Antibiotics
Medicines that fight infections (pneumonia, for example).

Health care directive
A document you create that states the medical treatments and life-sustaining measures you would or would not like should an end-of-life situation occur.

BiPAP (bi-level positive airway pressure)
A treatment given through a mask to help you breathe. The mask fits tightly over your nose and mouth.

CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)
An emergency procedure to keep your heart pumping and oxygen flowing to your brain. The procedure involves another person breathing into your mouth and pressing on your chest. The person also uses medicine and special equipment to give electrical shocks to your heart to get it working. You may have a tube placed down your throat to help you breathe.

Dialysis
The use of a machine to clean your blood when your kidneys aren’t working normally. Your kidneys help your body get rid of waste products and extra fluid in your blood.

IV (intravenous) line
A very narrow, flexible plastic tube placed in a vein. An IV is a way to give you fluids, blood and medicine.

Nutritional support and hydration
Using IVs or tubes to give you food (nutrients) or water if you can’t eat or drink.

Tube feeding
The use of a tube placed in your nose or stomach. The tube provides a way to give you food and fluids if you can’t swallow normally or take in enough food or water.

Ventilator
A machine that pushes air and oxygen into your lungs to help you breathe if you can’t breathe on your own. The machine connects to a tube that goes through your mouth and into the windpipe at the back of your throat.

Code status
Words clinicians use to describe procedures that can be performed if a person’s heart stops or lungs fail. Code status can include the terms DNR, DNI or CPR.

DNR (Do not resuscitate)
Do not use CPR if a person’s breathing or heartbeat has stopped.

DNI (Do not intubate)
Do not put a breathing tube down the throat to assist with breathing.

Do not hospitalize
Do not admit the person to the hospital overnight.

Comfort Care
Medical care and treatment for immediate relief of pain and symptoms that falls short of ventilator support, artificial nutrition/hydration, and re-hospitalization. Treatments and care are usually provided in a community setting and can include oxygen and medications for pain and symptom relief.

Limited intervention
Medical care aimed at treating a new or current illness/injury when the illness is considered reversible. Any invasive or uncomfortable treatment is provided on a time-limited trial

Palliative care
Treatment given for comfort measures only, to relieve symptoms rather than cure disease.

POLST (Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment)
Signed medical order form that communicates the patient’s end-of-life health care wishes to other health care providers during an emergency.