Be Prepared to Go Home Booklet

Before you leave the hospital, we want to make sure you feel ready to be at home. During your hospital stay, your doctors and nurses will make sure to answer your questions and address your concerns. We want you to have all the information you need.

This booklet has a checklist, questions to ask your doctor or nurse, and space to write.

Use the **checklist** to see what information you still need from us as you or your family member prepare to go home. If you cannot check a box, use the **questions** listed to ask your doctor or nurse about the information you need. Use the **space to write** additional questions or answers to your questions.



☐ I feel confident that I or someone close to me can take care of me when I leave the hospital.

Before leaving the hospital, you will get written instructions about your care.

Make sure you understand these instructions. Repeat these instructions back to the doctor or nurse in your own words. That way, you can make sure you understand what you need to do. If you do not understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain things more clearly.

Ask:

- How do I take care of any wounds, cuts, or incisions? Can you show me how to do this?
- What foods or drinks should I avoid? For how long?
- Are there any activities I should not do like driving, sex, heavy lifting, or climbing stairs? For how long?
- What exercises are good for me? When can I start doing them? How often should I do them?
- What do I need to do to make my home safer?

Tips for Going Home

Patients and families at [insert hospital name] wrote these tips to help you get ready to go home:

[Use patient and family advisors to tailor this list to your hospital.]

- Write down what your doctors and nurses say.
- Ask questions again until you understand the answers.
- Make lists of what needs to be done, who can do it, and who can help.
- Talk with someone else who has been in your situation to help you prepare and know what to expect.
- Talk to other people in the hospital, such as social workers, chaplains, and other patients, about your care or other support you may need.

Going Home Too Soon?

If you feel that you are going home before you are ready, call [insert name] at [phone number].

☐ My doctors or nurses answered questions that are important to me and my family. You may have other questions or concerns that are not in this checklist.	Use this space to write any information you need:
Write them down and make sure you have the answers you need befor you leave the hospital.	
you leave the hospital.	

☐ My family or someone close to me knows I am coming home. They also know about the next steps in my care.

Family or someone close to you can help keep track of and understand information about your health. Involve your friends or family in ways that you wish.

Ask:

- Will I need help when I get home?
- If so, who will help me? What do they need to do to get ready?
- How do I make sure my family or someone close knows what I need when I get home?
- What should I do if there is no one at home who can help me?

se this space to write any information you need:				

☐ I know about other help I need at home.

You may need other help at home. Or, you may be fine on your own.

We will set up nursing care, therapy, or other help if you need it. Family or friends can also help. Ask your doctor or nurse how others can help you recover.

Ask:

- When I get home, what kind of help or care will I need? Should someone be with me all the time?
- Will I need nursing care for taking my medicines or taking care of cuts or wounds? For how long? Who pays for it?
- Will I need physical or occupational therapy for help with exercises or relearning how to do things? For how long? Who pays for it?
- Will I need help with eating, bathing, or going to the bathroom? For how long? Who pays for it?
- Will I need any equipment, such as crutches or oxygen? Where do I get it? Who pays for it? How do I use it?
- How can friends or family members help me at home?

☐ I know what my medicines are and how to take them.

Before you leave the hospital, go over the list of medicines you need to take when you get home with your doctor or nurse. The medicines you need to take now may be different from what you took before you went into the hospital.

Tell your doctor and nurse about all the medicines you usually take at home, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Ask:

- What medicines do I need to take when I leave the hospital? Is this the same as before I went into the hospital?
- What is the name of this medicine? Is this the generic or brand name?
- Why do I take this medicine?
- When and how do I take this medicine?
- How much do I take?
- What does this medicine look like?
- What are potential side effects of this medicine? What problems do I need to look out for?
- Will this medicine interfere with vitamins or other herbal supplements I am taking?
- Where and how do I get this medicine?
- What medicines can I take for pain? Upset stomach? Headaches?
 Allergies?

☐ I know when my followup appointments are and how to get there.

You will need followup appointments after you leave the hospital. At these appointments, your doctor will check on how well you are recovering. Your doctor may also ask you to get some tests or give you test results that you are waiting for.

Ask:

- What appointments do I need after I leave the hospital? Can the hospital help me make these appointments?
- Am I waiting on results of any tests? When should I get the results?
- Are there tests I need after I leave the hospital?

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☐ I know what problems to look for and who to call if I have problems at home.
Some symptoms, such as pain or swelling, may be normal when you get
home. Sometimes these symptoms are signs of bigger problems. Be sure
you understand when you need to call for help and who you should call.

Ask:

- What problems do I need to watch for when I get home? If I have problems, how do I know when I should call?
- Who do I call if I have questions or problems when I get home?

If you have a	uestions about v	our care after vo	ou leave the hospi	tal.
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Call	 	 	

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