

# Your Hospital Stay: Tips for Safety

## How to Improve Your (or Your Loved One's) Hospital Stay

This fact sheet is written by current and former Provena Covenant nurses and the Champaign County Health Care Consumers (CCHCC) in response to community concerns about hospital patient health and safety during times of budget, staffing, and supplies cuts at your hospital.

When hospitals implement austerity measures or make cuts in staffing and supplies, patients frequently cannot get the attention and the supplies or meals they need, when they need them. Nurses and other staff work hard to meet patients' needs, but because of short-staffing or lack of adequate supplies, are not always able to provide for their patients.

1. Plan for someone to stay with you for the duration of your hospital stay. You may need to arrange to have family and friends take shifts to stay with you or look in on you. They can assist with basic activities (see below) as well as act as your eyes and ears to ensure that you are getting proper and timely care.
2. Bring a list of all the medications you are currently taking – including prescription and over-the-counter medications.
3. Ask someone to be prepared to assist you with basic activities such as: bathing, eating, walking, etc.
4. Ask someone to be prepared to bring you supplementary meals and snacks.
5. Be prepared to bring your own toilet supplies, including: toothbrush, toothpaste, razor, soap, etc.
6. Prepare daily lists of questions to ask your physician.
7. Do not hesitate to ask the nurse or physician for an explanation of all medications and treatments, including side-effects and things to watch out for.
8. Keep a written record or journal of procedures, tests, medications prescribed, etc. with dates and names of medical personnel, where possible.

**For more information, please contact:**

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