

MEDICATION SAFETY: Tips for your Hospital Stay

Drug Errors; Know what medications and vitamins you take at home

Fill out enclosed prescription form at home; **Keep Handy**

Record any changes in medications, keep updated;

Bring list of current medications, strength and frequency

BE sure of current dosage usually in mgs

Know which Doctor prescribes what medication AND

Know what each medication is used FOR:

Blood pressure, blood thinner, thyroid, depression, anxiety, cholesterol, seizures

Do you use any over-the counter (OTC) meds such as antihistamines for allergies?

Do you take any OTC pain meds? Tylenol, Aleve, aspirin

- Be certain that any drugs you've been taking for chronic conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, are continued, because many hospitals routinely stop such medications when patients are admitted.
- This practice may increase the risk of complications. CHECK with your doctor
- Note: it is important to ask dosage as pills can look different in the hospital.
- Yes they always ask about your medications but in emergencies we forget and things are misunderstood or even recorded wrong. Have meds on paper or a wallet card. Tell family, friend, or advocate where this card or paper is.

Make a drug list. Be a smart consumer! ASK QUESTIONS: TAKE NOTES;

- Make sure your attending doctor knows that you want to be told the name of each NEW medicine given to you as well as its intended purpose and side effects.
- *Have the doctor WRITE out the name of the drug(s) for you*
- You can refuse any medication you think is being given to you in error.
- *If still unsure ask nurse who else can explain the purpose of the medication to you*****
- *If you are unable due to a medical condition ask a relative, friend or advocate to*
- be sure of your medications.
- *Ask if any written drug information is available. for Drug information: check on computer*
- *For more help :most hospitals have patient relation department , case managers or social workers etc*

Drug errors are caused by:

- giving an unauthorized drug,
- giving a drug at the wrong time or in the wrong dose
- staff forgetting to give you a needed medication
- interaction with other drugs

Check your wristband.

- Make sure the information on your wristband—your name plus any drug allergies—is accurate. The Hospital staffs are supposed to CHECK THE BAND each time they give you a drug, take a blood sample, or perform a test.
- If they don't, it's wise to mention your name and your allergies.

Pain Management: Plan ahead

- Patients should insist on a *pain-management plan*
- This includes asking your admitting doctor to leave standing orders for pain meds as well as insomnia and constipation medication
- If you find yourself in pain, you won't face a long wait while the nurse puts in a call to your doctor.
- Also ask if the use of PCA patient-controlled intravenous analgesia is appropriate as this lets you administer your own medication as needed