
HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SAFE HOSPITAL STAY

You and your care partner are important members of your hospital care team. Other members include doctors, nurses and staff who will care for you during your hospital stay.

We invite you to partner with us in your care. Just like you, our goal is to make sure that you get the best and safest care.

Use this checklist to help you get ready for your admission to the hospital and your hospital stay. The staff member who admits you to the hospital will review and talk to you about this information and also answer any questions you might have.

► Before Admission to the Hospital

Choose at least one trusted family member or friend to be your care partner. A care partner is someone who can:

- Help you with your care and making decisions about your care
- Support your recovery in the hospital and at home after you leave
- Help make sure that your preferences, values and goals are used in care planning



Bring the following important items with you to the hospital:

- List of all medicines you take including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and supplements (include reason for taking, dose, time you take and how you take them)
- Allergies to medications or food
- Names and phone numbers of your primary care doctors and specialists
- Your insurance information
- Your wishes about care and treatment in case you become unable to speak for yourself (bring any written forms you have such as an Advance Directive for Care or Living Will)
- A small notebook to keep track of important information

Talk to your doctor who is admitting you to the hospital to get the information you want and need about:

- Your treatment or surgery
- Diagnosis or condition
- Tests you will have
- Medicines you will be given
- How your pain will be safely managed
- How long you will be in the hospital and if it is likely you will need to go to a rehabilitation hospital or skilled nursing facility before you go home
- Any physical therapy or other therapies you will receive in the hospital



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► When You Are Admitted to the Hospital

Learn about who is on your team by asking:

- Who will be taking care of you and what they will do
- How to contact them
- How to contact the hospital's patient advocate



Find out about how you and your care partner can share and get information and be part of care planning. This includes:

- During **rounds** when your doctors, others on the team and you plan your care
- During **nurse change of shift report** when one nurse is finishing a shift and shares important information about your care with the nurse starting the shift
- In **planning meetings for discharge or transition** to your home or another care setting
- On a **whiteboard** in your hospital room
- Through an **online patient portal**

Safety is key! We all work together to make sure your care is safe. Speak up at any time with any concerns you have. Talk with your team about the best ways to:

- Make sure everyone washes their hands – family, friends, staff and doctors
- Help prevent infections
- Help prevent pressure injuries (sometimes called bed sores)
- Protect yourself from falling
- Make sure your patient identification is correct and is checked especially before tests, procedures and being given medicines
- Make sure that all doctors, nurses and staff introduce themselves and explain what they are going to do before giving you any medicine or before a treatment or test
- Make sure your surgery site is correctly marked on your body or you are getting the correct test or procedure
- Be aware of side effects of treatment and medicines
- Learn about symptoms and danger signs to watch out for
- Know what to do and who to talk to about concerns if you or your care partner thinks something does not seem “right”

► Before You Leave the Hospital

Talk with your team as early as possible about how you and your care partner can get ready to leave the hospital. You will get specific discharge instructions before you leave the hospital but you can talk with your team at any time about:

- Your medicines and what they are for and how to take them properly
- Serious signs and symptoms to look out for once you get home, what to do if you see them and who to call if you have concerns
- What to expect in your recovery
- Instructions for care related to your surgery or treatment
- Instructions for what you should and should not eat and drink
- Need for additional therapy, home care, support or equipment at home
- Follow-up appointments
- How doctors and staff will share information with your primary care doctors and specialists

