

Before You Leave the Hospital

Checklist for Discharge

Discharge summary

This includes why you were in the hospital, who cared for you and your procedures and medicines.



Medicine list

This may be part of your discharge summary. It should include new and existing prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and supplements. Ask if there are any medicines you can stop taking or that are not good to take together. Also make sure you know why, how and when to take each one.



New prescriptions

Check that your pharmacy has your new prescriptions, and that you have a plan to get them filled and picked up.



Local resources

Ask your discharge planner for help finding local after-care services or other support groups that you may need.



After-hospital services

Know if you'll need support in these areas and make a plan for getting it:

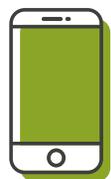
- ◆ **Personal care:** bathing, eating, dressing, toileting
- ◆ **Home care:** cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping
- ◆ **Healthcare:** taking your medicines, doctor's appointments, physical therapy, wound care, injections, medical equipment



Follow-up care instructions

Beyond medicine, this can include:

- ◆ foods or activities to avoid
- ◆ tests or appointments
- ◆ how to care for incisions or use equipment
- ◆ warning signs to watch for
- ◆ daily living adjustments (like how to get into bed)
- ◆ who to call with questions



Planning Ahead

Before You Leave

Not Ready to Leave?

You have the right to appeal our discharge if you don't agree with the decision that you are ready to leave the hospital. Speak with your discharge planner or physician and share your concerns. You also may need to reach out to Medicare, Medicaid or your insurance company.



Try the teach-back method.

Repeat back what you hear the discharge planner say to make sure you understand the details correctly.

Plan Early

Reduce your chances of being readmitted and increase your chances for a healthy recovery by planning early. Take steps as soon as possible during your stay to plan for a successful transition from the hospital.

To begin, ask to speak with your discharge planner, and review the following:

- ◆ your discharge summary and discharge plan
- ◆ your complete medicine list and instructions
- ◆ your upcoming appointments
- ◆ what to do if you don't feel well

A Reason to Plan Early

If you need a rehabilitation facility, nursing home, skilled care or other service after your stay, you'll need time to find and weigh your options. For help comparing services in your local area, go to:

- ◆ www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare
- ◆ www.medicare.gov/homehealthcompare
- ◆ www.qualitycheck.org



Planning Ahead

Before You Leave

Need Medical Equipment or Supplies?

If you need durable medical equipment (walker, wheelchair, hospital bed, oxygen, etc.), Medicare will only cover the cost if you use an approved supplier. To find one in your area, visit www.medicare.gov and select “Find suppliers of medical equipment and supplies” or call 1-800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227).



See your doctor.

After your stay, make an appointment to see your doctor for any follow-up tests you may need.

Top 9 Questions



1. Who can I call 24 hours a day if I have questions or concerns? What number should I call?

2. Has my follow-up appointment been scheduled? With whom? Do I have a ride there?

3. What are key warning signs I need to watch out for? Whom do I call if they happen?

4. What special equipment do I need? What special instructions do I need (wound care, injections, etc.)?

5. What kinds of activities and foods are limited? For how long?

6. Are my new medicines safe to take with my other medicines, vitamins or supplements?

7. Do I know how and when to take my medicines and how I will get prescriptions filled?

8. Who will provide personal, home or healthcare services I may need?

9. Who can help me if I have concerns about medical costs?
