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Notes

Welcome

Dear Patient:

Welcome to St. Elizabeth Hospital!

We want to be sure you are very satisfied with the care you receive. If at any time you are not satisfied with your care, please let us know. All of our staff are committed to serving you as we would a friend, neighbor or loved one. If you need to talk with me for any reason, please feel free to call. My office phone number is (920) 831-8912 and my cell phone number is (920) 450-5003.

We again want to make sure that we provide you and your family with excellent care, and thank you for choosing St. Elizabeth Hospital for your health care needs.

Sincerely,

Travis Andersen
President St. Elizabeth Hospital

As our patient, you are the most important person at St. Elizabeth Hospital. Our primary concern is your quick recovery and return to good health. Your comfort, convenience and peace of mind are extremely important to us.

Our everyday mission is to extend the most professional, loving care and respect of life to all those in need. We value your uniqueness as an individual and will utilize all of our resources to minister to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of you and your family.

We hope this booklet will answer the questions you and your family may have about your hospital care and help you feel more at home. If you have any questions, please ask. Our staff will be happy to answer them for you.

Daniel E. Neufelder
President and Chief Executive Officer
Affinity Health System

Amenities

Welcome Center

(920) 738-2990

The Welcome Center staff will greet patients and visitors and direct them to their destination. It is the main information desk for the hospital. During regular business hours volunteers are available for assistance and transport.

Visitor Guidelines

We have open visiting hours, but we recommend your family visit from 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

To ensure the comfort of all hospital patients, please:

- Limit visitors to two at a time.
- Keep visits short and quiet.
- Don't sit on the bed or use the lavatory in the room.

Special restrictions apply to the adult and adolescent mental health units, neonatal intensive/coronary care, open heart and isolation rooms. Please consult with the nurse if you need to visit during hours other than visiting hours. Please note the only entrance open after hours is the Emergency Room.

Family Waiting Rooms

There are family waiting rooms in the following departments:

- Surgery
- Emergency
- Neonatal ICU
- Intensive/Coronary Care
- BirthPlace

Families will be kept informed by staff and/or physicians in these areas.

Smoking

St. Elizabeth Hospital is a smoke-free campus.

Valet and General Parking

Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Patient and visitor parking available in designated lots. Enter on Oneida Street.Valet parking is available at the Main Entrance.

TV Channels

2 = DIGITAL PREVIEW
3 = ABC WBAY 2 - LOCAL
4 = TIME WARNER CABLE TV
5 = CSPAN
6 = CBS WFRV 5 - LOCAL
7 = NBC 26 - LOCAL
8 = PBS
9 = WWAZ
10 = WIWB - THE CW NETWORK
11 = RELIGION
12 = WLUK FOX 11 - LOCAL
13 = UPN 32
14 = THE GOLF CHANNEL
15 = ESPN2
16 = ESPN
17 = MTV
18 = COMEDY CENTRAL
19 = LOCAL LIVING
20 = INFORMATION CHANNEL
21 = USA
22 = A&E
23 = NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
24 = HISTORY CHANNEL
25 = TBS
26 = SHOP NBC
27 = QVC
28 = THE WEATHER CHANNEL
29 = TNT
30 = HEADLINE NEWS
31 = CNN
32 = TIME WARNER SPORTS
33 = SPIKE TV
34 = DISCOVERY
35 = NICK
36 = LIFETIME
37 = TRAVEL
38 = VH1
39 = HOME AND GARDEN TV
40 = FOX SPORTS
41 = SPANISH
42 = TLC
43 = ANIMAL PLANET
44 = BET
45 = FOX NEWS
46 = MSNBC
47 = CSPAN2
48 = FX
49 = BRAVO
50 = CMT
51 = FOOD NETWORK
52 = COURT TV
53 = E
55 = FOX FAMILY CHANNEL
57 = THE PATIENT CHANNEL
59 = THE C.A.R.E. CHANNEL
60 = ST. ELIZABETH CHAPEL
62 = THE NEWBORN CHANNEL
64 = PATIENT EDUCATION 1
64 = PATIENT EDUCATION 2
64 = TIP-TV EDUCATION
98 = WGN

6/2010

Agencies

Hospitals/Nursing Homes/Quality of Care Concerns
Bureau of Quality Assurance
1 W. Wilson
P.O. Box 2969
Madison, WI 53701-2969
(608) 266-8481

Insurance/HMO's
Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
P.O. Box 7873
Madison, WI 53702-7873
(608) 266-3585 or 1-800-236-8517
711 (TDD) ask for (608) 266-3586

Interpreter and/or Translation Service Concerns
Dept. of Health & Family Services
Division of Management Technology - Office of Civil Rights Compliance
1 W. Wilson, Room 561
P.O. Box 7850
Madison, WI 53707
(608) 266-9372 or TDD (608) 266-2555

Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Services
(608) 243-2087

Physicians & Other Healthcare Professionals
Wisconsin Dept. of Regulation & Licensing
1400 E. Washington Ave.
P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708
Complaints: (608) 266-7482 (automated number)
Direct Line: (608) 266-3736

Amenities

Telephones/Cell Phones

- Family and friends can dial your room directly.
  Your telephone number is 738-2 plus your room number.
- To make a local call, dial 9, then the number you are calling.
- To make a long distance call, dial 9, then 0, the area code (if necessary), and the number you are calling.
- Cell phones can cause electromechanical interference with medical equipment and are only allowed in designated areas inside the building. Please turn cell phones off when you are not in a designated area.

Television

Closed caption TV programs for the hearing impaired are available on all channels. Press CC on the remote control. Cable TV is available on TVs in patient rooms. Our Patient Education channel is 57.

Mail and E-mail

Patient mail address: 1506 S. Oneida Street, Appleton, WI 54915.

Any mail addressed to you will be delivered to your room. Mail received after you have been discharged will be forwarded to your home. A public mailbox is available in the main lobby. Stamps are available in the gift shop.

E-mail may be sent to your room at:
www.affinityhealth.org/object/patient_message_ste.html

Lost and Found

(920) 738-2300

All lost and found articles are taken to the Safety & Security Center. Articles will be held for 30 days before disposal. The nursing unit where you were a patient will attempt to phone you or your family about articles left behind. Questions regarding lost and found articles should be directed to the Safety & Security Center at (920) 738-2300.

Amenities

Newspapers

The *Appleton Post-Crescent* is available in the visitors lobby and at the Emergency Department entrance.

Patient Relations Center

00 or (920) 628-9700

Your comfort and recovery are of primary concern to us. Thus, Affinity Health System provides a Patient Relations Center that is available to you. Acting on your behalf with hospital administration and staff, the center provides a specific way through which you can seek solutions to questions, assist in your special needs or hear your recommendations. This center is available weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m and can be reached by dialing 00 or (920) 628-9700.

Patient Library

Open 24 hours a day

The patient library is located on the main floor-south wing just outside the Volunteer Services department. It is stocked with magazines and paperback books, which are available for patient or visitor use. The library is always open for you to make your selections. Volunteer Services provides magazines for use in the patient library.

Agencies

Developmentally Disabled
Northeastern Region
200 N. Jefferson St., Suite 211
Green Bay, WI 54301
(920) 448-5240

Fees/Business Practices
Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
2811 Agriculture Dr.
Madison, WI 53718-6777
(608) 224-4960 or 1-800-422-7128

Health Services
Ambulatory, Surgery, Dialysis
2917 International Ln.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 266-8740

HIPAA Concerns
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services - Office for Civil Rights
233 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 240
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 886-2359 or TDD (312) 353-5693
FAX (312) 886-1807

Home Health & Hospice Concerns
Health Services Section - Bureau of Quality Assurance
Department of Health & Family Services
2917 International Ln., Suite 300
Madison, WI 53704-3100
Toll Free 1-800-642-6552

Joint Commission on Accreditation of HealthCare Organizations Quality of Care and Patient Safety Concerns
One Renaissance Blvd.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
(630) 792-5000

Accreditations

St. Elizabeth Hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. This means the hospital has voluntarily chosen to have its performance measured against standards set by a nationwide organization sponsored by the American College of Surgeons, the American Hospital Association and the American Medical Association. These standards are applied to every area of the hospital and there is a continuous, internal process in place to review, inspect and update hospital operations.

The purpose of participating in the accreditation process is to ensure that every patient's welfare is entrusted to competent, dedicated professionals.

St. Elizabeth Hospital is also accredited by:
- Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
- Wisconsin Alcoholism and Drug Counselor Certification Board, Inc.
- College of American Pathologists
- American College of Surgeons

St. Elizabeth Hospital is licensed by:
- The United States Department of Health and Human Services for participation in the Medicare Program
- Wisconsin Professional Review Organization

St. Elizabeth Hospital is a member of:
- Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services Division of Community Programs for AODA programs
- The American Hospital Association
- The Catholic Health Association of the United States
- The Wisconsin Hospital Association
- The Catholic Health Association of Wisconsin
- The Wisconsin Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse, Inc.
- The Wisconsin Alcohol/Drug Treatment Providers Association
- American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association
- Chest Pain Certified

Amenities

Health Science Library

Monday through Friday: 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

The Health Science Library, located near the Emergency Department, provides medical books, journals, audio tapes, videocassettes and patient education and consumer health materials. Patients and family members are welcome to check out our health information Internet services. For online health information, visit the Affinity Health System website at ***www.affinityhealth.org/page/healthtopics*** This website has links to many different reputable health information websites and information about the Affinity Health Science Libraries.

The information provided by the above internet sources is for your general information and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Any medical or other decisions should be made in consultation with your health care provider. Please consult your health care provider for individual information specific to your condition.

Resource Center

Monday through Friday: 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

The Resource Center is a part of the Resource Café. It contains books, periodicals, audiovisual materials and online resources for patients, their families and the general public on health, wellness and medical topics. A professional librarian will be available to assist users in finding reliable, up-to-date information. Free photocopying, scanning and Internet access are available.

Resource Café

Monday through Friday: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Resource Café combines the comforting aromas of a coffee house with the quiet atmosphere of a library. Enjoy Starbucks brand coffees, cappuccino, espresso, lattes, smoothies and teas. The Resource Café also serves to-go items such as muffins, yogurt, soup and sandwiches.

Amenities

Cafeteria

Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4:45 - 6:30 p.m.

Weekends and Holidays: 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4:45 - 6:30 p.m.

Visitors are welcome to use the cafeteria located on the main floor. The cafeteria features heart healthy dining and a full selection of entrees, soups, vegetables, potatoes, salads, desserts, sandwiches and snacks.

Hot Meals: Breakfast: 7:30 - 10 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Dinner: 4:45 - 6:30 p.m.

Canteen - Vending

Open 24 hours a day

Vending machines are located in the canteen across from the pharmacy.

Meals

Breakfast: 7 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch: 11:20 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Dinner: 4:15 - 5:30 p.m.

Patients may select their meals by filling out a menu before 11 a.m. each day, for the following day. A special diet may be ordered for you by your physician. Guest trays are available upon request for a fee. If you have a special event, please let us know.

Hospitél

The Kathleen Mortell Rankin Hospitél is a home away from home for the family and friends of our out-of-town patients. The Rankin House is located across the street from the hospital and has a living room, kitchen and bedrooms. Normal charge for a room is $15 per room per night. Arrangements can be made by calling Safety & Security at (920) 738-2300.

St. Elizabeth Hospital Foundation

Many grateful patients and their families are eager to express their appreciation for the personalized care they have received at St. Elizabeth Hospital. A gift in honor or memory of a loved one or to thank a caregiver is a truly meaningful way to pay tribute to someone special while helping to advance excellent health care within your community.

The mission of St. Elizabeth Hospital Foundation is to live out the healing ministry of Christ with special emphasis on those in need, by generating, stewarding and distributing funds to enhance the quality of Affinity Health System's services and programs and other community health care initiatives.

Your gift to St. Elizabeth Hospital Foundation makes a difference and allows us to focus on providing quality health care to individuals in our region, especially the poor. Your donation will help fund programs and services provided at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Calumet Medical Center and Affinity Medical Group clinics, which support the hospitals. There are six funds to which you may direct your gift:

Cancer Fund
Directed to projects related to cancer care.

Heart & Lung Fund
Directed to projects related to cardiovascular and pulmonary care.

Women & Families Fund
Directed to projects related to programs serving the unique healthcare needs of women and children.

The Needs of the Poor & Underserved Fund
Underwrites programs that assist the uninsured and underinsured cared for within Affinity's northern region hospitals and clinics.

St. Elizabeth Hospital/Where the Need is Greatest Fund
This fund is the most flexible in funding various requests. It allows the foundation board of directors to determine where the funds can make the most impact.

Calumet Medical Center Fund
Supports projects and purposes at Calumet Medical Center.

For more information, please call the foundation office at (920) 831-1475 or visit our website at www.affinityhealth.org/stefoundation.

Financial Arrangements

- Your bill is a summary of the services and supplies received while in the hospital.
- Arrangements for payment of the hospital bill are your responsibility.
- The hospital will bill your insurance company from the information provided at the time of registration.
- Payment of known deductibles and co-insurance amounts is required at discharge.
- Any difference remaining after insurance payment has been applied will be billed to you.
- If you need assistance or have questions about your bill, call Patient Business Services at (920) 628-9000 or 1-866-832-1120.
- The hospital bill does not include your attending physician or surgeon's fees. Physician specialists such as radiologists, anesthesiologists and pathologists will also bill you separately for their services.
- Please note: If you are a Medicare patient, staying overnight when your stay is considered outpatient by Medicare, that Medicare Part B does not pay for medications on their self administered list even if a nurse administers them to you. If you have questions about this please contact Medicare.
- The Affinity Care program provides assistance to our patients who have the inability to make payment arrangements on their balance. Individuals with limited financial resources who meet eligibility requirements will be eligible for a charitable reduction on their balance due. If you feel you may be eligible, call (920) 628-9670 or 1-877-928-5678.

Amenities

Gift Shop

(920) 738-2423
Monday through Friday 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sunday and Holidays Noon - 4 p.m.

The gift shop is located by the main entrance. Please dial 82423 for assistance. Hours are based on volunteer coverage.

- Items can be delivered to your room.
- Gift shop volunteers will be happy to select gifts for you.

Internet Connections

Web pages are available to you to help family and friends stay connected to you. Enter updates (blog) daily, weekly or monthly to let others know how you are doing.

This can help you:

- Keep in touch before, during and after a hospital stay or treatment.
- Update your loved ones on your condition and care.
- Receive support from friends and family.
- Most are free, private and fully secure.

Creating a Page is easy!

1. Go to www.affinityhealth.org and click on a patient connection of your choice.
2. Follow the outlined directions.
3. Let your friends know.

Affinity hospitals are equipped with wireless computer access. Bring your own computer (with wireless capabilities) or ask to use an Affinity computer while you are in the hospital. We also have Internet access in some department waiting rooms and various other locations throughout the hospital. Please ask if you are interested.

For Your Safety

Security
St. Elizabeth Hospital has 24-hour security to assure patient/visitor safety.

Medications
Registered nurses are responsible for administering medications during your hospital stay. Please inform your nurse if you have medications from home. A record of medications taken will be kept by the nursing staff during your stay.

Bed Rails
Affinity Health System has members of the patient's multidisiplinary team who will assess for the appropriate use of bed rails and any safety risks that may be associated with their use. Please ask any staff member if you have questions. **Call Don't Fall! Always use your call light if you need assistance.**

Smoking
St. Elizabeth Hospital is a smoke-free campus.

Fire Drills
Periodically, the hospital conducts fire drills. You will be directed what to do. Patient rooms doors will be closed during the drill.

Tornado Warnings
In the event of a tornado, hospital staff will implement emergency procedures. Doors and blinds may be closed and you will be given extra blankets. Our staff has received special training to keep you safe.

Electrical Appliances
Personal appliances are not allowed in the hospital. If you need something, please let us know.

Valuables
Please send all money and valuables home with a family member. In the event you are unable to send something home, a safe is available for storage. **We will not be responsible for lost or stolen property.**

Discharge Procedure

Nursing service staff will assist you during the discharge process. If insurance information or financial arrangements are incomplete, it may be necessary for you or a representative to stop at the cashier's office on the first floor before leaving the hospital.

Please arrange to check out of the hospital by 11 a.m. on the day of your release.

Case managers/social services staff will work with your health care team in assessing and planning for continuing care needs following hospitalization whether you return home, transfer to an extended care facility or move to another living situation.

If you have questions regarding discharge planning, please call Case Management at (920) 738-2493.

Patient's Rights and Responsibilities

26. Examine his/her hospital bill and receive an explanation of the bill, regardless of source of payment and every patient shall receive, upon request, information relating to financial assistance available through the hospital.
27. Designate persons who are permitted to visit the patient during the patient's hospital stay.

Note: *Patients in special care units such as Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse, Adult Mental Health and Child & Adolescent Mental Health will receive specific information on patient rights and grievances during their admission to those specialized care units.*

All patients have the responsibility to:

- Actively participate in decisions regarding your health care.
- Be as accurate and complete as possible in providing information about your medical history.
- Let your doctor or nurses know if you are concerned about a treatment, or if you feel you cannot or will not follow a treatment plan.
- Notify your doctor or nurse if you have a concern about your hospital or clinic care.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand what is asked of you or why it is asked.
- Be considerate of other patients and staff, respecting their privacy and confidentiality.
- Use hospital or clinic property and equipment for their intended use.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights or care received while at Affinity Health System, contact the Patient Relations Center at (920) 628-9700 and/or the department's director/manager.

Patient Safety

SPEAK UP - To prevent health care errors, patients are encouraged to speak up.

Everyone has a role in making health care safe — physicians, health care executives, nurses and technicians. Health care organizations across the country are working to make health care safety a priority. You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team. An Institute of Medicine (IOM) report has identified the occurrence of medical errors as a serious problem in the health care system. The IOM recommends, among other things, that a concerted effort be made to improve the public's awareness of the problem.

The "Speak Up" program, sponsored by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, urges patients to get involved in their care. Such efforts to increase consumer awareness and involvement are supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience. After all, research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their health care are more likely to have better outcomes.

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

Your health is too important to worry about being embarrassed if you don't understand something that your doctor, nurse or other health care professional tells you.

- Don't be afraid to ask about safety. If you're having surgery, for example, ask the doctor to mark the area that is to be operated upon, so that there's no confusion in the operating room.
- Don't be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication.
- Don't hesitate to tell the health care professional if you think he or she has confused you with another patient.

Patient Safety

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn't seem quite right.
- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room and look for their identification badges. A new mother, for example, should know the person to whom she is handing her baby. If you are unsure, ask.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. Don't be afraid to gently remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of day you normally receive a medication. If it doesn't happen, bring this to the attention of your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor confirms your identity, that is, checks your wristband or asks your name, before he or she administers any medication or treatment.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

- Ask your doctor about the specialized training and experience that qualifies him or her to treat your illness (and be sure to ask the same questions of those physicians to whom he or she refers you).
- Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups.
- Write down important facts your doctor tells you, so that you can look for additional information later. And ask your doctor if he or she has any written information you can keep.
- Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of any equipment that is being used in your care. If you will be using oxygen at home, do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke near you while oxygen is in use.

Patient's Rights and Responsibilities

11. Access information contained in his/her clinical records within a reasonable timeframe. AHS must not frustrate the legitimate efforts of individuals to gain access to their own medical records and must actively seek to meet these requests as quickly as its record keeping system permits.
12. Be free from restraints of any form that are not medically necessary or are used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation by staff.
13. Be informed regarding less than favorable results of treatment.
14. Know the identity and professional status of individuals providing service to them.
15. Care that includes consideration of psychosocial, spiritual and cultural variables.
16. Have reasonable access to considerate and respectful care.
17. Refuse to participate in research or receive experimental treatment and the right to refuse to participate at any time.
18. Participate in the consideration of ethical issues that arise in the care of the patient.
19. Relief of pain when possible.
20. End-of life care that optimizes the comfort and dignity of the patient, including effective pain management.
21. Qualified interpreter services at no cost to them; not be required to rely on their minor children, other relatives, or friends as interpreters; file a grievance about the language access services provided them.
22. Receive the organization's "Notice of Privacy Practices," As required by the HIPAA privacy regulations, which delineates how health information may be used and disclosed, and the patient's rights and providers' legal duties with respect to protected health information.
23. A patient may not be denied appropriate hospital care because of the patient's race, creed, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, newborn status, handicap or source of payment.
24. To know who has overall responsibility for the patient's care.
25. Except in emergencies, the patient may not be transferred to another facility without being given a full explanation for the transfer, without provision being made for continuing care and without acceptance by the receiving facility.

Patient's Rights and Responsibilities

Each patient, or when appropriate, the patient's representative (as allowed under Wisconsin law) at Affinity Health System has the right to:

1. Be informed of the patient rights upon admission to the hospital or in advance of furnishing or discontinuing care, whenever possible.
2. Have a family member or representative of his/her choice and his/her own physician informed when you are admitted to the hospital.
3. A formal complaint process for the initiation, and, when possible, prompt resolution of patient complaints and grievances concerning quality of care and privacy of health information, as well as information on whom to contact, including state agencies and the Joint Commission to file a complaint/grievance. The complaint/grievance process and timeframes for resolution are found in AHS's Complaint/Grievance policy and can be obtained by contracting Patient Relations at (920) 628-9700.
4. Participate in the development and implementation of his/her plan of care and the right to make informed decisions regarding his or her care. This includes the right to accept medical care or to refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be informed of the medical consequence of such refusal.
5. Be informed of his/her health status, being involved in care planning and treatment and being able to request or refuse treatment. This right must not be construed as a mechanism to demand the provision of treatment or services deemed medically unnecessary or inappropriate.
6. Formulate advance directives and appoint a surrogate to make health care decisions on his/her behalf to the extent permitted by law, and to have hospital and clinic staff and practitioners who provide care comply with these directives.
7. Personal privacy and confidentiality of information except those cases provided by law.
8. Receive care in a safe environment.
9. Be kept free from all forms of abuse and harassment.
10. Confidentiality of his/her clinical records.

Patient Safety

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.
- Ask this person to stay with you, even overnight, when you are hospitalized. You will be able to rest more comfortably and your advocate can help to make sure you get the right medications and treatments.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked, and speak up for you if you cannot.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Review consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them and make sure you both understand exactly what you are agreeing to.
- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. Your advocate should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse and whom to call for help.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

- Affinity Health System is committed to your safety. Affinity is proud to be the first in the Fox Valley to implement bar-code scanning technology. When implemented, your nurse will bring a computer on wheels into your room. He/she then will be using a bar-code scanner to read your ID bracelet on your arm as well as each dose of medication he/she gives you.
- Ask about the purpose of the medication and ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also inquire about the side effects of the medication.
- If you do not recognize a medication, verify that it is for you. Ask about oral medications before swallowing, and read the contents of bags of intravenous (IV) fluids. If you're not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do this.
- Whenever you are going to receive a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have, or negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.
- If you are taking multiple medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medications together. This holds true for vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs, too.
- Make sure you can read any prescriptions from your doctor. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either.

Patient Safety

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by the Joint Commission.

- Ask about the health care organization's experience in treating your type of illness. How frequently do they perform the procedure you need and what specialized care do they provide in helping patients get well?
- If you have more than one hospital or other facility to choose from, ask your doctor which one offers the best care for your condition.
- Before you leave the hospital or other facility, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all of the instructions.
- Go to Quality Check at www.jcaho.org to find out whether your hospital or other health care organization is accredited.
- Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.
- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.

Code H HELP Dial "77"

At Affinity Health System we are leading health in safety so we created a Code H. First always call your nurse for help, but if you have chest pain, shortness of breath or if you are having significant changes in how you feel that you feel are not getting resolved, dial "77" from your room phone for assistance. A medical professional will arrive to assess the situation. Additional help then will be called in as needed. This is reserved for emergencies only but is another safety feature we have built in.

Identification Bands

If you stay overnight with us, you should always have a white identification band on. If any information on this band is incorrect, please notify your nurse right away. In addition to this band we have three other bands that are color coded to help alert us of special alerts. The three special alerts we have in place for additional safety are:

1. Yellow for potential fall risk
2. Red for a known allergy
3. Purple for do not resuscitate wishes

Staff

During your stay in the hospital, you will be cared for by a Patient Care Team. Team members are identified as colleagues. Along with your physicians, you can count on these people to assist you.

Registered Nurse (RN)
Registered nurses are responsible for assessing your progress and designing, implementing and evaluating your care plan. Professional colleagues include registered nurses, pharmacists, therapists, clinicians, social workers and our chaplains.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
Licensed practical nurses provide advanced technical skills such as data collection and medication distribution.

Technical Colleague
Technical colleagues are certified and responsible for assisting you with bathing and other aspects of your personal care. Both technical and the licensed practical nurses also perform other skills such as EKGs, phlebotomy and simple breathing treatments.

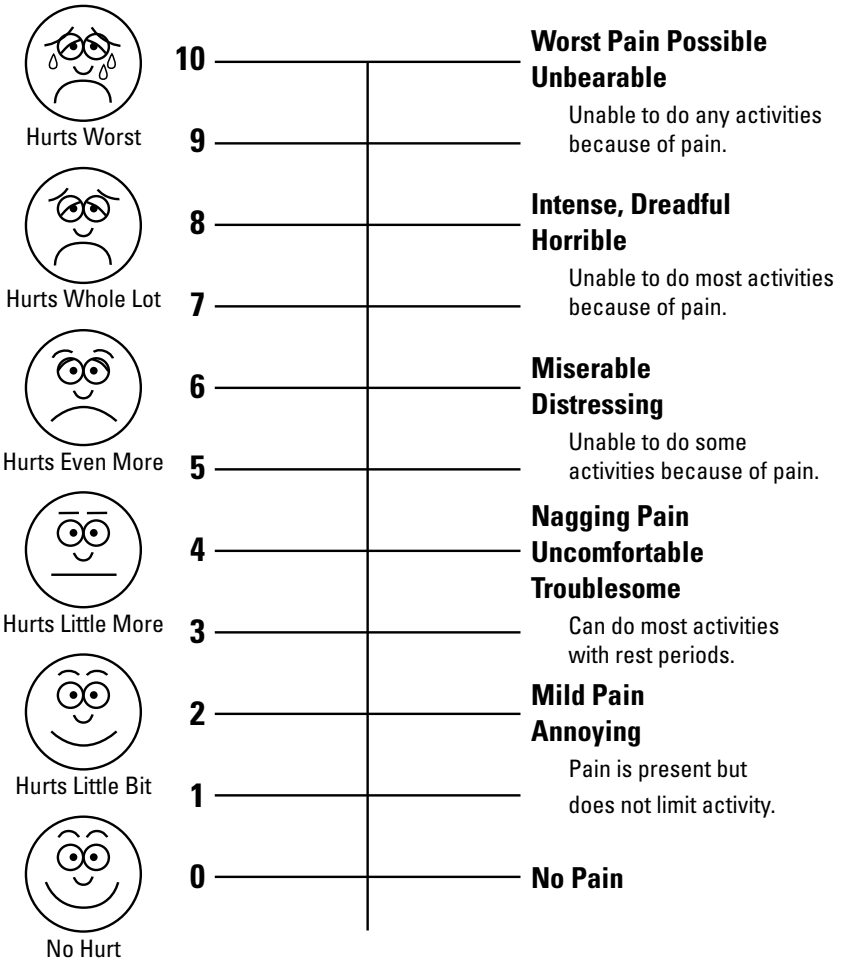
Environmental Associates
Environmental associates facilitate efficient functioning within the unit by performing housekeeping duties, assisting with some transport duties and helping with aspects of personal care.

Unit Clerks
Unit clerks are responsible for clerical functions, communication, unit coordination, record keeping and customer relations.

Hospitalist
Our Hospitalist Program at Affinity is a new nationwide trend redefining the future of inpatient care. Hospitalists are physicians who specialize in hospital care. He/she communicates with your primary care doctor telling him/her about any changes in your condition or treatment. You can be assured he/she will also work closely with you and your family. Nurses called acute care coordinators will be working directly with the hospitalist team to ensure excellent quality of care.

Patient/Family Education for Pain Control

Below is a pain scale used to assist you in scoring your level of discomfort.



From Wong DK: Hockenberry-Eaton M., Wilson D,. Winkelstein M.L., Schwartz P: *Wong's Essentials of Pediatric Nursing,* ed. 6. St. Louis, 2001. p 1301. Copyrighted by Mosby, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

Patient Safety

Hourly Rounding

At Affinity Health System we round on every patient every hour during the day and every two hours at night. We do this to give personalize care and ensures your pain is controlled. We have learned this also prevents fall, prevents bed sores (pressure ulcers) and keep your room safe.

Falls Prevention

Patient falls are among the most common occurrences reported in hospitals and are a leading cause of death in people ages 65 or older. Of those who fall, as many as half may suffer moderate to severe injuries that reduce mobility and independence, and increase the risk of premature death. *Source IHI.ORG*

What are the risks of falls?

The chances of injury from falling increase as one gets older. About half the falls are a result of factors in the environment. The other 50 percent of falls happen due to factors with the patient such as medications or physical conditions. Falls increase proportionately with the number of cognitive and functional impairments. The more risk factors the more likely a fall could occur. Risks for fall assessment are:

- Age
- Confused/disoriented
- Altered elimination
- History of falls in last six months
- Medications
- Impaired mobility

The single main goal regarding falls is prevention

- Call Don't Fall reminders posted in the room, a visual reminder to patients and families to use the call light for assistance.
- Wear proper foot wear to prevent slipping and falls.
- The physical therapy department evaluation and treat for patients at risk for fall, recommend equipment or falls prevention tools.
- Don't Rush! Take your time, especially when getting out of bed or standing up if you have been lying down or sitting for an extended period of time.
- Staff rounding on an hourly basis and will assess you for on 4 P's pain-evaluate pain level, potty-offer help using the toilet, position-help patient get comfortable, prevention-looking for falls prevention.

Patient Safety

- Call for help if you are unsteady when moving from bed to chair or chair to bed, walking, getting to the toilet or retrieving hard to reach items.
- Make sure your wheelchair is locked and that the foot pedals are up before moving in or out of it!
- Pause for a few seconds when changing positions, such as lying to sitting or sitting to standing. This allows your body to adjust to the change.
- Avoid bending to pick up items. Ask for help.
- Tell your doctor or nurse of any episodes of dizziness or lightheadedness.
- Patients should share any fears or concerns they have about falling with staff.

Pressure Ulcer Prevention

Affinity Health System Wound and Skin program is an initiative to provide quality care to our patients. The program's goal is to help maintain healthy skin and prevent pressure ulcers from developing. Our nursing staff have been educated on ways to help promote healthy skin by assessing for patients with risk factors that may increase their risk of pressure ulcer development. A plan of care is developed with the patient and family to work together to keep their skin healthy and prevent pressure ulcers from developing.

Our pressure ulcer prevention practices begin at the front-line level, our nursing staff.

Multiple Health Care Associated Infections

Multiple drug resistance organisms are bacteria or bugs that are resistant and are not killed by many antibiotics. The most common are C. diff (clostridium difficile) and MRSA (staphylococcus aureus). We have outlined how to reduce your risk of each.

Patient/Family Education for Pain Control

Pain Management

It is Affinity's goal to keep you as comfortable as possible. Your health care team (physicians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, etc.) will work with you to find your best treatment options. Your nurse will help you to identify an acceptable or "tolerable" pain level. "Tolerable" means that you will still have some aches and discomfort, but your pain is at a level where you can still do things that will help you get better, such as: turn in bed; cough and deep breathe; get out of bed; sit up in a chair; participate in therapy; and walk. When you tell us you are in pain, we will act quickly to relieve your pain. It is important that you help us by telling a member of your health care team about your discomfort including where it is, how it feels and how well the treatment is working.

Why is pain control important?

Unrelieved pain has many negative effects, which may delay healing. When you are comfortable, you can breathe, move and walk more easily. This helps you recover and helps prevent problems such as blood clots and infections. If you are having pain, do not wait to report your pain to a member of your health care team. Pain is easier to treat when we start early.

Your health care team will ask you questions throughout your hospital stay/office visit to help them understand your pain and help them recommend the most appropriate treatment.

Rehabilitation Services

Rehabilitation Services

Rehabilitation Services of Affinity Health System is a regional provider of comprehensive physical rehabilitation. The role of rehabilitation is to assist individuals with functional limitations in achieving their maximum level of function.

Your physician may order physical, occupational or speech therapy to help with your recovery.

Rehabilitation Services offers individual outpatient therapy as well as a variety of specialized treatment programs. For more information, call (920) 738-2681.

Patient Safety

Clostridium Difficile (C. Diff)

What is Clostridium difficile infection?
Clostridium difficile [pronounced Klo-STRID-ee-um dif-uh-SEEL], also known as "C. diff" [See-dif], is a germ that can cause diarrhea. Most cases of C. diff infection occur in patients taking antibiotics. The most common symptoms of a C. diff infection include:

- Watery diarrhea
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea, belly pain and tenderness

Who is most likely to get C. diff infection?
The elderly and people with certain medical problems have the greatest chance of getting C. diff. C. diff spores can live outside the human body for a very long time and may be found on things in the environment such as bed linens, bed rails, bathroom fixtures, and medical equipment. C. diff infection can spread from person-to person on contaminated equipment and on the hands of doctors, nurses, other healthcare providers and visitors.

Can C. diff infection be treated?
Yes, there are antibiotics that can be used to treat C. diff. In some severe cases, a person might have to have surgery to remove the infected part of the intestines. This surgery is needed in only one or two out of every 100 persons with C. diff.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent C. diff infections?
To prevent C. diff. infections, doctors, nurses and other health care providers:

- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for every patient. This can prevent C. diff and other germs from being passed from one patient to another on their hands.
- Carefully clean hospital rooms and medical equipment that have been used for patients with C. diff.
- Use Contact Precautions to prevent C. diff from spreading to other patients. Contact Precautions mean:
- Whenever possible, patients with C. diff will have a single room or share a room only with someone else who also has C. diff.
- Health care providers will put on gloves and wear a gown over their clothing while taking care of patients with C. diff.
- Visitors may also be asked to wear a gown and gloves.

Patient Safety

- When leaving the room, hospital providers and visitors remove their gown and gloves and clean their hands.
- Patients on Contact Precautions are asked to stay in their hospital rooms as much as possible. They should not go to common areas, such as the gift shop or cafeteria. They can go to other areas of the hospital for treatments and tests.
- Only give patients antibiotics when it is necessary.

What can I do to help prevent C. diff infections?

- Make sure that all doctors, nurses and other health care providers clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for you.
- Only take antibiotics as prescribed by your doctor.
- Be sure to clean your own hands often, especially after using the bathroom and before eating.

If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.

Can my friends and family get C. diff when they visit me?

C. diff infection usually does not occur in persons who are not taking antibiotics. Visitors are not likely to get C. diff. Still, to make it safer for visitors, they should:

- Clean their hands before they enter your room and as they leave your room.
- Ask the nurse if they need to wear protective gowns and gloves when they visit you.

What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?

Once you are back at home, you can return to your normal routine. Often, the diarrhea will be better or completely gone before you go home. This makes giving C. diff to other people much less likely. There are a few things you should do, however, to lower the chances of developing C. diff infection again or of spreading it to others.

- If you are given a prescription to treat C. diff, take the medicine exactly as prescribed by your doctor and pharmacist. Do not take half-doses or stop before you run out.
- Wash your hands often, especially after going to the bathroom and before preparing food.
- People who live with you should wash their hands often as well.
- If you develop more diarrhea after you get home, tell your doctor immediately.
- Your doctor may give you additional instructions.

If you have questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Services

Meals on Wheels

The Affinity Health System, through St. Elizabeth Hospital participates in the Meals on Wheels program. Meals are delivered to the south side of Appleton, Kimberly and Calumet County by volunteers, Monday to Friday. The Meals on Wheels program supplies nourishing food at a nominal cost and helps clients remain self-sufficient at home. For more information on the Meals on Wheels program, talk to your discharge planner or contact the St. Elizabeth Hospital Food & Nutrition department at (920) 738-2294.

Department of Spiritual Services

Clergy and lay person staff are available 24 hours a days to meet your spiritual needs. They can be contacted at (920) 738-2655. Religious services are offered daily on Channel 60. Please check brochure provided by the department for times. For the on call chaplain, dial “00.” The chapel is open 24 hours a day.

Services

Lifeline Home Monitor Services

Lifeline is a personal home response system that links you to 24-hour assistance at the push of a button. Lifeline allows the user to move freely around the home or yard with the confidence of knowing that help is available just by pushing the Lifeline button. A monthly user fee is charged for the service. For information, ask your nurse or case manager, or call (920) 738-2711.

Volunteer Services and St. Elizabeth Hospital Auxiliary

Volunteers provide a tradition of caring at St. Elizabeth Hospital. Our volunteers are committed people of different ages with diverse backgrounds.

The St. Elizabeth Hospital volunteer program draws on the special talents of folks from all walks of life; teenagers seeking activity outside of school, retirees looking to meet new people, college students enhancing their career possibilities through community service.

Young or old, man or woman…if you have the time and desire to give, we have a great experience waiting for you. Together we can utilize your skills as well as help you learn new ones.

The St. Elizabeth Hospital Auxiliary is a not-for-profit organization of women and men who are dedicated to fundraising for the betterment of health care services at St. Elizabeth Hospital.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or a member of the Auxiliary, please call (920) 738-2425.

Patient Safety

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus (pronounced staffill-oh-KOK-us AW-ree-us), or "Staph" is a very common germ that about one out of every three people have on their skin or in their nose. This germ does not cause any problems for most people who have it on their skin. But sometimes it can cause serious infections such as skin or wound infections, pneumonia, or infections of the blood. Antibiotics are given to kill Staph germs when they cause infections. Some Staph are resistant, meaning they cannot be killed by some antibiotics. "Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus" or "MRSA" is a type of Staph that is resistant to some of the antibiotics that are often used to treat Staph infections.

Who is most likely to get an MRSA infection?

In the hospital, people who are more likely to get an MRSA infection are people who:

- Have other health conditions making them sick.
- Have been in the hospital or a nursing home.
- Have been treated with antibiotics.

People who are healthy and who have not been in the hospital or a nursing home can also get MRSA infections. These infections usually involve the skin. More information about this type of MRSA infection, known as "community-associated MRSA" infection, is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at www.cdc.gov/mrsa.

How do I get an MRSA infection?

People who have MRSA germs on their skin or who are infected with MRSA may be able to spread the germ to other people. MRSA can be passed on to bed linens, bed rails, bathroom fixtures and medical equipment. It can spread to other people on contaminated equipment and on the hands of doctors, nurses, other health care providers and visitors.

Can MRSA infections be treated?

Yes, there are antibiotics that can kill MRSA germs. Some patients with MRSA abscesses may need surgery to drain the infection. Your health care provider will determine which treatments are best for you.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent MRSA infections?
To prevent MRSA infections, doctors, nurses, and other health care providers:
- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for every patient.
- Carefully clean hospital rooms and medical equipment.
- Use Contact Precautions when caring for patients with MRSA. Contact Precautions mean:
  - Whenever possible, patients with MRSA will have a single room or will share a room only with someone else who also has MRSA.
  - Health care providers will put on gloves and wear a gown over their clothing while taking care of patients with MRSA.
  - Visitors may also be asked to wear a gown and gloves.
  - When leaving the room, hospital providers and visitors remove their gown and gloves and clean their hands.
  - Patients on Contact Precautions are asked to stay in their hospital rooms as much as possible. They should not go to common areas, such as the gift shop or cafeteria. They may go to other areas of the hospital for treatments and tests.
- May test some patients to see if they have MRSA on their skin. This test involves rubbing a cotton-tipped swab in the patient's nostrils or on the skin.

What can I do to help prevent MRSA infections?
In the hospital
- Make sure that all doctors, nurses, and other health care providers clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for you. If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.

When you go home
- If you have wounds or an intravascular device (such as a catheter or dialysis port) make sure that you know how to take care of them.

- Keep the head of the patient's bed raised between 30 and 45 degrees unless other medical conditions do not allow this to occur.
- Check the patient's ability to breathe on his or her own every day so that the patient can be taken off of the ventilator as soon as possible.
- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after touching the patient or the ventilator.
- Clean the inside of the patient's mouth on a regular basis.
- Clean or replace equipment between use on different patients.

What can I do to help prevent VAP?
If you smoke, quit. Patients who smoke get more infections. If you are going to have surgery and will need to be on a ventilator, talk to your doctor before your surgery about how you can quit smoking.
- Family members can ask about raising the head of the bed.
- Family members can ask when the patient will be allowed to try breathing on his or her own.
- Family members can ask doctors, nurses, and other health care providers to clean their hands.
- Family members can ask about how often health care providers clean the patient's mouth.

Can VAP be treated?
VAP can be a very serious infection. Most of the time, these infections can be treated with antibiotics. The choice of antibiotics depends on which specific germs are causing the infection. Your health care provider will decide which antibiotic is best.

If you have questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Suicide and Crisis Prevention

If you are having thoughts of suicide we have resources at your disposal, please know that we are concerned not only for your health but your emotional well-being also. If you are having thoughts of suicide please let anyone on your care team know or access the local county hotlines. They can be reached by phone at:

Crisis Hotline
Calumet: (920) 849-9317
Outagamie: (920) 832-4646
Winnebago: (920) 233-7707 or (920) 722-7707

What can I do to help prevent catheter-associated urinary tract infections if I have a catheter?

- Always clean your hands before and after doing catheter care.
- Always keep your urine bag below the level of your bladder.
- Do not tug or pull on the tubing.
- Do not twist or kink the catheter tubing.
- Ask your health care provider each day if you still need the catheter.

What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?

- If you will be going home with a catheter, your doctor or nurse should explain everything you need to know about taking care of the catheter. Make sure you understand how to care for it before you leave the hospital.
- If you develop any of the symptoms of a urinary tract infection, such as burning or pain in the lower abdomen, fever, or an increase in the frequency of urination, contact your doctor or nurse immediately.
- Before you go home, make sure you know who to contact if you have questions or problems after you get home.

Ventilator Associated Pneumonia

What is a Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia (VAP)?

A "pneumonia" is an infection of the lungs. A "ventilator" is a machine that helps a patient breathe by giving oxygen through a tube. The tube can be placed in a patient's mouth, nose, or through a hole in the front of the neck. The tube is connected to a ventilator. A "ventilator-associated pneumonia" or "VAP" is a lung infection or pneumonia that develops in a person who is on a ventilator.

Why do patients need a ventilator?

A patient may need a ventilator when he or she is very ill or during and after surgery. Ventilators can be life-saving, but they can also increase a patient's chance of getting pneumonia by making it easier for germs to get into the patient's lungs.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent ventilator-associated pneumonia?

To prevent ventilator-associated pneumonia, doctors, nurses, and other health care providers:

Can my friends and family get MRSA when they visit me?

The chance of getting MRSA while visiting a person who has MRSA is very low.

To decrease the chance of getting MRSA your family and friends should:

- Clean their hands before they enter your room and when they leave.
- Ask a health care provider if they need to wear protective gowns and gloves when they visit you.

What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?

To prevent another MRSA infection and to prevent spreading MRSA to others:

- Keep taking any antibiotics prescribed by your doctor. Don't take half-doses or stop before you complete your prescribed course.
- Clean your hands often, especially before and after changing your wound dressing or bandage.
- People who live with you should clean their hands often as well.
- Keep any wounds clean and change bandages as instructed until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors.
- Wash and dry your clothes and bed linens in the warmest temperatures recommended on the labels.
- Tell your health care providers that you have MRSA. This includes home health nurses and aides, therapists, and personnel in doctors' offices.
- Your doctor may have more instructions for you.

If you have questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Reducing Your Health Care Assoicated Infections

Central line, catheter associated urinary tract infection, surgical infection, ventilator associated pneumonia are the most common, we have outlined how to reduce your risk of each.

Central Venous Infection

What is a catheter-associated bloodstream infection?
A "central line" or "central catheter" is a tube that is placed into a patient's large vein, usually in the neck, chest, arm or groin. The catheter is often used to draw blood, or give fluids or medications. It may be left in place for several weeks. A bloodstream infection can occur when bacteria or other germs travel down a "central line" and enter the blood. If you develop a catheter-associated bloodstream infection you may become ill with fevers and chills or the skin around the catheter may become sore and red.

Can a catheter-related bloodstream infection be treated?
A catheter-associated bloodstream infection is serious, but often can be successfully treated with antibiotics. The catheter might need to be removed if you develop an infection.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent catheter-associated bloodstream infections?
To prevent catheter-associated bloodstream infections doctors and nurses will:

- Choose a vein where the catheter can be safely inserted and where the risk for infection is small.
- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before putting in the catheter.
- Wear a mask, cap, sterile gown, and sterile gloves when putting in the catheter to keep it sterile. The patient will be covered with a sterile sheet.
- Clean the patient's skin with an antiseptic cleanser before putting in the catheter.
- Clean their hands, wear gloves, and clean the catheter opening with an antiseptic solution before using the catheter to draw blood or give medications. Healthcare providers also clean their hands and wear gloves when changing the bandage that covers the area where the catheter enters the skin.
- Decide every day if the patient still needs to have the catheter. The catheter will be removed as soon as it is no longer needed.
- Carefully handle medications and fluids that are given through the catheter.

Can catheter-associated urinary tract infections be treated?
Yes, most catheter-associated urinary tract infections can be treated with antibiotics and removal or change of the catheter. Your doctor will determine which antibiotic is best for you.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent catheter-associated urinary tract infections?
To prevent urinary tract infections, doctors and nurses take the following actions:

- Catheter insertion
  - Catheters are put in only when necessary and they are removed as soon as possible.
  - Only properly trained persons insert catheters using sterile ("clean") technique.
  - The skin in the area where the catheter will be inserted is cleaned before inserting the catheter.

Other methods to drain the urine are sometimes used, such as:

- External catheters in men (these look like condoms and are placed over the penis rather than into the penis)
- Putting a temporary catheter in to drain the urine and removing it right away. This is called intermittent urethral catheterization.

Catheter care

- Healthcare providers clean their hands by washing them with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub before and after touching your catheter.
- Avoid disconnecting the catheter and drain tube. This helps to prevent germs from getting into the catheter tube.
- The catheter is secured to the leg to prevent pulling on the catheter.
- Avoid twisting or kinking the catheter.
- Keep the bag lower than the bladder to prevent urine from backflowing to the bladder.
- Empty the bag regularly. The drainage spout should not touch anything while emptying the bag.

If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.

Catheter Related Infection

What is "catheter-associated urinary tract infection"?
A urinary tract infection (also called "UTI") is an infection in the urinary system, which includes the bladder (which stores the urine) and the kidneys (which filter the blood to make urine). Germs (for example, bacteria or yeasts) do not normally live in these areas; but if germs are introduced, an infection can occur.

If you have a urinary catheter, germs can travel along the catheter and cause an infection in your bladder or your kidney; in that case it is called a catheter-associated urinary tract infection (or "CA-UTI").

What is a urinary catheter?
A urinary catheter is a thin tube placed in the bladder to drain urine. Urine drains through the tube into a bag that collects the urine. A urinary catheter may be used:

- If you are not able to urinate on your own
- To measure the amount of urine that you make, for example, during intensive care
- During and after some types of surgery
- During some tests of the kidneys and bladder

People with urinary catheters have a much higher chance of getting a urinary tract infection than people who don't have a catheter.

How do I get a catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CA-UTI)?
If germs enter the urinary tract, they may cause an infection. Many of the germs that cause a catheter-associated urinary tract infection are common germs found in your intestines that do not usually cause an infection there. Germs can enter the urinary tract when the catheter is being put in or while the catheter remains in the bladder.

What are the symptoms of a urinary tract infection?
Some of the common symptoms of a urinary tract infection are:

- Burning or pain in the lower abdomen (that is, below the stomach)
- Fever
- Bloody urine may be a sign of infection, but is also caused by other problems
- Burning during urination or an increase in the frequency of urination after the catheter is removed. Sometimes people with catheter-associated urinary tract infections do not have these symptoms of infection.

What can I do to help prevent a catheter-associated bloodstream infection?

- Ask your doctors and nurses to explain why you need the catheter and how long you will have it.
- Ask your doctors and nurses if they will be using all of the prevention methods discussed above.
- Make sure that all doctors and nurses caring for you clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for you.
- If the bandage comes off or becomes wet or dirty, tell your nurse or doctor immediately.
- Inform your nurse or doctor if the area around your catheter is sore or red.
- Do not let family and friends who visit touch the catheter or the tubing.
- Make sure family and friends clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after visiting you.

If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.

What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?
Some patients are sent home from the hospital with a catheter in order to continue their treatment. If you go home with a catheter, your doctors and nurses will explain everything you need to know about taking care of your catheter.

- Make sure you understand how to care for the catheter before leaving the hospital. For example, ask for instructions on showering or bathing with the catheter and how to change the catheter dressing.
- Make sure you know who to contact if you have questions or problems after you get home.
- Make sure you wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before handling your catheter.
- Watch for the signs and symptoms of catheter-associated bloodstream infection, such as soreness or redness at the catheter site or fever, and call your health care provider immediately if any occur.

If you have additional questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Surgical Site Infection (SSI)

What is a Surgical Site Infection (SSI)?
A surgical site infection is an infection that occurs after surgery in the part of the body where the surgery took place. Most patients who have surgery do not develop an infection. However, infections develop in about one to three out of every 100 patients who have surgery.

Some of the common symptoms of a surgical site infection are:
- Redness and pain around the area where you had surgery.
- Drainage of cloudy fluid from your surgical wound.
- Fever

Can SSIs be treated?
Yes. Most surgical site infections can be treated with antibiotics. The antibiotic given to you depends on the bacteria (germs) causing the infection. Sometimes patients with SSIs also need another surgery to treat the infection.

What are some of the things that hospitals are doing to prevent SSIs?
To prevent SSIs, doctors, nurses, and other health care providers:
- Clean their hands and arms up to their elbows with an antiseptic agent just before the surgery.
- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for each patient
- May remove some of your hair immediately before your surgery using electric clippers if the hair is in the same area where the procedure will occur. They should not shave you with a razor.
- Wear special hair covers, masks, gowns and gloves during surgery to keep the surgery area clean.
- Give you antibiotics before your surgery starts. In most cases, you should get antibiotics within 60 minutes before the surgery starts and the antibiotics should be stopped within 24 hours after surgery.
- Clean the skin at the site of your surgery with a special soap that kills germs.

What can I do to help prevent SSIs?
Before your surgery:
- Tell your doctor about other medical problems you may have. Health problems such as allergies, diabetes, and obesity could affect your surgery and your treatment.
- Quit smoking. Patients who smoke get more infections. Talk to your doctor about how you can quit before your surgery.
- Do not shave near where you will have surgery. Shaving with a razor can irritate your skin and make it easier to develop an infection.

At the time of your surgery:
- Speak up if someone tries to shave you with a razor before surgery. Ask why you need to be shaved and talk with your surgeon if you have any concerns.
- Ask if you will get antibiotics before surgery.

After your surgery:
- Make sure that your health care providers clean their hands before examining you, either with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Family and friends who visit you should not touch the surgical wound or dressings.
- Family and friends should clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after visiting you. If you do not see them clean their hands, ask them to clean their hands.
- If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.
- What do I need to do when I go home from the hospital?
- Before you go home, your doctor or nurse should explain everything you need to know about taking care of your wound. Make sure you understand how to care for your wound before you leave the hospital.
- Always clean your hands before and after caring for your wound.
- Before you go home, make sure you know who to contact if you have questions or problems after you get home.
- If you have any symptoms of an infection, such as redness and pain at the surgery site, drainage, or fever, call your doctor immediately.

If you have additional questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.