



10-Point Hospital Discharge Checklist

As your hospital stay nears its end, a registered nurse will review written discharge instructions with you to make sure you understand everything, including your medications, follow-up doctor visits, therapy arrangements and more. Here's what you need to know and do during that conversation to ensure your successful recovery.



1 ASK SOMEONE ELSE TO BE PRESENT AND ASK QUESTIONS

You'll likely be tired and feeling less than 100%, so you may have difficulty concentrating on or processing the important information the nurse is giving you.



2 CAREFULLY REVIEW ALL DISCHARGE PAPERWORK

Make sure you completely understand each instruction, change of routine, follow-up appointment, etc. If you don't understand something, ask to talk with a doctor. It's best to get clarification before you're discharged.

4 ASK FOR ANY WARNING SIGNS YOU SHOULD WATCH FOR

What should you look out for that could signal a problem? What might you see or feel that could indicate something isn't right? Ask what you should do and who you should call if you see signs or have symptoms.



3 TAKE DETAILED NOTES

Make some key notes on the discharge paperwork so you can refer to it easily for reminders and clarification. If needed, ask for extra paper so you can make notes for future reference.



5 ASK ABOUT ALL OF YOUR MEDICINES

Look at the name and dosage of each medicine. Is there a medication that isn't listed? Is there any new medication you weren't taking before? Has the dosage changed on a medication? If so, ask why.



6 DISCUSS HOW TO GET HOME SAFELY FROM THE HOSPITAL

Do you need someone to drive you? Once home, you may need additional assistance getting out of the car, walking up steps, etc. This is especially important if you've had major surgery. Get instructions as to your limits.

8 ASK IF YOU NEED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Ask what you need for your safety and/or recovery, how and where you should arrange to get it, and when you must have it. Provide information about your home environment so everyone involved has a clear picture of what kind of help you'll need.



7 REVIEW LIST OF FOLLOW-UP DOCTOR VISITS AND TESTS

Find out how soon you should have your appointments. Confirm if you are responsible for making these appointments yourself, and be sure you have the names and phone numbers of all the doctors you need to contact.



9 CONFIRM THE NEED FOR HOME HEALTH SERVICES OR IN-HOME REHABILITATION

Communicate your living situation to provide an accurate picture of help you will require. If responsible for arranging necessary services, find out who you need to call and when so your assistance can begin as soon as possible.



10 GET THE NAME AND NUMBER OF PERSON TO CALL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

Once back home, you may have questions about wound care, medications, follow-up visits, exercise, diet, etc. It's important to have contact information for someone at the hospital whom you can call to get answers.

This guide was prepared by the plan administrator using information from interviews with medical professionals and online research.

NOTE: If discharged on a weekend or a holiday, you may discover you're not able to reach the people you need or set up services immediately. Be aware of this when you're reviewing your discharge instructions and ask specifically about whether this will cause any problem for you and how you should handle it.