

Staying Safe in the Hospital

It is your responsibility to be prepared for your admission to the hospital. Use this checklist to improve your safety and comfort while you are in the hospital.

Preparing at home for your visit:

- ✓ Bring your living will, advanced directives, and /or healthcare power of attorney documents with you.
- ✓ Provide the name and number of your emergency contact during your preoperative phone call.
- ✓ Make sure you understand *all instructions* for admission (special preparations, pre-admission, fasting, when to stop taking your medicine, etc.). Call your doctor's office with questions if you do not understand or have forgotten your instructions.
- ✓ **Bring:** A picture ID such as your drivers license and bring your insurance cards
 - A list of your allergies and the reactions you had in the past (e.g. Penicillin-Rash)
 - A complete medication list **OR** all of your medicine (the list should include supplements and over the counter medications taken *regularly*, such as aspirin for your heart or saw palmetto for your prostate)
- ✓ Make necessary arrangements for pets, plants, mail, newspaper delivery, etc.
- ✓ Make sure you know what procedure you are having and what side of your body you are having the procedure (e.g. right knee replacement).

DO NOT BRING OR WEAR ANY JEWELRY, EXPENSIVE WATCHES, CASH, CREDIT CARDS, ETC.

DO NOT SHAVE THE OPERATIVE SITE. WE WILL DO THIS FOR YOU WITH SPECIAL CLIPPERS.

Have a trusted friend or family member serve as your advocate.

- Ask someone you trust to accompany you to the hospital and to visit you regularly.
- Provide their phone number and make sure your doctor and nurses know (recognize) your advocate.
- Ask to sign a release of information to the advocate so care can be discussed freely.
- Have your advocate present when making major medical decisions or when receiving important instructions.
- Ask your advocate to record medications given, changes in your condition, medication changes and other important instructions.
- Take your discharge medication list to all of your follow up appointments so that your doctor(s) is aware of any changes made while you were hospitalized

Basic Hospital Security

- You may limit visitations to only approved individuals; you will be asked about this when you register. Consider limiting the number of individuals you tell about your surgery in order to deter unwanted visits or phone calls.
- Know where your telephone and call light are and ask staff about where the fire exits are on your floor.
- Keep the card that our maintenance staff will provide to you with their extension. Report any suspicious person and activity to your nurse or to maintenance.
- Accept care and transport out of your room only from hospital staff who are wearing hospital identification badges. If the badge is not visible ask to see it. Put on your call light if you do not feel safe.

Basic Patient Safety

- Make sure all equipment (telephone, call button, light, bed, etc.) is working when you get to your room.
- Ask *everyone* who enters the room to wash their hands or use the hand gel located just inside your door.
- Ask nurses and doctors to wipe their stethoscopes with an alcohol swab before using
- Always have hospital staff verify your name and birthdate before giving you medications, getting blood drawn or having tests. Question your caregiver if something doesn't make sense to you!
- Get to know all the hospital staff involved with your care. Write down their names and what they do if it helps you to remember them.
- If you feel unsafe at anytime or feel your safety needs are not being met when you tell your nurse your concern - please ask to speak to the unit supervisor or hospital supervisor to report your concerns.

Adapted from Community Medical Foundation for Public Safety