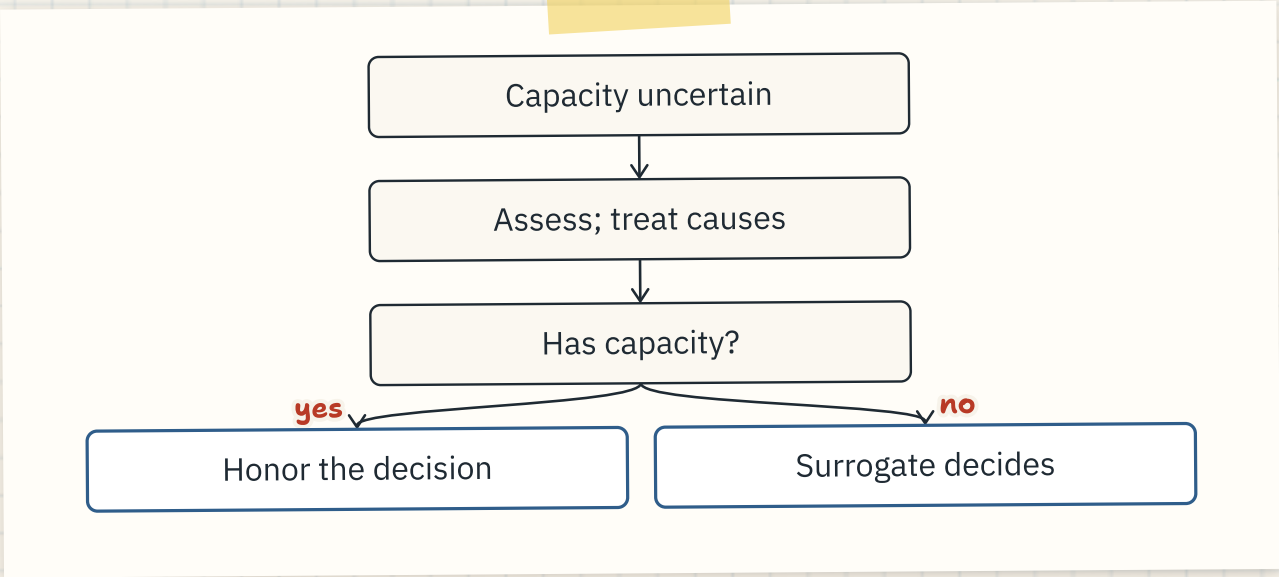
Informed consent and capacity

Assess capacity before using a surrogate



Step by step

1. Three elements, then document. Disclosure: diagnosis, purpose, risks, benefits, alternatives
2. Capacity: for this decision
3. Voluntariness: free of coercion
4. Document the conversation and decision

Ability	Patient can
Express a choice	State a decision
Understand	Take in the information
Appreciate	Apply it to themselves
Reason	Weigh the options

Four abilities of capacity

Rule of thumb

Consent is a process, not a signature

Unwise choice is not incapacity

Uncertain capacity: assess, do not guess

Exam traps

- ! An unwise choice is not incapacity.
- ! Do not hand the decision to the family before assessing capacity.
- ! The emergency exception needs urgency, no way to take part and no surrogate.

Informed consent and decision-making capacity: the four abilities

Video, written lesson, practice question and sources: medservatory.com/usmle-step-2-ck/ethics-law-patient-safety/informed-consent-decision-making-capacity

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