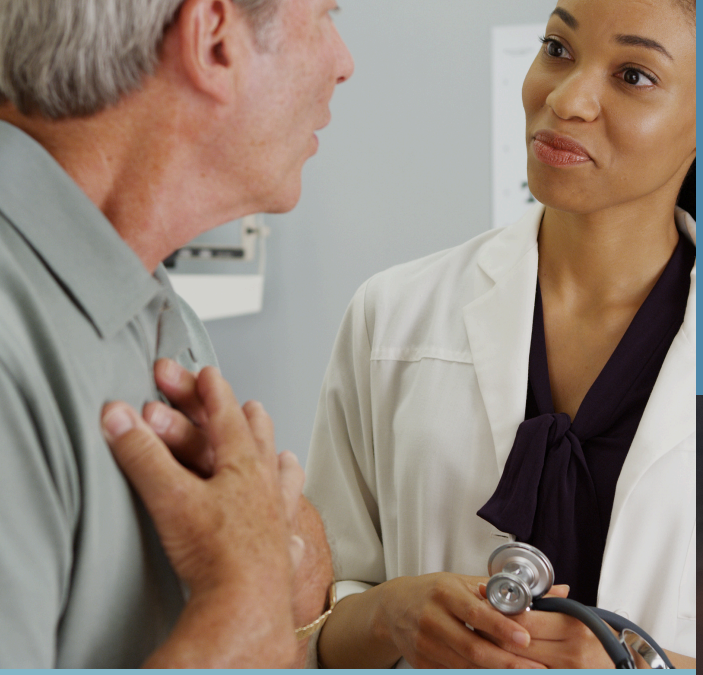

The Mended Hearts, Inc.

Inspiring hope and improving the quality of life for cardiovascular disease patients and their families through ongoing peer-to-peer support, education and advocacy for more than 74 years.

Informed Consent

Informed consent means you have the information you need to make a decision, you fully understand, and you have the freedom and ability to make a choice that is right for you.

Many procedures and clinical trials involve signing an **informed consent form**. Be sure a healthcare professional has reviewed the form with you so you fully understand what you are agreeing to and why. In a clinical trial, you can withdraw consent **at any time**, and you do not need to give a reason.

"It's your road, and yours alone. Others may walk it with you, but no one can walk it for you."
RUMI

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Shared Decision Making

The Mended Hearts, Inc.

Making decisions together

Discussion Guide for Patients & Caregivers

1 Take responsibility

Your health is ultimately your responsibility. It is up to you to be part of the healthcare team, to educate yourself, to share your thoughts and opinions, to know your needs and preferences, and to make decision that work for you. If you make a bad decision, as we all do, it is up to you to make the changes needed to make better decisions going forward. Also, new information becomes available all the time, and keeping yourself informed and updated will improve your health.

2 Know yourself

For true shared decision making, the decisions you make have to be right for **YOU**. Set your own health goals to guide decisions. Know your values, needs, wants, preferences, and what is important to you. After all, you are the one who will live with the decisions you make--not your healthcare team or others who might want to give advice.

3 Know your rights

Too often, patients are not aware of their rights. You have the right to:

- Be treated as part of the team
- Ask questions and get answers
- Be heard
- Have access to notes and medical records.
- Get a second opinion (and third and fourth)
- Suggest alternatives
- Feel confident in the team
- Appeal decisions if you don't agree
- Change your mind

4 Know your options

Only when you know all your options, can you participate in shared decision making. Ask:

- What are all my options?
- What are the risks and benefits of each option?
- What changes will I have to make with each option?
- Will insurance cover each option?
- Who is the best person to provide this treatment?
- Where is the best place for me to get this treatment?

Ask follow-up questions as needed until you feel confident.

5 Get information

The next step for shared decision making is to be informed. Ask questions and get the information you need. Make sure you fully understand your condition, your treatment options, your role, and your responsibilities. Ask for reliable resources that you can refer to in print and online.

6 Use your voice

Gone are the days where patients silently follow doctor's orders. Today, patients can play an active role in the healthcare and their input is valued.

Speak up and speak out so your needs, preferences, questions and concerns are heard and addressed. Don't be afraid you will be seen as a "problem patient." Your healthcare providers want to hear from you and for you to feel confident about your decisions.

"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions."

STEVEN COVEY