

What to Do When You're Admitted to a Nursing Home

You have many things to think about when you are admitted from a hospital to a nursing home. Use this checklist to help you keep track of important details regarding your stay and recovery.

First Things First



- Ask nursing home staff to explain anything that you may not understand.
- Tell the nursing home staff what you would want to be done if you should stop breathing or your heart should stop (if you have Do Not Resuscitate wishes).
- Make sure the nursing home has a copy of your Advance Directives/Living Will.
 - If you do not have one, information can be provided.
- Provide a person's name (family member/Power of Attorney) and contact information who can discuss your care and condition.

Medications



- Ask the nurse to review the list of medications you are taking.
- Tell the nurse if you have any allergies to medications or food.
- If you are given a new medication(s), ask:
 - What it is for and how it will help you.
 - How often you take it.
 - What the side effects are.

Mobility



Even though you may not be feeling well, getting you moving as soon as possible will help decrease the chance of your muscles getting weak and you developing blood clots or bed sores.

Tell or ask the nurse:

- How you have been getting around prior to being hospitalized and now.
- If you use anything to help you walk.
- If you can get out of bed and go to the bathroom on your own, or if you should call for help first.
- If you can get out of bed to eat your meals.
- To show you how you can prevent getting blood clots by doing exercises, such as ankle pumps.

To prevent bed sores, tell or ask the nurse:

- To look at your skin.
- Where skin injury can happen to you.
- If you see any changes on your skin.
- If you have trouble controlling your urine or stool. This can cause irritation to your skin.
- How you or your caregiver can safely change your position in bed.
- To tell you about rubbing or friction on the skin and ways to prevent it.

Nutrition



A healthy diet is necessary to heal wounds, control illnesses, and build or maintain strength.

Tell or ask the nurse:

- How you have been eating and drinking before you were hospitalized and now.
- If you needed help with your meals before you were hospitalized and now.
- If you have trouble swallowing food or liquids.
- What kind of foods you like.

Mental State



Sometimes being in a nursing home can cause confusion because of changes in your surroundings.

Tell or ask the nurse:

- How your thinking can be affected during your nursing home stay.
- If you have trouble sleeping.

For family members/Power of Attorney, tell or ask the nursing home staff:

- If your loved one is acting different.
- If anything causes confusion for your loved one at home.
- If your loved one gets confused during the night.

Discharge Planning



Discuss what you may need when you are released from the nursing home.

- Talk to your doctor and nurse about your plan of care.
- Tell the nurse if you have trouble getting your medications.
- Discuss how you will get your meals.

