



Medical assistance in dying refers to the situation where an eligible person in Canada seeks and obtains medical help to end their life. This has been a legal option for qualifying Canadians since 2016. The choice of an assisted death is about compassion, avoiding suffering and the fundamental rights of an individual.

What is Medical Assistance In Dying (MAID)?

There are two ways to receive MAID:

- 1.** A physician or nurse practitioner can administer, by intravenous, a substance that causes the death of a person who has requested it, or
- 2.** A physician or nurse practitioner can give or prescribe to a patient a substance that they can self-administer to cause their own death.

NOTE: The vast majority of MAID deaths in Canada occur by clinician-administered intravenous

To qualify for MAID, a person must satisfy all the following criteria:

- Be eligible for government-funded health insurance in Canada
- Be 18 years of age or older and have decision-making capacity
- Have a grievous and irremediable condition*
- Have made a voluntary request for MAID that was not a result of external pressure
- Give informed consent to receive MAID after having received all information needed to make this decision, including a medical diagnosis, available forms of treatment, and options to relieve suffering (including palliative care).

***To have a “grievous and irremediable medical condition,” a person must:**


- Have a serious illness, disease, or disability
- Be in an advanced state of decline that cannot be reversed
- Experience unbearable physical or mental suffering from an illness, disease, disability, or state of decline that cannot be relieved under conditions that the person considers acceptable.

FACT SHEET

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Dying With Dignity Canada's Support team can answer general questions about MAID or provide navigation support.
support@dyingwithdignity.ca

1-844-395-3640

 **MAID navigation and forms by province/territory**

 **Local health directories by province/territory**

 **FAQs about MAID**

 **MAID Assessment Guide**

 **MAID eligibility 101 webinar**

 **Finding an Independent Witness**

 **Download these resources and more at dyingwithdignity.ca**

IT'S YOUR LIFE. IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

DYING WITH DIGNITY
CANADA 

What is Medical Assistance In Dying (MAID)?

Two independent health care professionals (nurse practitioners or physicians) must evaluate an individual to determine whether they qualify for MAID. Prior to or during the assessment process, it will be determined in which track they belong. Each track has specific safeguards:

TRACK 1: Your death is reasonably foreseeable.*

- Written request made by the individual
- One independent witness to sign and date the request form
- Two independent medical assessments
- Final consent before the MAID provision, or through a waiver of final consent. The waiver of final consent allows someone who has already been assessed and approved for MAID to receive it on or before their chosen date even if they do not have the capacity to consent at the time of the MAID procedure.

*Clinicians may interpret “reasonably foreseeable” as meaning “reasonably predictable”. This may mean that there is sufficient temporal proximity to death (it is coming soon), and/or that the trajectory towards death is predictable from the person’s combination of known medical conditions and potential sequelae. In clinical circumstances this would include the consideration of a person’s individual circumstances such as age and frailty. [CAMAP – The interpretation of ‘reasonably foreseeable’ in MAID practice] A person’s condition does not have to be terminal to be defined as reasonably foreseeable.

TRACK 2: Your death is not reasonably foreseeable.

- Written request made by the individual
- One independent witness to sign and date the request form
- Two independent medical assessments; one of the assessors must have expertise in the condition(s) causing suffering and if not, another clinician must be consulted
- The individual must be informed of available and appropriate means to relieve their suffering
- Minimum 90-day assessment period
- Final consent before the MAID provision

Once an individual is approved for MAID it is up to them how to proceed. For example, there is no requirement that you have MAID right away, and the patient can change their mind at any time, even the day of the provision.

For those who are considered Track 1 and who wish to use the option of the waiver of final consent, a date must be set with their MAID provider. If that date is approaching, and the person has capacity, they can reconsider and set a new date with their provider.

To begin the process of requesting medical assistance in dying, it is recommended that you speak with your health care provider, or your provincial, territorial or regional MAID team (usually the Ministry of Health or your local health authority).