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| Do I meet the conditions for voluntary assisted dying? |
| Information for people considering voluntary assisted dying |

This factsheet is about the conditions people need to meet to access voluntary assisted dying. The information in this factsheet is also available as part of the comprehensive guide [*Voluntary assisted dying – Information for people considering voluntary assisted dying*](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/voluntary-assisted-dying/community-consumer-information)<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/voluntary-assisted-dying/community-consumer-information>.

# Summary

You can only access the voluntary assisted dying medication if you meet the conditions set out in the law. These conditions are:

1. You are in the late stages of an advanced disease and expected to die within weeks or months, but not more than six months (or 12 months if you have a neurodegenerative disease, such as motor neurone disease).
2. You are experiencing suffering, which you consider unacceptable.
3. You have the ability to make and communicate an informed decision about voluntary assisted dying.
4. You are making a voluntary, continuing and fully informed decision about voluntary assisted dying.
5. You are an adult, 18 years old or over.
6. You are an Australian citizen or permanent resident.
7. You live in Victoria and have lived in Victoria for the last 12 months.

If you do not think you will meet these conditions but are thinking about voluntary assisted dying, you can still discuss this with your doctor.

# Conditions for voluntary assisted dying

## 1. You are in the late stages of an advanced disease

The advanced disease must be:

* incurable
* progressive (getting worse) and will cause death
* expected to cause your death within weeks or months, but not more than six months (or within 12 months for neurodegenerative diseases, such as motor neurone disease).

## 2. You are experiencing suffering you consider unacceptable

The advanced disease must be causing you suffering that cannot be relieved in a way that is acceptable to you. People experience suffering in different and personal ways.

## 3. You have the ability to make and communicate an informed decision about voluntary assisted dying

This means you must be able to:

* understand what voluntary assisted dying is and what the medication will do
* remember the information about voluntary assisted dying so you can make a decision
* think about voluntary assisted dying alongside the other options available to you (including treatment and palliative care options)
	+ communicate your decision verbally or using other means (such as gestures or a communication aid).

You have to keep the ability to make and communicate a decision about voluntary assisted dying throughout the process. This means that you cannot request it in an advance care directive, because voluntary assisted dying is not available to you once you have lost the ability to make a decision about it.

## 4. You are making a voluntary, continuing and fully informed decision about voluntary assisted dying

Your decision to seek voluntary assisted dying must be:

* voluntary (your own decision)
* consistent (you must make three separate requests for voluntary assisted dying during the process)
	+ fully informed (you are well-informed about your disease, treatment and palliative care options).

Only you can start a discussion with your doctor or health practitioner about voluntary assisted dying. Your doctor or health practitioner cannot start the discussion. Your family member or friend can be with you when you ask about voluntary assisted dying, but they cannot ask for you. This helps to make sure your decision to seek voluntary assisted dying is voluntary.

## 5. You are an adult 18 years old or over

You can only start the formal process to seek voluntary assisted dying when you are an adult 18 years or over. If you are under 18, you may like to discuss your treatment and care options with:

* your family
* a close friend
* your doctor or another health practitioner
* someone else you feel comfortable talking to.

## 6. You are an Australian citizen or permanent resident

You must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident to receive voluntary assisted dying. You will be asked to show proof of your citizenship or permanent residency during the assessment process.

The easiest way to prove you are a citizen is to show your current Australian passport. However, if you don't have a passport, you can use one of the following:

* Australian birth certificate if you were born before 20 August 1986.
* Australian birth certificate if you were born on or after 20 August 1986, plus proof that at least one of your parents was an Australian citizen or permanent resident at the time of your birth. This proof could include your parent's passport or citizenship certificate.
	+ Australian citizenship certificate.

If you are a permanent resident, you can use the following:

* Permanent resident visa or permanent resident visa grant number.

You may want to get the proof of your Australian citizenship or permanent residency organised while you are thinking about seeking voluntary assisted dying. This will make things easier if you decide to go ahead.

## 7. You live in Victoria and have lived in Victoria for at least 12 months

To receive voluntary assisted dying, you must:

* + 1. live in Victoria
		2. at the time of making the first request have lived in Victoria for at least 12 months.

If you use Victorian health services, but do not live in Victoria, you will not meet this condition.

Documents that could help to prove that you have lived in Victoria for the past 12 months include:

* rental agreement
* driver's licence
	+ utilities bills covering a 12-month period – you don't need to show every bill within that period if it's the same account number or Victorian address.

You may want to collect your proof of Victorian residency while you are thinking about seeking voluntary assisted dying. This will make things easier if you decide to go ahead.

# I do not think I will meet these conditions. What can I do?

If you are thinking about voluntary assisted dying, but do not think you will meet the conditions, it might still be a good idea to talk to your doctor about how you are feeling. Your doctor can help you explore why you are thinking about voluntary assisted dying, and also what treatment, palliative care and practical support services may help you.

# Who can I speak to for information about voluntary assisted dying?

You can speak with your doctor or another health practitioner to find out more about voluntary assisted dying.

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