

# Your Health Care, Be Involved

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**Be involved in your health care. Speak up if you have questions or concerns about your care.**

One of the keys to getting the best health care is to be an active member of your health care team. This means taking part and being involved in every decision about your care. This also means asking a member of your health care team questions, so that you can make informed choices. It is often helpful to bring a family member or friend with you when you talk to your health care team.



**Tell a member of your health care team about your past illnesses and your current health condition.**

You are the one who knows the most about your health. Tell the members of your health care team everything you can, even if you think they already know, and even if you think it is not important.



**Know what medicines you are taking when you are in hospital or attend a medical appointment.**

Some medicines combine with each other in your body and can produce bad reactions. To protect you, your health care team must know about everything you take including the drugs you take with a doctor's prescription. It also includes other medicines you buy, such as: vitamins, herbal remedies, food supplements and "over the counter" or non-prescription medicines.

Please keep a list of everything you take and keep this list up to date in the hospital and bring it with you to any medical appointments. Your healthcare provider can help you make this list.

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**Tell a member of your health care team if you have ever had an allergic or bad reaction to any medicine or food.**

If you get sick, your health care team may have to act fast. Before they give you any medicine, they need to know if you could have a bad reaction to it. That's why you should tell them in advance about any allergy or reaction you have ever had to any medicine or food.

Reactions can include rashes, headaches, breathing trouble, and feeling sick. Because some medicines have food in them (such as the eggs used in the flu shot), be sure to talk about your food allergies too. Tell a member of your team right away if a new medicine makes you feel unwell. If you do not know if you have allergies, you can get tested.



**Make sure you know what to do when you go home from the hospital or from your medical appointment.**

When you are getting ready to go home from the hospital or after a medical treatment ask as many questions as you can to make sure you understand what treatment you received; whether you will have to pick up a prescription before you go home, the type of care you will need at home and if you will need someone to stay with you, what symptoms to watch for and who to call if something does not feel right.

You can write this information down or it may be helpful to have a family member or friend with you. They can help you to write down everything you should know about your care.