

E-ROK in Terminal Cancer (Estimated Remaining OK Days)

Einer-Jensen N*

University of Southern Denmark, Denmark.

***Correspondence:**

Einer-Jensen N, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark,
E-mail: nielseinerjensen@gmail.com.

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In general: Patients do not want to die, and doctors do not want their patients to die. Both parts involved want to extend life, even in terminal cases. Drastic surgery or chemotherapy may be started to increase the number of days surviving, and life may indeed be extended somewhat. However, the remaining life may end up being a struggle with a poor quality of life trying to overcome the stress of the treatment.

The author suggest introduction of a new term: Estimated Remaining OK Days (E-ROK).

Reason: The number of remaining OK days is more important than the number of surviving days. Patients, their relatives, and the doctors may (and often do) discuss the pro et contra before an eventual start of extensive treatment in terminal cases. The base of the discussion could be E-ROK. How many OK days are left after a drastic treatment - how many OK days remains with a more traditional approach. The author is aware that the discussion may be based on a comparison between two rather uncertain numbers - but it is still important.

E-ROK could be introduced as a parameter in cancer research proposals.