

## Euthanasia Definitions

### Euthanasia (sometimes referred to as Mercy Killing)

The intentional killing of a human being either by that person (suicide) or by another (homicide). Examples of this would be the administration of a lethal drug, or denying the ordinary means of survival (passive euthanasia).

### Voluntary Euthanasia

Euthanasia that occurs when a patient (gives consent) personally requests it.

### Involuntary Euthanasia

Euthanasia that occurs when consent could be obtained from the patient but is not. Instead the consent is obtained from a relative, judge, a panel, or is performed solely at the discretion of the individual providing treatment i.e. the physician and/or caretaker.

### Non-Voluntary Euthanasia

Patient's consent cannot be obtained. This may be due to brain damage following an accident or another medical reason such as dementia. Someone else authorizes euthanizing the patient even though the patient is not dying. The reason given might be that the patient would not want to live like this.

### Suicide

The taking of one's own life voluntarily and intentionally.

### Physician-Assisted Suicide

A physician or other person provides the means by which a person can kill themselves.

### Active Euthanasia

A physician or other person not only provides the patient with the means to kill themselves but actually assists them in doing so.

### Murder

The intentional taking of a human life, often out of malicious and selfish motives. Murder is not to be confused with taking a human life in the act of self defense nor is it to be confused with carrying out a death sentence for someone convicted of a capital offense.

### Medical Futility

When continued medical treatment for a dying patient is determined to be futile a doctor may be justified in recommending that further medical treatment be withheld from the patient. This is not euthanasia because the doctor and his staff have done everything they can to reverse the dying process but to no avail; therefore, treatment is stopped.