



## Patient Safety

Review this handout with your family or support person to help you understand patient safety tips for the hospital and ambulatory setting (doctor's office, etc.).

### 10 Important Tips on Patient Safety Awareness

- 1. Participate in your medical care and treatment decisions:** Write down any questions you may have for your doctor. Discuss your medical condition and treatment, and make sure you understand any information that is given to you.
- 2. Involve a family member or friend in your care:** Bring a family member, friend, or support person to your appointments to help ask questions and provide support while you receive your care.
- 3. Read all medical forms carefully:** Review the consent form(s), and if you have any questions or concerns, ask your health care provider.
- 4. Checking the I.D. band:** Your health care provider checks your identity – for example, checking your I.D. band – before giving any medication, drawing blood, going to tests, treatments, or procedures in the hospital.
- 5. Review the correct procedure and operative site with the staff before you have any surgeries, tests or procedures.** (Note: for selected procedures, your site will be marked ONLY by your doctor.)
- 6. Move about safely in your hospital room to prevent falls:**
  - Involve your family or support person in any education you receive about preventing falls in the hospital.
  - Put on your call light before you get out of bed if you feel weak or dizzy.
  - Sit on the edge of the bed for a few minutes before you stand up. This helps to prevent dizziness.
  - Wear slippers or shoes when you get up.
  - Make sure the path to your bathroom is clear.
  - Know where the emergency call light is located.
  - Make sure you can reach your call light before the medical staff leaves the room.

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## Important Tips on Patient Safety Awareness *continued*

### 7. Learn about your medication safety:

- **Bring a list of all of your medications to your doctor's appointments and to the hospital** – including any vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter medications you are currently taking. Keep a record of vaccines you have been given.
- **Understand your medication prescription:** Please be sure to ask your doctor/pharmacist to verify medication instructions with you.
- **Know the correct dose, time, and purpose of your medications.**
- **Speak up about your medication while you are hospitalized:** If you notice the color, the imprint (wording on the medication), the dose, or the timing of your medication is different than at home, tell your nurse immediately.
- **Tell your doctor and nurses about any allergies or side effects to medications you may have had in the past.** If you suddenly feel short of breath, develop a rash or hives or have an itching sensation, notify your nurse right away. You may be having an allergic reaction to a medication.

### 8. Learn how to Use a Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) pump (if you have one):

Patient Control Analgesia (PCA) is an effective way of treating pain. A PCA pump gives you a set amount of pain medication with the push of a button.

**Note:** For your safety, a PCA pump is for patient use only. The PCA dosing button should not be pushed by anyone else except the patient. Be sure to ask for help when getting out of bed if you are using a PCA pump.

### 9. Wash your hands:

After using the bathroom and before eating. To keep you safe, health care providers sanitize their hands with soap and water, or alcohol-based waterless gel before and after caring for patients.

### 10. Learn more about patient safety:

- Visit the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations at [www.jcaho.org](http://www.jcaho.org) and click on "Speak Up."
- Visit the National Patient Safety Foundation® at [www.npsf.org](http://www.npsf.org).

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Note: This information is not meant to replace any information or personal medical advice which you get directly from your doctor(s). If you have any questions about this information, such as the risks or benefits of the treatment listed, please ask your doctor(s).