

## 5 Tell a member of the health care team if you have ever had an allergic or bad reaction to any medicine or food.

If you get sick, your health care team may have to act fast. Before they give you any medicine, they need to know if you could have a bad reaction to it. That's why you should tell them in advance about any allergy or reaction you have ever had to any medicine or food.



Reactions can include rashes, headaches, breathing trouble, and feeling sick. Because some medicines have food in them, be sure to talk about your food allergies too. Tell a member of your team right away if a new medicine makes you feel unwell. If you do not know if you have allergies, you can get tested. Some people have reactions to anaesthetics - the drugs used to put them to sleep or stop pain during surgery. If you have ever had a reaction, tell your family and your health care team in case you need surgery again. Don't wait until you get sick to tell people about your allergies. Some people wear an ID bracelet such as Medic Alert™. This tells the health care team about your allergies when you can't tell them yourself.

## 6 Make sure you know what to do when you go home from the hospital. When you are getting ready to go home from the hospital or after a medical treatment ask as many questions as you can to make sure you understand:

- what treatment you received,
- whether you will have to pick up a prescription before you go home,
- what kind of transportation you will need to get home, the type of care you will need at home and if you will need someone to stay with you,
- what symptoms to watch for and who to call if something does not feel right,
- whether someone will be making a plan with you for home care,
- what medicine you must take, how to take it, and any side effects,
- what foods you should eat and not eat,
- when you can go back to normal activities, such as work, school, exercise, and driving,
- what follow-up appointments you will need and who will make them.

Outstanding Care — Patient & Family Centered

## Your Health Care: Be Involved

6 steps to being more involved in your health care

## Our Commitment to Patient Safety



### Our Values:

Accountability, Respect, Optimism, Leadership, Engagement

We all have **A ROLE** to play in patient safety.

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**Whether you are a patient or a visitor, do your part to prevent germs from spreading. When performed correctly, hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of germs.**



It's a fact that health care-associated infections can cause serious harm, but you can protect yourself, your visitors and your health care providers by promoting clean hands. Don't be shy. If you are confined to your bed, ask for a small bottle of hand sanitizer or wipes to keep at your bedside. Insist that your visitors clean their hands when they arrive in your room and as they leave, and prompt any health care worker who forgets to clean their hands.

Hand hygiene includes washing hands with soap and water or sanitizing with an alcohol-based product. Use soap and water anytime your hands are visibly soiled. For all other instances, using alcohol-based hand sanitizer is the preferred method of cleaning your hands.



**One of the keys to getting the best health care is to be an active member of your health care team. This means taking part and being involved in every decision about your care. You are the one who knows the most about your health. Tell the members of your health care team everything you can, even if you think they already know, and even if you think it is not important. We encourage you to speak up if you have questions or concerns about your care.**



Before you see your health care team, plan the questions you want to ask and write them down if you can. It is often helpful to bring a family member or friend with you when you talk to your health care team. If you need an interpreter, ask in advance if there one can be there, or bring someone who can interpret for you. If you do not understand the answers to your questions, it's fine to ask again. You can say, "I'm not sure I understand what you said. Can you explain that to me again?" Also, ask where you can go for more information. You should understand as much as you can about any:

- medical problem you have (your diagnosis),
- treatment or procedure that you will have, and
- medicine you should take and how to take it.

As an active participant in your care, be sure to tell us if:

- you are not feeling well right now or have been sick lately,
- you are taking any medicine,
- you have had an allergic or bad reaction to any food or medicine,
- you have had surgery or recent visits to the hospital,
- you have ever fallen or are unsteady on your feet,
- you have seen another doctor or gone somewhere else for health care,
- you have an ongoing illness like diabetes or heart disease,
- there is an illness that runs in your family,
- you have an addiction such as smoking, drugs, or alcohol.

**Bring all of your medicines with you when you go to the hospital or to a medical appointment.**

Some medicines combine with each other in your body and produce bad reactions. To protect you, your health care team must know about everything you take. This includes the drugs you take with a doctor's prescription. It also includes other medicines you buy, such as: vitamins, herbs and herbal remedies, food supplements, and 'over the counter' or non-prescription medicine you buy at the drugstore. When you are going to the hospital or to the medical appointment, put all of your medicines in a bag and take them with you. Always keep your medicine in the bottle it came in. If you cannot bring the medicines with you, try to keep an up-to-date list of everything you take in your wallet.



**Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Falls can be prevented and we can help keep you safe.**

The first step to avoiding a fall is to understand what causes them. Poor balance, decreased muscle and bone strength, and reduced vision or hearing can contribute to falls. Staying safe and on your feet is a matter of taking some steps to protect yourself. Tell us if you have ever fallen or are unsteady on your feet. Ask for help when walking if needed, use handrails, walkers or wheelchairs if needed. Wear non-slip footwear.