Madison Patient Safety Collaborative (MPSC)

Safety As You Go From Hospital to Home

You and your doctor will decide when you are ready to go home from the hospital. New medications, home nursing, special equipment, and physical, occupational, or speech therapy are things that might be included in your recovery routine. Going home from the hospital can be a hectic and confusing time. Start planning for going home as early in your hospital stay as is practical. Here are some helpful tips to assist you in preparing to go home.

MEDICINE FOR HOME

Your doctor may order medicine for you to take at home. There are a few things you can do before you go home from the hospital to make things easier:

• Tell your doctor about the medicine (self prescribed or prescribed by your doctor) you were taking when you came to the hospital.
• Have available the name and telephone number of your pharmacy.
• Check if your pharmacy offers home delivery services.
• Call your pharmacy to check on availability of the medicines you will be taking when you get home. You may need to purchase some of your medicines at the hospital outpatient pharmacy until your regular pharmacy can obtain your medicine.
• Plan how you will pay for your medicine.
• Tell your doctor if you are unable to obtain the medicine needed for going home.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

• Write down the name and office telephone numbers of the doctors with whom you need to schedule appointments after you go home.
• Know the reason for each appointment and what information you will need to bring with you.
• Schedule an appointment to see your primary care physician after you go home.
• Communicate your discharge instructions to your primary care physician and obtain referrals as necessary.
• Know what other types of care you will need, such as physical or occupational therapy, or cardiac rehabilitation. Find out whether you need to call for an appointment or whether the appointment has already been scheduled for you.

HOME HEALTH SERVICES

Your doctor may order a nurse or therapist to visit you at home and/or medical equipment such as oxygen and wheelchairs.

Choosing a home healthcare company:

• Ask your doctor, family or friends for home healthcare company recommendations. Let your nurse know if you need help in choosing a home healthcare company.
• Check your insurance company's preferred provider list for home healthcare companies.
• Contact the home healthcare company to determine if they can provide the service your doctor ordered and can send a nurse or therapist to your home when you are discharged.

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Dean Health System • GHC • Meriter Hospital • St. Marys Hospital Medical Center • University of WI Hospital & Clinics • University of WI Medical Foundation • William S. Middleton Memorial VA Hospital

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