



A SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR PATIENTS WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL

We are all patients at one time or another. Whether it be in a visit to our family physician, a trip to the emergency department or an inpatient hospital stay, we will all experience being a patient. The important thing is to **stay involved** in your care and in planning for discharge. In hospitals, clinicians often use checklists to make sure protocols are followed. Here is a safety checklist you can use should you or a loved one have the need to be in the hospital.

Helping to prevent infections

- Whenever clinicians enter your room, ask if they have washed their hands. Request that visitors wash their hands as well.
- If you have any type of catheter, ask every day if that catheter can be removed.

Identification errors

- Check the ID bracelet placed on your arm to make sure all information is correct.
- Staff should ask you your name and date of birth to confirm your identity before any treatment or tests.

Falls

- Ask about what steps are being taken to help reduce your risk of falling.
- Keep your call light, eyeglasses and other items you need within reach
- Always wear non-skid footwear
- If you need assistance walking, request help before the need to use the bathroom becomes urgent

Blood clots (venous thromboembolism or VTE)

- You should be screened by clinicians to identify your risk for blood clots
- If you are at risk, ask what treatments you should receive

Communication and Teamwork

- Be familiar with the medications you are taking, your allergies and your medical history
- If you are confused about something related to your treatment, ask for clarification or for a caregiver to provide an explanation
- Ensure you understand the plan for your discharge and that you will be able to care for yourself at home by reading back the plan and ensuring you know the following:
 - Your treatment
 - What risks to watch out for and what to do if they occur
 - Follow-up instructions – which provider you should visit, how soon and when this provider will receive records from your hospital stay