consent for a healthcare test, treatment or procedure

Information for consumers



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

What is consent for healthcare treatment?

Consent is a decision you make with your health care provider to have, or not have a healthcare test, treatment or procedure. A test can be a chest x-ray, surgery is a procedure, and an example of a treatment is chemotherapy

Your healthcare provider will ask you to give your consent before having any test, treatment or procedure. The only exception is in an emergency or situation to save your life.

What is informed consent?

Informed consent means that you make a voluntary decision to have or not have a recommended test, treatment or procedure. This should happen after your healthcare provider has explained:

- Your condition and likely outcome (prognosis) of your condition
- The benefits, risks and expected outcomes of each option for treatment available to you
- Details about the test, treatment or procedure, such as who will perform it and where.

The information your healthcare provider gives you needs to be specific to your situation and what matters to you.

Communication for informed consent

Medical and healthcare information can be complex. Sometimes you may receive information that you don't fully understand.

You have a right to receive information about the test, treatment or procedure that is being recommended for you, in a way that you can understand. You can also ask questions at any time, or ask for information to be repeated.

You can ask a support person – like a family member, carer or friend to help you decide.

You may have a substitute decision maker if you're not able to make your own healthcare decisions. Your healthcare provider will involve your substitute decision maker (if you have one), in decisions about your care.

Your healthcare provider can also give you written information, or links to trusted information on the internet.



How can I give consent?

The consent you need to give depends on the type of procedure or treatment. There are three main ways you can give your consent; these are:

- Implied consent – you cooperate with a healthcare provider's instructions by showing your agreement. For example, you can extend your arm for a blood test, or take and swallow medicines that a healthcare provider gives you.
- Verbal consent – you give your verbal agreement for a treatment or procedure that does not carry a significant risk. For example, when a healthcare provider asks to perform a physical examination on you.
- Written consent – you agree to have a treatment or procedure that is usually complex or has a higher risk, by signing a document (consent form).

It is important that you freely give your consent. This means that your doctor or healthcare provider, or your family, carer or friend should not pressure or force you to give your consent.