

# What to Do When You're Admitted to the Hospital

You have many things to think about when you are admitted to the hospital. Use this checklist to help you keep track of important details regarding your stay and recovery.

## First Things First



- Ask hospital staff to explain anything that you may not understand.
- Tell the nurse\* or doctor what you would want to be done if you should stop breathing or your heart should stop (if you have Do Not Resuscitate wishes).
- Give the nurse a copy of your Advance Directives/Living Will for your chart.
  - If you do not have one, information can be provided.
- Tell the nurse if you have a specific person who can get information about you during your hospital stay.
- Tell the nurse if you have a Power of Attorney for your healthcare and who that person is.
- Make sure all hospital staff are washing or sanitizing their hands when entering and leaving your room.
- Talk to your doctor and nurse about your plan of care.
  - Discuss what you may need when you are released from the hospital.

## Medications



- Give the nurse an updated list of medications you are taking right now.
- Tell the nurse if you have any allergies.
- Tell the nurse if you have trouble getting your medications.
- If you are given a new medication(s), ask:
  - What it is for.
  - How it will help you.
  - How often you take it.
  - What the side effects are.

**\*The hospital staff person who assists with your admission might be someone other than a nurse or doctor, such as an admissions specialist or case manager.**

## Mobility



Even though you may not be feeling well, getting you moving as soon as possible will help decrease the chance of your muscles getting weak and you developing blood clots or bed sores.

### Tell or ask the nurse:

- How you have been getting around at home.
- If you use anything to help you walk.
- If you can get out of bed and go to the bathroom on your own, or if you should call for help first.
- If you can get out of bed to eat your meals.
- To show you how you can prevent getting blood clots by doing exercises, such as ankle pumps.

### To prevent bed sores, tell or ask the nurse:

- To look at your skin.
- Where skin injury can happen to you.
- If you see any changes on your skin.
- If you have trouble controlling your urine or stool. This can cause irritation to your skin.
- How you or your caregiver can safely change your position in bed.
- To tell you about rubbing or friction on the skin and ways to prevent it.

## Nutrition



A healthy diet is necessary to heal wounds, control illnesses, and build or maintain strength.

### Tell or ask the nurse:

- How you have been eating and drinking at home.
- If you need help with your meals.
- If you have trouble swallowing food or liquids.
- What kind of foods you like.
- How you can order your meals.
- How you get your meals at home.

## Mental State



Sometimes being in the hospital can cause confusion because of changes in your surroundings.

### Tell or ask the nurse:

- How your thinking can be affected during your hospital stay.
- If you have trouble sleeping.

### For family members, tell or ask the nurse:

- If your loved one is acting different.
- If anything causes confusion for your loved one at home.
- If your loved one gets confused during the night.

