

Patient Centered Patient Safe



SARASOTA
MEMORIAL
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



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Patient Centered • Patient Safe

Health care today is very complex. Sarasota Memorial Health Care system is making patient safety a top priority. You are the most important member of your health care team and Sarasota Memorial welcomes and urges you and your family to play a vital role in your care. This brochure lets you know how you can make a difference by being informed and actively involved.

Look – Always be aware of what is going on with your health.

Listen – Learn everything you can about your condition and treatment.

Ask – *Speak Up* when you are unsure of something.

Medication

The most common type of mistake in health care is related to wrong medications being given or interactions between medications. Make sure your doctors and nurses know *everything* you are taking, including non-prescription (over-the-counter) dietary and nutritional supplements such as vitamins and herbs.

- Keep a current list of the names and amounts of medicines you take as well as how often you take them. Having copies of important medical information often can be helpful to you and your health care team.
- Tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have or reactions you have had in the past.
- Check any medications you may receive while in the hospital or from a pharmacy

and speak up if you are not familiar with the medication.

- Read labels and instructions carefully and take medications only as prescribed by your physician.

Communication

It is important for you to understand your condition and treatment plan. You and your doctor should discuss such things as who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment is expected to last, what tests and medications will be ordered, what they are expected to accomplish and how you are expected to respond. Don't think you are bothering someone by asking questions or providing information.

- Make sure your health care professionals have up-to-date health information about you.
- If you do not agree or don't understand something, inform your doctor or nurse caring for you.
- Don't assume no news is good news. Ask about all of your test results.
- Tell your health care team if something doesn't seem quite right with the way you are feeling or responding to medication or treatment.

Being Informed

It is your right to make informed decisions regarding your health care. The more knowledge you have about your illness and alternatives available to you, the more confident you will be when making important decisions regarding your care and treatment.

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- Your doctor, libraries and reliable Internet web sites, such as www.smh.com, can be good sources of information about your illness. Do not rely on one source for all your information.
 - If you are unsure about the nature of your illness and treatment options or have questions, be sure to ask.
 - Take notes to help you remember facts and write down questions you have for your health care team.
 - Read all medical forms thoroughly and make sure you understand the content before you sign them. Ask for information about your medicines and treatment in terms you can easily understand, and speak to your doctor or other health care team member for clarification.

Surgery

- Make sure you know what procedure is to be performed along with the risks, benefits and alternatives and that your consent form is correct.
- Sarasota Memorial has procedures to mark the correct surgical area to be operated upon. If you think something is wrong, say “stop” and get your issues clarified.

Identification

- Make sure your health care providers have the correct spelling of your full name and date of birth.
- When in the hospital, expect all members of your health care team to address you by your name and check your wristband before administering medicine or treatments.

Infections

- Hand washing is the most important way for you and health care workers to prevent the spread of infections. Members of your health care team should wash their hands before and after each contact with a patient. Don't be afraid to gently remind doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals to do this.

Selecting Your Providers

Research shows that patients tend to have better results when they are treated in hospitals that have a great deal of experience with their condition.

- Use a hospital or other health care organization that, like Sarasota Memorial, has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as surveys provided by The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).
- Ask about doctors with specialized training and experience in treating your type of illness.

Having Others Involved In Your Health Care

Illness and being hospitalized can often be very stressful. Another person involved in your health care often can be of assistance by asking questions you may not think of, remembering the answers to questions already discussed, helping you with medical information and forms, or just being with you.

- Ask a trusted family member or friend to be involved and be an advocate for you.

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- You may also want to designate a health care surrogate to speak for you if you are unable to do so. Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and treatment. This is usually put in writing and Sarasota Memorial has prepared a special booklet about “Advance Directives” to guide you in your decisions. Ask if you need more information about Advance Directives.

Leaving the Hospital

It is important for you to receive and understand your discharge instructions. This includes information about your medicines, diet, activity level, symptoms you might experience and what to do about them, treatments and follow-up appointments.

- Ask your doctor to explain the treatment plan you will use at home, what to look for and what to do if your condition gets worse.
- Make sure you can read the prescriptions, orders and instructions that are provided to you.
- If something unexpected develops, don’t wait for your follow-up appointment. Call your doctor.
- Make sure you and anyone who will be involved with your care at home understands the type of care you will need and is familiar any equipment and safety considerations that are being used in your care. For example, do not allow anyone to smoke while oxygen is in use.

BE INFORMED AND BE INVOLVED.

Notes



*In recognition of the life of Catherine C. Mason,
The Catherine C. Mason Patient Education
Program*