

# HOSPITAL STAY

## Checklist

Going to the hospital can be stressful, but being prepared helps you feel more in control.

### QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU GO

- ☐ Do I understand why I'm going to the hospital and what to expect before, during, and after?
- ☐ Have I asked my doctor about all my options, including second opinions or different hospitals?
- ☐ Am I bringing someone with me to ask questions or take notes during appointments?
- ☐ Have I told my doctor about all my health conditions, past surgeries, and allergies? Is this documented?
- ☐ Have I made a complete list of medications, including over the counter, vitamins, and supplements?
- ☐ Have I asked my insurance if this hospital and provider are covered?

### EMOTIONAL PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Have I told someone I trust how I'm feeling about the hospital stay – and asked them to check in on me?
- ☐ Do I have a small comfort item with me?
- ☐ Have I written down any questions or worries I want to bring up with my doctor or care team?

### PLANNING AHEAD

- ☐ Have I arranged for transportation home?
- ☐ Have I arranged for time off work, and help with kids, pets, or plants?
- ☐ Have I asked whether I'll need rehab or home health care after my stay?
- ☐ Does the hospital have a copy of my advance directive, or do I need to complete one?



# PACKING LIST

A little planning goes a long way – not just in your care,  
but in your peace of mind.

## CLOTHING & COMFORT

- ☐ Soft, loose-fitting pajamas, comfortable clothes, or a robe
- ☐ Non-slip socks or slippers
- ☐ A cozy blanket and pillow
- ☐ A comforting item: photo, stuffed animal, or small keepsake
- ☐ Entertainment: books, headphones, journal, puzzles, phone charger
- ☐ A sleep mask or earplugs for rest

## TOILETRIES

- ☐ Toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, deodorant, lip balm, lotion
- ☐ Extra: face wipes, hand sanitizer, glasses/contacts, feminine hygiene products (if needed), etc.

## MEDICAL & FINANCIAL

- ☐ Full list of medications you take & bottles
- ☐ Medical history and allergy list
- ☐ Insurance cards, photo ID, credit/debit card
- ☐ Advance directive (if you have one)
- ☐ Emergency Contact List
- ☐ Any required pre-approval letters or referrals
- ☐ Hospital Admission forms



**What to Leave at Home:** Valuables, large amounts of cash, jewelry, strong perfumes/scented lotions, and medications not approved by hospital staff (always check first).

# DURING & AFTER YOUR STAY

A hospital stay can feel overwhelming - but you have the power to stay informed, involved, and supported every step of the way.

## TIPS FOR A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE STAY

- Check your hospital ID bracelet to make sure your name and birthdate are correct.
- Ask what each medication is before you take it. What is it? Why is it being given? Are there side effects?
- Speak up if something feels wrong, if you are in pain, or if a dose seems late or missed.
- If you don't understand something, ask your doctor or nurse to explain it again – clearly and in plain language.
- Write down questions and updates in a notebook. A loved one can also help take notes for you.
- Ask when your doctor will visit, so you will not be asleep or if you want to have someone with you.
- Discuss routine tests with your doctor. You may be able to save money or a hospital day by having routine tests done prior to going to the hospital.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- ☐ Can I have copies (paper or CDs) of all test results performed during my stay? (Examples: radiology, lab results, etc.)
- ☐ Can I have a list of my new or updated medications, including the dosage schedule?
- ☐ When should I see my doctor after I leave, and can I have my follow-up appointments scheduled?
- ☐ Do I need special paperwork for work or school?
- ☐ Are there any activity restrictions or recovery tips I need to follow?
- ☐ What are the warning signs to watch for (e.g., fever, swelling, pain, etc.)?
- ☐ Do I have instructions for wound care or any equipment I need to use?
- ☐ Who should I contact if I have questions after I'm home, and how can I reach my care team after hours?

