

Be Our PARTNER in Patient Safety

At Northwestern Memorial Hospital, we want to provide you with the *Best Patient Experience*. We want you to partner with your doctors and nurses so that you always receive the right care at the right time. Everyone has a role in patient safety, including you or your chosen family member or friend.

What Can You Do? PARTNER With the Healthcare Team!

Provide information.

Ask questions.

Review information with the healthcare team.

Take part in the simple identification steps done by the healthcare team prior to Tests, Treatment and Surgery.

Notify your doctor, nurse or healthcare team.

Engage a family member or friend in your care.

Recognize your fall risk and help us keep you safe.

During Your Hospital Stay

You may have questions for your doctor or nurse. Make notes here and we'll get answers for you.

Questions: _____

Provide the Following Information to All Healthcare Providers

Your allergies or reactions to medicines and foods.

- Current list of prescribed medicines with the name, purpose, dose and when you take it.
- Medicines or diet aids that you buy over the counter, such as aspirin, cold medicine, vitamins, herbs and health supplements.
- Health history, including past surgeries.
- Names and phone numbers of your doctors, clinics and pharmacies.

Ask Questions

If you are confused at any time, speak up and **ask questions**.

- Before taking any medicine, ask your healthcare provider:
 1. What is the name of the medicine?
 2. What is it for?
 3. How should I take it and for how long?
 4. What should I do if I miss a dose?
 5. What side effects are likely? What do I do if they occur?
 6. Is there any food, drink, diet supplements or activity I should avoid while taking this medicine?
 7. Will this medicine work safely with the other medications prescription or over-the-counter that I am taking?
 8. Do you have any written information about this medication?
- If you feel any medication is making you sick or causing pain or other side effects, report it right away.
- Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. It is OK to remind staff and visitors to wash their hands.
- Know who is taking care of you. All staff wear ID badges. If you are unsure, ask them for their role in your care.
- Discuss any concerns about your care, the healthcare team or safety issues with your doctor or nurse. You also can call our Patient Representatives at 312-926-3112 for help. They will work with your doctor and nurses in order to answer your questions about your care.
- Don't be afraid to ask for a second opinion.
- Write down any questions and review them with your doctor or nurse.
- Learn more about your health and treatment options at our Health Learning Center or Alberto Culver Women's Health Center. (See back page for more information.)

Review the Following Information With Your Doctor or Nurse

Written consents. Be sure you know exactly what the consent is for, what will be done and follow-up care.

- Risks and benefits of your test, treatment or surgery.
- Your treatment plan during your hospital stay and at discharge. Make sure you understand the plan, medication list and when to call or visit your doctor for a follow-up visit.

Tests, Treatments and Surgery

To keep you safe, the healthcare team will ask for your name and will check your wristband before every test, treatment, medication or surgery.

- Ask your healthcare providers about your tests, treatments or surgery. If you do not know what it is for, ask your doctor or nurse.
- Ask about your test results and what they mean for your care.
- For some procedures the doctor will mark the surgery site with you to be sure that the site is correct.

Notify the Doctor, Nurse or Healthcare Team

If you are unsure about why you are receiving a certain medication, procedure or treatment.

- If your pain medicines are not working well. Pain can be relieved most of the time. Good pain relief can help you be more active and help you in your recovery.
- If your IV (into the vein) line starts to leak, the IV site begins to swell or if you hear the pump alarm. Do not adjust your IV pump, monitors or other devices.
- If your IV line becomes disconnected. Do not disconnect or reconnect your IV line.
- If you or your family feel your medical condition is changing and you are worried, or you are having symptoms you did not expect.
- If you are feeling depressed or feel as though you might harm yourself. Our 24-hour mental health **hotline number** is 312-926-8100.
- Before leaving the unit.

Engage a Friend or Family Member to be Your Decision Maker in Case You Are Ever Unable to Make Decisions For Yourself

Ask them to stay with you, even overnight if you wish, during your hospital stay.

- They can come with you, ask questions and write down any instructions.
- You can tell this person of your wishes about treatment, care and emergency measures if you are ever unable to make that decision.
- Tell your nurse and your doctor who is your preferred healthcare decision maker (when you are unable to do so.)
- You may ask your nurse to arrange for help for you in completing “advance directives” describing your specific wishes.

Recognize Your Fall Risk

- You may be at risk for falls due to medications, your medical condition, poor vision or hearing or difficulty walking. To prevent falls:
 1. If you have a history of falling at home, tell your doctor or nurse.
 2. Follow your healthcare provider’s guidelines. Don’t get out of bed on your own.
 3. Use the call button to ask for help to the bathroom—we want to come and help you. It is never a bother.
 4. Do not be afraid to ask for help when walking.
 5. Wear non-skid slippers.

6. Walk slowly and with care.
 7. Do not lean or support yourself with rolling objects such as bedside tables.
 8. Use devices such as canes or walkers as instructed.
 9. Call for help when you need it for any reason.
 10. Notify your nurse of any spills or clutter in your room.
- If you feel unsteady, dizzy or light-headed when walking, notify your doctor or nurse right away.

When You Leave the Hospital, Make Sure You Have This Information

- List of medications you need to take—when and how.
- Activity limits (e.g., lifting, stairs, driving, sex, work and exercise).
- Diet guidelines (e.g., fluid intake).
- Wound, drain and IV line care as needed.
- Symptoms to report to your doctor (e.g., fever, redness of incision).
- How you can expect to feel (e.g., tired).
- When to seek immediate medical treatment (e.g., chest pain or bleeding).
- Timing of follow-up tests, doctor or clinic visits.
- Baby care (e.g., breastfeeding, bathing).
- Who to call with questions.
- Northwestern Memorial's main phone number: 312-926-2000.

For Other Health Information, Call or Visit:

- **Drug Information Center:** 312-926-7573
- **Breastfeeding Helpline:** 312-472-MILK (6455)

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

Northwestern Memorial is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes, respects and serves with dignity all people and does not discriminate, including in hiring, or employment, or admission, or access to, or treatment in its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, disability, handicap, age, Vietnam or other veteran status, sexual orientation or any other status protected by relevant law. To arrange for TDD/TTY, auxiliary aids and foreign language interpretation services, call the Patient Representative department at 312-926-3112, TDD number 312-926-6363. Issues related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should be directed to the director of Employee Relations or designee at 312-926-7297.

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