

# FACING DEATH

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How far would you go to sustain the life of someone you love, or your own? When the moment comes, and you're confronted with the prospect of "pulling the plug," do you know how you'll respond? Unfounded rumors of federal "death panels" grabbed headlines last summer, but the real decisions of how we die -- the questions that most of us prefer to put off -- are being made quietly behind closed doors, increasingly on the floors of America's intensive care units. In this film, FRONTLINE gains access to the ICU of one of New York's biggest hospitals to examine the complicated reality of today's modern, medicalized death. Here, we find doctors and nurses struggling to guide families through the maze of end of life choices they now confront: whether to pull feeding and breathing tubes, when to perform expensive surgeries and therapies or to call for hospice. The film also offers an unusually intimate portrait of patients facing the prospect of dying in ways that they might never have wanted or imagined.

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## CREDITS

*Directed by* Josh Aronson  
*Produced by* Roger Weisberg



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