FREE CHECKLIST

NURSE RUPY

Are You Hospital Ready?

Keep this handy in case you, or someone you love, ever needs to go into the hospital.

- **Before**: get ready now, while you're well
- **During**: the questions to ask in the hospital
- **Before you go home**: leave safely

Nurse Rupy · nurserupy.com
Canadian-trained Registered Nurse (Non-Practising) · 23 years in nursing. Education only, not medical advice.

Before

BEFORE get ready now, while you're well

Can't do these yourself? Ask a family member, a friend or your pharmacist to help.

- [ ] Write down every medicine you take, with the dose and time.
  Include vitamins, supplements, inhalers, eye drops and creams. Date it, and update it every time something changes. Keep a copy on your phone and in your wallet.
- [ ] List your allergies, and what happens when you're exposed.
- [ ] Write down what's normal for you: memory, walking, hearing, eating, sleep.
  Date it. Staff don't know your normal. Your family does.
- [ ] Choose the person (or people) to speak for you, and put it in writing.
  A health care power of attorney.
- [ ] No up-to-date medication list? Take all your medicine bottles with you, especially in an emergency.
  Doctors need to see everything you take, so nothing new clashes with it.
- [ ] Pack: glasses, hearing aids, dentures, cane or walker, phone charger, non-slip shoes, and a notebook and pen.

Notes

During

DURING in the hospital

- [ ] Keep one notebook at the bedside.
  Each day, write down who came (names and roles), what changed, and your questions.
- [ ] Ask every day: "What's the plan for today? Why am I still here, and what are we waiting for?"
- [ ] In the first day or two, ask: "What needs to happen before I can go home?"
  Planning for going home starts when you arrive.
- [ ] In the US, on day one, ask: "Am I admitted as an inpatient, or under observation?"
- [ ] Before signing a consent form, check it's the right procedure, and the right side.
- [ ] For any new medicine, ask: "What is this for? Does it replace something I take at home?"

Notes

During (continued)

- [ ] Offered a sleeping pill? Ask: "Is there another way to help me sleep?"
  In older patients, sleeping pills can sometimes lead to confusion, dizziness and falls.
- [ ] Have a urinary catheter? Ask every day: "When can it come out?"
  Without one, it's easier to get up and move.
- [ ] Fasting for a test? Ask when it's scheduled. If it's moved or canceled, ask: "Can I eat now?"
- [ ] Keep moving as much as you safely can. It protects your strength.
  Press the call bell for any help you need, even just to have someone stand by while you walk.
- [ ] Ask staff not to take your meal tray away while you're asleep, and ask if family can bring food from home.
- [ ] If things aren't improving, ask for a meeting with the care team sooner rather than later.
- [ ] Tell the nurse right away about new confusion, harder breathing, a fall, not eating or drinking, or "I just don't feel like myself."

Notes

FREE FROM NURSE RUPY

Before You Go Home

BEFORE YOU GO HOME the day you leave

- [ ] Get medicine changes in writing: what's new, what stopped, and why.
- [ ] Ask: "Who do I call if something goes wrong? When is my follow-up?"
- [ ] Arrange help and equipment at home, and someone to stay the first few days.
- [ ] Don't feel ready or safe to go home? Say so clearly. Ask: "Who can I talk to about this before I leave?"

Notes

Want every page you need, in one place? The Health Ready Binder has a daily hospital page, discharge checklists, the first two weeks home, and more. nurserupy.com

Important: This checklist is general education only, not medical advice. Always follow the advice of your own healthcare team. In an emergency, call 911.