

Facts & Figures: How We Die

- Nearly half of all Americans die in a hospital. [Source: Centers for Disease Control \(2005\)](#)
- Nearly 70 percent of Americans die in a hospital, nursing home or long-term-care facility. [Source: Centers for Disease Control \(2005\)](#)
- 7 out of 10 Americans say they would prefer to die at home. [Source: Time/CNN Poll \(2000\)](#)
- Only 25 percent of Americans actually die at home. [Source: Centers for Disease Control \(2005\)](#)
- More than 80 percent of patients with chronic diseases say they want to avoid hospitalization and intensive care when they are dying. [Source: Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care \(2005\)](#)
- The 10 leading causes of death in America are (in order): heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic lower respiratory disease, accidents, Alzheimer's, diabetes, influenza and pneumonia, kidney disease and sepsis (infection). [Source: Centers for Disease Control \(2007\)](#)
- 7 out of 10 Americans die from chronic disease. More than 90 million Americans live with at least one chronic disease. [Source: Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care \(2005\)](#)
- Only 20 to 30 percent of Americans report having an advance directive such as a living will. [Source: Associated Press, 2010](#)
- Even when patients have an advance directive, physicians are often unaware of their patients' preferences. One large-scale study found that only 25 percent of physicians knew that their patients had advance directives on file. [Source: Critical Care Journal \(2007\)](#)