



Your hospital stay

Your hospital guide 2

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About this information



This easy-to-read information tells you what it might be like when you are in hospital.



It will help you not to worry about being in hospital.



You will feel better if you have an idea about:

- What might happen.
- Who you might talk to.
- How you might feel.

Arriving at hospital



What might happen

If you go to hospital in an ambulance, you might go to one hospital then to another hospital.

If the hospital is busy, you might have to wait in the ambulance until they have enough space to look after you.



Sometimes, police officers might take some people to hospital.

Some people get taken to hospital by air.



Who you might talk to

Depending on how you got to hospital you might talk to:

- Ambulance team
- Emergency paramedics
- Doctors
- Nurses
- Police
- Flight crew



How you might feel

Depending on what has happened, you might feel different things such as:



Happy you are at the hospital where they will take care of you.

You might feel comfortable.

You could have pain or be in shock.



Or you might be scared that this is happening, and worried about what will happen next.



Tips

Even if you are very worried, try to stay calm.

The hospital staff are there to help you. Treat them with respect.

Ask questions if you are not sure what is happening.



Emergency Department

What might happen



The first person to talk to you will probably be one of the **triage team**.

The triage team are people who work out who is very sick and needs to be seen by doctors first.

They will ask for your full name, where you live, and contact details.



They will ask about your illness or injury.

They will ask if you are in pain or feel sick.



They will ask if you have private health insurance. If you have, you can choose to go public or private.

They talk with you and people with you to find out how sick you are.



If you are seriously ill or injured you will go straight through for doctors and nurses to look after you.

If you are not seriously ill, you will have to wait if the hospital is busy.



You might need some emergency medications or tests such as x-rays or scans.

A nurse will take your temperature and check your blood pressure. They will keep doing this while you are in emergency.



The nurse will also ask you some questions to fill in the hospital paperwork.



You might be left alone sometimes while the doctors and nurses see to other patients.

When the doctor has assessed you, you might be taken to a **ward**. This is where you stay while you're in hospital.



Sometimes, people are taken to another hospital if that is best for them.

You might be discharged if the doctor thinks you are well enough to be looked after at home.

Who you might talk to



You will talk with a triage nurse, doctors and nurses.

Depending on what happens in Emergency, you could talk to other people such as:

- Specialists and therapists.
- Hospital staff who do tests.



Depending on the support you need, you might also talk to:

- An interpreter
- A social worker
- Police



If you are being admitted to a ward, you might speak with orderlies who take you to the ward.



An admission clerk or nurse on the ward might ask some questions and check your details.

How you might feel

You might be feeling comfortable and not worried.

But depending on what is happening, you might feel different things such as:

- Uncomfortable, very ill and in pain
- You might feel confused and badly affected by what has happened



You might feel frustrated.

You might think the hospital staff aren't listening to you.



You could be worried that the staff have forgotten about you.

Or worried about what is going to happen to you.

Tips

It is good to have a support person with you..



They can support you in different ways, like:

Keeping you company if you have to wait a long time.

Helping you to understand what is happening.



It is okay to ask hospital staff about your illness or injury, and what will happen to you.

Remember to be be kind, polite and patient.



The doctors and nurses are very busy and doing their best to help lots of people.



It will be noisy in Emergency. There is beeping from machines, alarms and lots of people talking

If you are sensitive to noise, tell someone you need a quiet place. Tell them why.



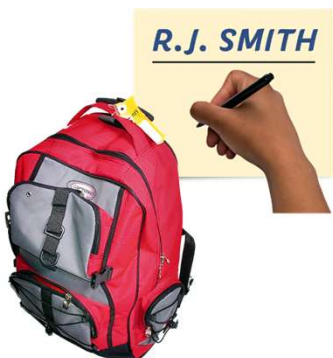
Ask the nurse to show you the call button and how to use it. Make sure you can reach it.

If you feel you are getting sicker, tell someone. Call out for help if you need to.



You can ask for an advocate if you need someone to help you speak out and ask questions.

If you are going to a ward, a nurse will put a name band on your wrist and ankle.



Make sure your clothes, shoes and personal belongings are put in a bag and go with you.

Ask the nurse to put name labels on your equipment, such as your wheelchair or communication aid.

Ward Stay



What might happen

A ward is where you have a bed while you are in hospital.

You might get moved to different wards depending on the kind of care you need.

Doctors, nurses and other people in your health team will visit to talk about your health care.



You will get a menu form to fill in each day to choose your meals.

Tell the staff if there are things you don't eat, including if you are allergic to some foods.



Let the nurses know if you need help to eat and drink.

Sometimes you may have to be on special food because of your illness. Or no food before some tests or an operation.



Nurses will help if you need support to shower or go to the toilet.

Other things that might happen.

Depending on your illness:



You might be given new medications that you haven't had before.

You might need to have different kinds of tests such as blood tests or scans.



You might need to have an operation or other treatment.

You might need **therapy** to help you get well.

Therapy can be physiotherapy, occupational therapy, or speech therapy, depending on what you need.



You might have some therapy in hospital, and need more appointments when you go home.



Your health team will work with you to make a discharge plan for you to leave hospital.

Who you might talk to

You will see lots of different people on the ward, such as:

- Nurses
- Doctors
- Specialists
- **Allied health** professionals, such as therapists, dieticians, psychologists
- Others who help you in hospital and with getting ready to go home



How you might feel

You might enjoy being in hospital.

But you might also have other feelings.

You might feel lonely and alone.

You could be very sick and in pain.

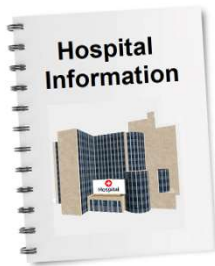
You might be worried and maybe scared by what is happening to you.

You might feel tired, or feel down, or just be bored.

Tell a nurse or your support person how you are feeling.



Tips



Ask for a hospital information booklet to find out how everything works in hospital.



You might not sleep very well in hospital.

Staff can change and you might not see the same people all the time.



If you need advice or someone to speak up for you, you can have an advocate.



Hospitals often have a chapel or prayer room and you can have someone of your faith visit you.



Ask about planning for going home.

Discharge

What might happen

Your health team and other services work together to plan for you leaving hospital. This is called **discharge**.

You and your support networks can be involved in discharge planning meetings.

The team will decide on a date for you to leave hospital.

The date might change if you are still unwell, or there are other reasons you won't be able to go home.

If you've been in hospital a long time, you may be able to go home for a few days at a time until you are ready to go home full-time.

You may need to go to **rehab** - a place where you can have more treatment.

Or to temporary accommodation until you are able go home.

You might need help from your support networks as well as service providers.



Who you might talk to



Lots of people are involved in discharge planning. You might talk to:

- Allied health professionals such as a social worker, dietician, occupational therapist
- Nurses
- Doctors
- Community service providers

How you might feel

You may be excited and glad to be going home.



But it is okay to feel like you might not be ready.

You might feel worried or feel that it is all too much for you.

You might still feel a bit sick or in pain.



Tips

Ask for an advocate if you need advice or someone to speak up for you.

If you have new equipment, ask how to use it safely.

Ask if you can get in-home rehab to help you get better.

Ask about any **allowances** - extra money you might be able to get.

