

Be Part of the Safety Team for Your Child

You are the most critical part of your child's caregiving team! **While visiting the hospital, here are eight tips for ensuring a safe experience every time:**

1. BE A PATIENT ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD.

Don't be shy. Ask questions about your child's care, raise safety concerns you have, or ask the caregiver to double check their chart before they act. Write down your questions to make sure the caregiver addresses them. **You might say,** *"Excuse me, I have a few questions before you start treatment, would you mind answering them, please?"*

2. YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD BEST.

Share unique things about your child with caregivers that may be important for your child's overall care (i.e. they have a fear of animals or only like to eat food cut in small pieces).

3. WASH.

Wash your hands and your child's hands when entering and leaving the hospital, your patient room, the bathroom, and any treatment rooms (such as x-ray); and be sure to wash if you have handled any soiled material.

4. ENSURE THEY WASH, TOO.

Since you are part of your child's health care team, do not be afraid to remind doctors and nurses about washing their hands before working with you—even if they are wearing gloves. **You might say,** *"Excuse me, I didn't see you wash your hands. I'd like to be sure everyone's hands are clean. Please wash them before caring for my child."*

5. STAY CLEAN & DRY.

If your child has an intravenous catheter or a wound, keep the skin around the dressing clean and dry and let your caregiver know if it gets wet or loose.

6. WATCH FOR RED OR IRRITATED SKIN.

If you notice any new redness or irritation on your child's skin, notify your child's caregivers. Ask what steps can be taken to prevent harm to the skin.

7. KNOW THE MEDS.

Ask for the names of the medications your child is receiving in the hospital and how they are expected to help your child. Caregivers will check your child's identification band before giving a medication to make certain the correct medication is being given. If you don't see this, ask staff to double check that the medication is for your child. **You might say,** *"Excuse me, that medication is not familiar to me. Can you please double check it against my child's chart?"*

8. BE PREPARED WHEN GOING HOME.

When your child is ready to go home from the hospital, make certain you know what medications and/or treatments your child will need once home. Ask what you should watch for that will require a call to your child's doctor and which doctor to call if questions come up. Also ask when your child will need to follow up with a physician appointment.



For more information about patient safety, visit: www.solutionsforpatientsafety.org.

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