

Patient Safety - What Can **You** Do?

Be Involved in Your Health Care



Ask questions

- Make sure you understand the answers.
- Choose a doctor you feel comfortable talking to.
- Take a relative or friend with you to help you ask questions and understand the answers.
- Write questions down and take them with you to your appointment.

Keep a list of all the medicines you take

- Bring your list of medications to all your doctor appointments.
- Include prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements such as vitamins and herbs.
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist about drug allergies.
- Ask about side effects and what to avoid while taking the medication.
- Read the label. Make sure you understand how to use it.
- Ask your pharmacist if the medicine looks different than you expected.

Get test results

- Ask when and how you will get results of tests or procedures.
- Don't assume the results are fine if you do not get them when expected.
- Ask what the results mean.

Talk to your doctor about specialty care

- Ask your doctor to recommend specialists if needed
- Ask who/what specialist is best to see for your symptoms

Understand what will happen if you need surgery

- Ask who will manage your care while in the hospital.
- Tell the surgeon, anesthesiologist and nurses about allergies, reactions to anesthesia and medications you are taking.
- Make sure that you, your doctor and your surgeon all agree and are clear on exactly what will be done.
- Ask your surgeon how long it will take and what you should expect to feel during recovery.
- Make sure you understand instructions you get about follow-up care when you leave the hospital.

**Adapted from the AHRQ
Publication No. 03-M007, Five
Steps to Safer Health Care, Patient
Fact Sheet and AHRQ Publication
NO.00-PO38, 20 Tips to Help
Prevent Medical Errors, Patient
Fact Sheet.*



**LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SYSTEM**

Loyola University Chicago

We also treat the human spirit.®