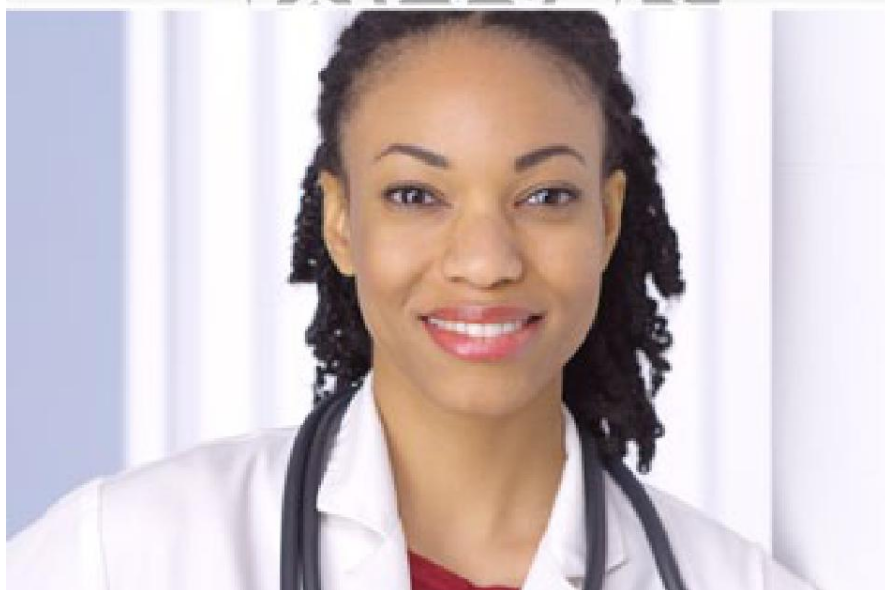




Discharge Plan: Leaving the Hospital



Overview

When it's time for you to leave the hospital, you will get a discharge plan. It lists important topics to discuss with your healthcare team. The discharge plan simplifies your exit with tips and instructions for continuing your care at home. If a family member or friend will be helping you with your care once you get home, try to have them with you when you receive your discharge plan.

Medications and Other Needs

Before your discharge, you will need to discuss the medications you are taking. You will be given directions for taking these at home. The healthcare team will help you come up with a plan for getting refills if needed. You should have a plan in place for getting to future doctor's appointments, and you should decide which family members or friends you can trust to help you. If you need any other medical equipment, such as a walker or a supplemental oxygen tank, you will be given information about how to get them.

Personal Care

Your healthcare team will discuss strategies for making sure you receive proper personal care. You may need to learn new techniques for bathing, using the restroom or climbing stairs. You may need to be shown how to change bandages or how to keep a wound clean. A nurse or doctor can teach you these skills and make sure you (or a caregiver) can perform them with confidence before you leave. You may also talk about your future plans for shopping, cooking and keeping your house clean. Hospital staff can also help answer questions you may have about your insurance plan and your financial obligations.

Mental Health

You may spend time discussing your mental health. If you are coping with an illness, a social worker may speak with you about support groups or other resources available to you. It's important that you let your doctor know if you are having trouble coping after your discharge so that you can get the care you need. If you have any other questions about the discharge process, ask a member of your healthcare team.