

# **Be Our Partner for Safe Health Care**

There are many things we do to keep you safe and prevent errors while you receive health care. We need you and your family to be a partner in your health care to keep you safe or increase your safety.

## **Be a Part of Your Care**

- Be a part of all decisions. Make sure that you understand and agree with your care.
- Please ask questions. Tell us your concerns. Write down questions to ask your doctor or nurse so that you will not forget.
- Expect clear, simple information that you can understand. If you do not understand or you have trouble reading, tell the staff.
- Ask a family member or friend to be with you during your hospital stay or appointment. This person can help you learn information and ask questions.

## **Tell Us about Your Needs**

- Tell your doctor or nurse right away if something does not feel right or if your condition changes.
- You will be asked about your health conditions, allergies and the medicines you are taking. You may need to tell more than one staff member.
- Tell the staff about special beliefs, customs or foods you should not eat to assist with your care.
- Give us a copy of your living will or Health Care Power of Attorney.
- Ask for an interpreter, if needed. This is a free service to you.

## **Expect Good Care**

- Make sure the staff introduces themselves and explains their roles.
- Make sure the staff checks your identification (ID) and asks your name before they give you medicine or provide care.
- The staff will check on you often and show you how to use the call light to ask for help. Expect the staff will respond quickly to call lights and alarms.
- Ask for help when getting out of bed or walking because the risk of falls may increase when you are ill, weak, confused or taking certain medicines.
- Do not be afraid to ask for another doctor to review your treatment options before making a health decision.

## **Prevent Infection**

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer to limit the spread of infection. Be sure your visitors also wash their hands when they enter or leave your room.
- Expect the staff to wash their hands before providing care. If you do not see the staff washing their hands, ask them to do so.
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm, not your hands. If you have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away, and then wash your hands.
- Visitors should not visit you in the hospital if they think they are sick.
- To protect you or others from certain germs, you may be placed in “isolation”. A sign will be placed on your door. It will tell everyone what to do. Everyone who comes into your room may need to wear gloves, a gown and a mask.



## **Learn about Your Treatment**

- Learn more about your condition and treatment choices. Ask for information in a language you can understand.
- Before your test, procedure or surgery, make sure you understand how to prepare and what to expect before, during and after your treatment.
- Read all consent forms before signing to make sure you know what you are agreeing to. If you have questions, ask the staff to explain.
- Get the results of any test or procedure. Find out what the results mean for your care.

## **Test, Surgery or Procedure**

- Your surgery site will be marked before your surgery.
- The team will talk about a procedure before it happens to make sure they are doing the correct procedure at the correct site on the correct person.
- To prevent infection:
  - ▶ You may be asked to shower or cleanse your skin with a special soap before surgery.
  - ▶ The hair in the area of the surgery site may be clipped before surgery.
  - ▶ You may be asked to take an antibiotic before and after surgery.
  - ▶ A catheter, IV and/or breathing machine will be checked closely by staff for signs of infection so that it can be treated promptly. These tubes will be removed as soon as possible.
  - ▶ Follow your doctor's orders about deep breathing, coughing and getting out of bed. These can help prevent pneumonia, an infection of the lungs.

## **Discuss Your Medicines**

- Always carry a list of the medicines that you take. Be sure to include any over the counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, teas and home remedies you use.
- Let your doctors and nurses know of any allergies you have to medicines or foods, including over the counter products. Let them know of any reactions or side effects you have had.
- Learn what your medicines are for before taking them. If you are not sure what medicines you are being given, ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Have them explain what the medicines are for before taking them. The medicines you take in the hospital may have a different name or look different from what you take at home.
- If you have any side effects after starting a medicine, tell your nurse, doctor or pharmacist.

## **Report Concerns**

- If you have ideas to improve your care or to make it safer for you and other patients, please let us know. We will work to resolve your concern.
- If you still have concerns, you may contact:
  - ▶ Your local health department. For the Ohio Department of Health, call the Health Care Facility Complaint Hotline at 1-800-342-0553 or write to them at 245 N. High Street, Columbus, OH 43215.
  - ▶ The Joint Commission at [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org) or call 1-800-994-6610.

**If you have any questions about any of your care after you get home, call your doctor.**

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