

[Use of the R-concept in a medical department].

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Do-not-resuscitate orders issued in a medical department were studied by retrospective evaluation of 195 consecutive deaths in the department in 1991. No attempt at resuscitation was recorded in 171 patients. In these cases, do-not-resuscitate orders were documented in 67 only. For more than half of the orders, no reason was given in the medical record, and partial orders not to resuscitate were found in five patients only, none of whom were resuscitated. No difference was found in use of do-not-resuscitate orders between intensive-care units and regular wards, between patients above and patients below 80 years of age, or between patients with and patients without cancer. We suggest extended use of do-not-resuscitate orders in our department, and better documentation of the orders. Written guidelines have been established for this purpose.