



How you want to be treated.

Patient Safety

It Is Everyone's Responsibility

At Providence Health Care,

we want to give our patients the best care. Patients who take part in their own care do better and stay safer.

Please take a few minutes to review these simple tips that will help make your hospital stay a safe and positive experience.

Help stop the spread of germs

Hand washing is the best way to stop the spread of germs.

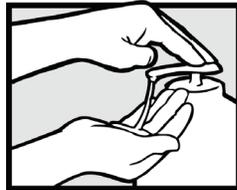
Wash your hands before:

- eating and drinking
- touching any cuts, sores, or bandages
- touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- leaving your room



Wash your hands after:

- using the toilet
- blowing your nose
- touching any cuts, sores or bandages
- touching garbage

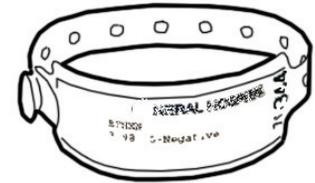


- Ask your nurse, doctor, or other healthcare staff if they have just cleaned their hands. We should clean our hands with soap and water or hand rub every time we touch you or give you medication. Please ask us – “Did you just clean your hands?”
- Do not share food, personal care items (such as combs, brushes, and razors), or cigarettes with other patients.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. The germs from a cough or sneeze can travel a meter (3 feet or more!). If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow. Do not cough or sneeze into your hand.
- Do not go into other patient’s rooms, especially if that room has a ‘precautions’ notice on the door.
- Keep your bedside area tidy. Do what you can to keep yourself clean. Wash often, shower or bath when you can. Ask for a clean hospital gown or pyjamas when they are soiled.

We might offer you the flu shot or pneumonia shot if you are more likely to catch any germs in hospital. We encourage your family and visitors to get immunized to help us prevent illness.

Wear your identification bracelet

Make sure the information on your identification bracelet is correct. Before we do any procedures or tests, expect us to ask to see your identification bracelet or ask you to identify yourself. We want you to go home well and go home tired of us asking you your name and birth date!



It is good to ask questions

Talk to your healthcare team about your health concerns, medical conditions, and medications. Tell us about any changes in your health.

Agreeing to Treatment

Depending on the treatment you need, we may ask you to sign a form that says we can treat you, called ‘Consent to Treatment’.

- Make sure you read and understand everything on the form before you sign it.
- Ask us to read the consent to you and explain it in words you can understand.
- Write down questions to ask if you need more information or do not understand. If you like, get a family member or friend to ask the questions for you. Write the answers down.
- If you have trouble hearing, or if English is not your first language, ask for an interpreter for medical conversations.
- Remember you can change your mind about treatment at any time.

Medications – Stay Safe

The medications we give you in hospital could look different from what you take at home. If you have any questions about your medications, ask us.

Make sure you tell us about all medicines you are taking, including samples from your doctor, vitamins, herbal medicines, diet supplements, natural remedies, and other medicines you buy without a prescription or over the Internet (such as laxatives, antacids, Aspirin).

Know the side effects of the medications you are taking and what to do if you have any problems.

Tell us of any allergies or reactions you might have.

If you think you have missed getting a medication, ask your nurse.

Unless we tell you it is okay, do not take any medicines you have brought from home.

Keep your belongings safe

A hospital is a public building with many people coming and going. Items can easily go missing. Please send your jewellery and important belongings home. If you do not have anybody to give your belongings to, we can lock up small items in the hospital safe.

For valuables that you need to keep with you, we suggest you get insurance.

Keep your glasses, hearing aids, and dentures in a case. Label the case with your name. When not using these items, place them in their cases.



Prevent slips and falls

To keep from slipping on the floor, wear slippers with rubber soles or non-skid socks.

Most falls happen when patients try to get out of bed on their own to go to the bathroom. Ask for help when getting out of bed, especially at night.

If we say you can get out of bed and walk on your own, make sure you have enough light to see where you are going.

If we tell you to only get up with help, use your call bell and wait until someone can help you.

Ask your nurse to make sure that your bed is at the lowest position.

Let your nurse know if you are finding it hard to walk with equipment such as an intravenous (IV) pole.

When you are in bed, make sure you can easily reach your call bell, telephone, eyeglasses, or anything else you might need. If you cannot reach something, ask someone to move it closer for you.

If you need a walking aid such as a wheelchair, walker, cane or crutches, one of our physiotherapists can help arrange for this.



Blood clots - What You Need to Know

Sometimes, patients can get a blood clot in the veins in their legs just from lying in bed. If the clot breaks off, it can 'travel' into the lungs, making it hard to breathe. While this is very rare, if it happens, you could die from a clot in the lungs.

Tell us right away if you notice any of the following:

- Swelling, throbbing, cramping or redness in your leg or calf
- Pain in your leg when you stand or walk
- Being suddenly short of breath for no reason
- Sudden chest pain that feels sharp or gets worse when you take a deep breath
- Coughing up blood
- Heart racing, especially if you feel dizzy or faint

Once you return home, if you notice any of these signs call your family doctor. If you cannot get in contact with your family doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Department.

To prevent blood clots:

- Drink as much water as you are allowed to drink.
- Move around as much as you are allowed, or as you are able to move around.

We might give you a specific medication to help prevent blood clots while in the hospital, and maybe give you a prescription for medication to take when you get home.

You might be surprised to know the chances of getting a blood clot can last for at least a month after you go home from hospital. It is important that you recognize the signs and get help right away.

Understand your instructions for when you go home

When you are getting ready to leave the hospital:

- Ask about your care at home and make sure you understand what to do.
- Ask for information in writing about how to care for yourself after you leave the hospital.
- Find out about any follow-up visits with your doctor or other appointments.
- Make sure you can read new prescriptions and can understand the medicine label.
- Learn about the side effects for your medicines.

Hospital Safety

We do not allow anyone to smoke, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs anywhere on hospital property, including the grounds and parking lots.

If you need help to stop using these substances while in the hospital, talk to any member of your healthcare team. We have ways to support you during your stay with us.

For more tips on how to take part in your care, go to the BC Patient Safety and Quality Council web site. Look under Resources 'For Patients, Clients and Families' www.bcpsqc.ca

If you would like more information or have questions about patient safety, contact:

Providence Health Care Patient Safety
(604) 682-2344 Local: 66018
patientsafety@providencehealth.bc.ca

Hand Hygiene images on Page 1
courtesy of the Province of British Columbia



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