

Getting Ready for Discharge:

A Guide for Patients

During your stay at the hospital, your care team will work with you and your caregivers to create a plan that prepares you for when it is time to leave. This is called a discharge plan. Your care team will review it with you when you are ready to leave.¹⁻³



When the hospital tells you that you are ready to leave it does not always mean that you are completely healed. It may just mean that your condition does not require you to be in the hospital anymore. You may still need medical attention and care.⁴

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Understanding the information about your hospital stay can help you stay safe after you leave. There are many topics you and your caregivers need to know about^{1,4}:

- Knowing what your life at home will be like. For example: the support you will need, what you can or cannot eat or drink, what activities to do or avoid.
- Understanding your medicines. It is especially important to know why you take each medicine, how much to take, how to take it, when to take it, and possible side effects.
- Being aware of warning signs and knowing when and who to contact if there is a problem.
- Understanding the tests you had while in the hospital and the results of those tests.
- Knowing when and where any future medical appointments will take place.



As you work together on the plan, be sure to tell your care team about your goals and needs. This will make sure your discharge plan is right for you.¹



It is important you understand the information you receive before you leave. Ask your care team to go over it with you one more time. Then repeat it back using your own words. This helps the team make sure they explained things well and that you are clear about your plan.⁵⁻⁶

A good discharge plan can help you get better and keep you from returning to the hospital. Taking part in your discharge plan makes sure your goals and needs are met and can help you feel satisfied with the care you receive.³

References

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