



Patient Safety



Join the MUSC Healthcare Team

You and your family are the most important members of your healthcare team. We depend on you to communicate with us – to tell us how you are feeling, what you are thinking and what you need. The information you provide can make a real difference in your care. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to speak up. We want to hear from you. This booklet was designed with your safety and care in mind. Please read it to understand more about your role in safe care.

S **SPEAK** up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again.

P **PAY** attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medicines by the right health care professionals.

E **EDUCATE** yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are having, and your treatment plan.

A **ASK** a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

K **KNOW** what medicines you take and why you take them.

U **USE** a hospital or clinic that is accredited by a national organization such as The Joint Commission.

P **PARTICIPATE** in all decisions about your treatment.

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PATIENT RIGHTS

MUSC Medical Center promotes and supports a patient and family-centered approach to care, which means you and your loved ones are important members of your care team. We depend on you to help us make the best choices about your care. As a patient at MUSC Medical Center, you have certain rights and protections assured by state and federal law. These exist to help ensure the quality and safety of your hospital care. You should have received a copy of these rights when you were admitted to the hospital. If you did not receive a copy of your Patient Rights, please speak with a member of your health care team and we will make sure that you receive a copy.

Patient privacy is very important to us. If you choose not to have your room number or telephone number shared with others, let us know. Our staff is very careful not to share your information without your permission. We encourage you to choose one family member or person to be your 'family spokesperson'. This spokesperson can receive updates from your care team, and share that information with your extended family and friends.

VISITATION

Family is determined by each patient. For you, your close family may include a best friend, grandparent, aunt or partner. This is your choice! Your family members are encouraged to be present and involved with your care while you are hospitalized. Therefore, visiting hours are flexible to meet the needs of each patient and family. Open visitation is encouraged and is adjusted to meet each patient's medical, comfort and privacy needs. Visitors are asked to wear their family/visitor badge at all times when visiting. Families and visitors are also asked to support the rest and recovery of our patients in a healing environment by speaking softly and quietly. Please remember to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer as you enter and leave patient rooms, and follow the special rules when visiting a patient who is on 'isolation' to protect the safety of all families and patients.

PATIENT AND FAMILY LIAISONS

Your care team will work to meet all of your needs. Please contact your nurse if you have questions or needs. If you feel that your questions, concerns or needs are not being addressed, you may also contact a Patient and Family Liaison by calling (843)792-5555. Liaisons are available from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, to assist you with resolving issues or concerns. Should you reach a voice recording, you may leave a confidential message and your call will be returned.



PATIENT IDENTIFICATION

A wristband with your name and important information was placed on your wrist during admission. Your wristband will be checked or scanned anytime care is delivered or medicines are given to you.

You may need to wear extra bands to help us keep you safe during your hospital stay. These types of bands include:

- **Allergy** - You will have a red ID band if you have allergies such as medicine or food. Please let your nurse know if you have allergies of any kind. Some patients are allergic to latex. We have very few latex products in our hospital and do not allow items such as latex balloons to be brought into the hospital.
- **Resuscitation Orders** - You will have a purple ID band if you have instructions about your wishes for care from your care providers.
- **Fall Risk** - You will wear a yellow band if your nurse or doctor decides you are at a high risk of falling while you are in the hospital.
- **No Blood** – You may ask to not receive transfusions of donor blood if you have surgery or during your care based upon personal preference or religious beliefs.

HOSPITAL STAFF (WHO WE ARE)

MUSC is a teaching hospital, also known as an academic medical center. During your stay, there will be a team of people working together to coordinate your care. Your **attending doctor (physician)** is the person responsible for and in charge of your overall care while you are in the hospital. Your attending physician may change during your stay, depending on the type of care and services that you require. If your attending physician is not available, a **designated attending physician** is always assigned to manage your care. Medical students, interns and resident physicians may also participate in your care; make treatment decisions; as well as participate in any surgery that you may have. **Residents and interns** are physicians who have graduated from medical school and are seeking additional training, often in a specialty area. **Students** are individuals who are pursuing medical, nursing or other health-related degrees. **A qualified professional always supervises students when they assist with patient care.**

If you have questions about your medical care, please ask a member of your healthcare team. If you would like to speak directly with your attending physician please ask your nurse and he/she will help you contact your physician. You may also contact the nurse manager, the house supervisor, or your attending physician yourself by calling the operator from your bedside phone.

Everyone involved with your care at MUSC is required to wear a photo identification (ID) badge. You should read your caregivers' name badges so you can get to know the members of your team. Do not accept care from any person who is not wearing a photo ID badge. If you notice that a person is not wearing an ID badge, please bring it to our attention.

WHITE BOARD

You will see a white care board on your wall. This board contains important information for you and your family. Members of your health care team will write their names on the white board and other information that is important for you to know.

HOURLY ROUNDING

During your stay a clinical staff member will stop by your room every hour to check on you. They will ask you questions about:

- Your comfort and pain.
- Bathroom needs.
- Any personal items that you may need and move them within reach.



PERSONAL ITEMS

Your care team's top priority is taking care of you, not your possessions. Staff cannot keep track of personal items or valuables, so we urge you to leave these at home, or send them home with a loved one once you are admitted. Many rooms now have personal safes to secure your valuables and money, and you are encouraged to utilize these. We cannot be responsible for the loss or damage to personal property kept in your room, such as cell phones, laptops, jewelry and clothing, so please do not keep those items in your room. At the time of discharge or transfer to another room, please remember to take any items with you that may have been secured in a room safe. Be advised that the following items are not permitted in all areas:

- Guns
- Illegal drugs
- Alcohol
- Knives or other sharp objects

MEDICATION SAFETY

Taking the right medication at the right time for the right reason is important.

- Make sure the nurse checks or scans your ID band and medication before giving you any medicine.
- Tell the doctors and nurses about any allergies to food, medicines, or other things, such as dyes or latex, especially when you first come into the hospital.

- Provide your doctor, nurse or pharmacist a complete list of your medications when you arrive. It is important to carry a list including prescription, over-the-counter, such as Tylenol or aspirin, and herbal or dietary supplements, such as Ginseng, or weight loss products.
- Do not take any medicine or herbal supplements you have brought from home without first checking with the doctor. All medicine you take in the hospital must be ordered by your doctor. Send home any medicine you will not be taking in the hospital, as medications cannot be stored in your room for safety reasons.
- While in the hospital and before you go home, ask why you are taking each medicine, what the medicine treats, and what side effects to expect.
- Before you go home, ask your nurse or doctor for a list of all the medications that you should take at home. This list should include any new medications.
- IT IS IMPORTANT to bring an updated list of medicines that you are taking every time you visit a doctor.
- If you think a medicine is missing from your list, please ask a member of your care team about it. A pharmacist is available to talk with you about your medicine at any time.
- If you are worried about a medicine, or have questions, please tell your nurse or pharmacist.

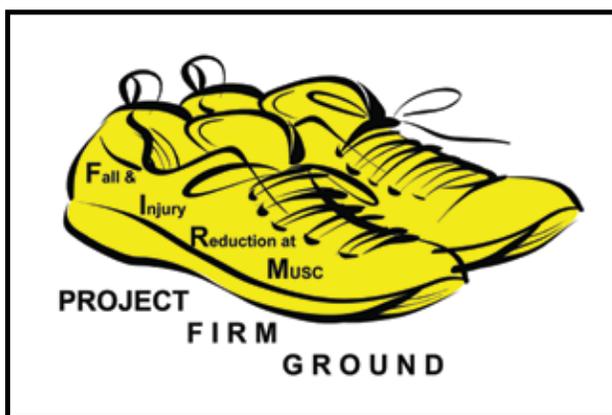
When you pick up your medicine at one of the MUSC pharmacies or at another retail pharmacy:

- Make sure it is what your doctor wanted you to have.
- Ask what the medicine is used for and how to take it and how often.
- Ask what side effects are important to know about.

PREVENTING INJURY FROM FALLS

You may be at risk of falling while you are ill or after surgery. You may feel weak or unsteady due to your illness, procedures or the medicines you are taking.

At MUSC we have a fall prevention program called ON FIRM GROUND. We will work with you and your family to keep you safe from falling.



How we can work together to prevent falls:

- Your nurse will ask you questions to help determine if you are at a high risk of falling. Answer honestly.
- A yellow bracelet and On FIRM Ground signage will help your care team know if you are at risk of falling.
- Call for assistance. Do not get out of bed or the chair alone.
- Keep the nurse call bell and personal items within your reach.
- Your bed will be in low position and side rails will be up.
- Bed or chair alarms will be on to let staff know if you are getting up from bed or a chair.
- We will ask you if you need to use the bathroom. Staff may stay with you in the bathroom to help protect you from a fall.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes that fit well or non-skid footwear supplied by the hospital when getting out of bed to walk.
- Keep your room and walkways clear of clutter.
- Sit up with your feet on the floor for one minute before standing.
- Make sure you have plenty of lighting so you can see clearly where to walk. Use night lights in your bathroom or bedroom.
- Wear clothing of proper length.
- Notify staff about spills or unsafe conditions.
- You and your family will be educated about your fall risk and how some of your medicines may increase your risk of falling. Falls can be a concern for people at home. If you fall, you may be hurt. You may even have to return to the hospital. Small changes at home can help you avoid a fall.

For more information ask your nurse for information on protecting yourself or loved one from falls at home.

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Because you may be confined to a bed for a prolonged period of time while in the hospital, there is a risk that you may develop a condition known as a Deep Vein Thrombosis or DVT. DVT is a blood clot that usually forms in the veins of your calf or thigh. A clot can develop when blood has the opportunity to slow down and pool. This normally occurs when a person is immobile for a long period of time or has recently had surgery. These clots then have the ability to become deadly when they break off and travel through your bloodstream and to your lungs. When this occurs it is known as a pulmonary embolism or PE. We do not want to alarm you; it is just very important that we all do our best to prevent these complications for you.

Our doctors and hospital staff are aware of the risks of developing DVT and have several options to help reduce this risk. One treatment is injections such as Heparin, Lovenox or Arixtra to help to thin the blood. Talk with your healthcare team to see when you can walk safely. You may also be asked to wear devices on your legs or feet while you are in the hospital to pump the blood through the legs, which in turn helps prevent pooling of blood. Other preventative measures include maintaining adequate hydration, performing range of motion exercises, and wearing compression stockings. Prevention is the key to stopping a DVT before it starts. If you have any questions or concerns about developing a DVT please contact your doctor or nurse.

PAIN MANAGEMENT

Pain management is an important part of your care and you should expect information about pain and pain treatment. Our goal is to make you as comfortable as possible while you are a patient.

There are many different kinds of pain. Pain can be caused by injury, illness, or surgery. Treating pain is the responsibility of your doctor, nurse and other caregivers. You can help them by asking questions and finding out more about how to relieve your pain. For more information, ask your nurse for the "Speak Up: What You Should Know About Pain Management" brochure.



FOOD AND NUTRITION

Eating the right food is important for your recovery.

- Be sure you know what kinds of food your doctor has ordered for you.
- If you have questions about your diet, ask to speak to a registered dietician.
- Some foods you eat may cause some of your medicines to not work as well.

Please ask your nurse about this. For more information ask your nurse for the Your Special Diet Explained Handout.

INFECTION PREVENTION

Germs that cause infections can be spread in a number of ways. The most common way is through hands. Hand washing removes germs from the hands and helps protect patients from infections. Hand washing is the single most important procedure to prevent the spread of infection.

Ways you can help prevent infection:

- Ask anyone who touches you whether he/she has washed his/her hands or used the hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer dispensers are located throughout the hospital, including your room.
- Wash your hands and ask family or visitors to wash their hands each time they enter and leave your room, after eating or using the bathroom.
- Know that any hospital staff member, who contacts your blood or other body fluids, should wear gloves.

Isolation precautions – are put in place for some patients when your caregivers have determined there may be a risk of spreading germs to other patients or caregivers. A card will be placed on your door to let others know to take special steps to prevent them from spreading or getting an infection. Please ask visitors and staff to follow the directions on the isolation door card. If the sign says:

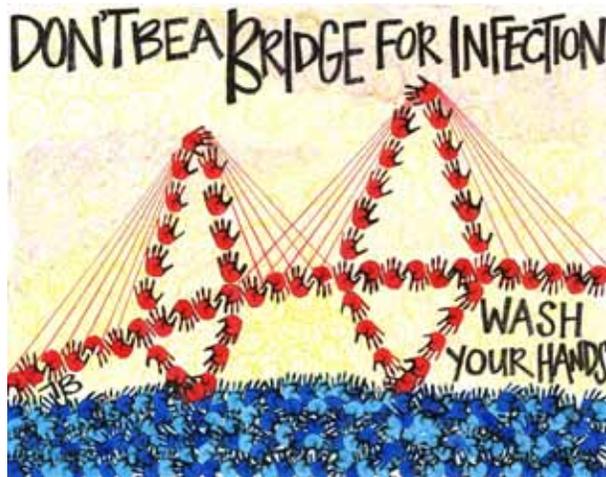
- Contact Precautions -visitors and care givers will need to put on a gown and gloves.
- Droplet or Airborne Precautions- visitors and care givers will need to wear a mask. Ask your nurse if you have questions.

Other important steps to take to prevent the spread of germs:

- Ask any visitor who is sick or has an infection, even a cold, not to visit you. This may help you and other patients get well faster.
- Follow all instructions for the care of tubes and catheters.
- You should cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or cough/sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- Discard any used tissues into a trash can and wash your hands right away with soap and water or the hand sanitizer.

Hospital acquired infections (HAI) are a concern for both patients and hospital staff. Some of the most serious hospital acquired infections are:

- Central Line (special line placed in a vein) Associated Blood Stream Infection (CLABSI)
- Surgical Site Infection
- Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infection (CAUTI)



We will provide more information to you if you should have a central line placed or have surgery. Hand washing is the best way to stop the spread of germs that cause any infection. We also will take special care to:

- Give you antibiotics before your surgery begins to help fight infection.
- Remove some of your hair (if required) using electric clippers at the site of your surgery just before the start of the procedure.
- Clean your skin with a germ-killing cleanser before putting in a line or before your skin is cut in surgery.
- Wear a mask, cap, sterile gown, and/or sterile gloves in the operating room, when placing your central line or changing your surgical or central line dressings.
- Clean the central line opening (or “hub”) with a germ-killing cleanser before using it to draw blood or give you medicine.
- Decide each day if you continue to need the central line.
- Place a urinary catheter when necessary and remove it as soon as possible.
- Take measures to prevent urinary tract infection, such as keeping the urine bag below the level of the bladder.

The hospital staff can provide you with more information about the prevention of these hospital acquired infections. Ask a staff member if you would like to learn more.

MULTI-DRUG RESISTANT ORGANISMS

Hospitals pay close attention to certain bacteria or germs that you may come in contact with during your hospital stay. MUSC has a program in place for adult patients and some pediatric patients to check for these bacteria. We will provide more information to you if you are found to carry or are infected with a multi-drug resistant organism.

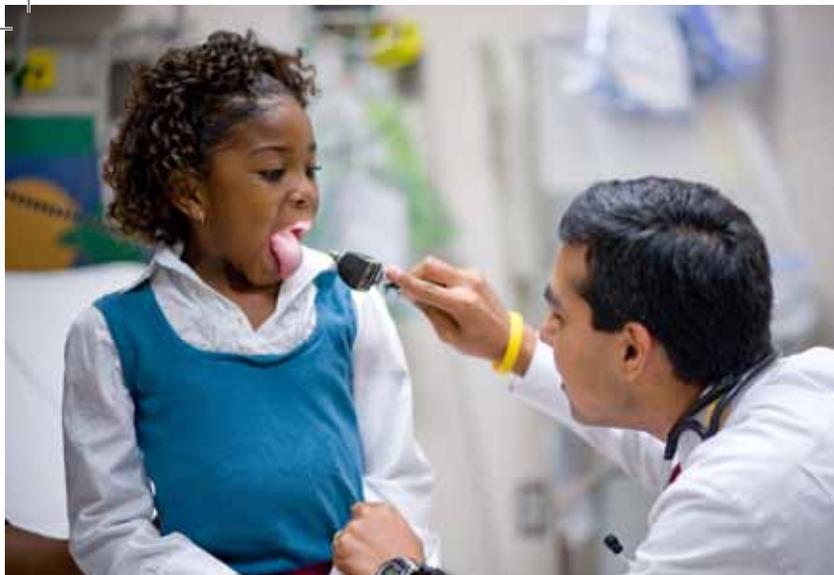
- MUSC takes special steps to prevent the spread of bacteria that are not killed with common antibiotics because it is harder to treat these infections if they do happen. Often these bacteria are found in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract or on surfaces in your room. They can cause various infections such as urinary tract infections (UTI) and pneumonia.
- To prevent the spread of these germs, your caregivers will use gowns and gloves during care and wash their hands before and after providing care for you.

The most common resistant bacteria are:

- Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) These bacteria normally live on the skin and in the nose. MRSA usually does not cause you to be sick. When you are sick, it may cause you to have a serious infection. MRSA is the single most common cause of hospital-associated infections.
- Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE) These bacteria are found in the GI tract and are considered part of the ‘normal flora’ or part of the bacteria normally living in your body. These bacteria most often cause Urinary Tract Infection, but can also cause infections of the blood and other parts of the body.
- Clostridium Difficile (C Diff) These bacteria are the most common cause of infectious diarrhea in hospitalized patients. You may have C Diff in your GI tract with no symptoms. While in the hospital some of the treatments or antibiotics you receive may change the levels of bacteria that are normally found in the intestines or bowel. C diff may grow in your GI tract and produce toxins that cause infectious diarrhea.

What else does MUSC do to prevent the spread of these bacteria?

- MUSC takes thorough steps to screen for antibiotic resistant bacteria.
- The hospital has a team of infection prevention and control specialists and doctors who work with staff to prevent the spread of infection.



- MUSC uses specific cleaning processes for your room and any equipment used by you during your stay.
- Your doctor may perform tests, such as cultures, if you show any signs of an infection. The culture will help to select the best antibiotic for you.

SURGERY AND TESTS

You are an important member of your care team. Before any surgery, tests or treatments we encourage you to:

- Talk to your doctor about the surgery or treatment. Ask what will be done.
- If you are having surgery, ask where it will be done and the name of the surgeon.
- Talk with your surgeon about his/her experiences with the kind of surgery you are going to have.
- On the day of the surgery, your doctor or a member of the healthcare team will mark the part of your body where the surgery will happen.
- If you are having a treatment or test, ask the person giving the test or treatment which part of your body will be involved.

If you are having a treatment or exam:

- Ask the person giving the treatment which part of your body will be treated.

FLU AND PNEUMONIA

Getting pneumonia or the flu can be very serious. MUSC offers the flu and pneumonia vaccines to eligible patients. The pneumonia vaccine is available year round and the flu vaccine is available during each flu season. BE SURE to ask your doctor or nurse about receiving the vaccines before you are discharged!

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

On rare occasions, you may need to be restrained and/or secluded.

- You and your family will be asked to identify possible alternatives to the use of seclusion or restraint.
- We use seclusion or restraint only as a last resort. We try other things first. We may move you closer to the nurses' station or ask family members to stay with you.
- You may refuse to have your family members notified about being restrained or secluded.
- Matches and lighters should be kept away from anyone who is restrained.

SMOKING

MUSC is a smoke free environment. Do not smoke in the hospital or any other campus buildings. Ask your nurse if you would like information about quitting.

SECURITY IN THE HOSPITAL

We have taken steps to assure your security, your child's security and the security of your newborn baby.

You and your family, or visitors are responsible for:

- Reporting any suspicious or unusual behavior to your nurse.
- Making sure all staff who come in contact with you and/or your baby wear a picture ID.
- Supervising or controlling minor children who may be visiting you.
- Following the nurse's instructions for new mothers.
- Making sure your baby is never left alone even for a few seconds.
- All newborn babies admitted as patients must be transported in a bassinet.



MEDICAL EMERGENCY TEAM

The Medical Emergency Team is a special team of intensive care unit (ICU) doctors, nurses and respiratory therapists that respond to patients in the medical center who suddenly need ICU care. The team is not called to help patients in intensive care units (ICU's) as these patients are already receiving this level of care. This team may be called by your doctor or nurse to help in your treatment. When the team arrives, you may notice a lot of activity. This is normal. After they have assessed the situation, team members will talk to you and your family. You may stay in your room or be taken to the ICU.

You or your family may also call the Medical Emergency Team, if there is a change in your condition that seems serious or worries you. Before you call the team, please talk with your nurse or doctor. If you feel the nurse or doctor does not understand your concern, you may call the Hospital Operator at 792-8080 and ask for the Medical Emergency Team. Please give your name and relationship to the patient, the patient's name, room number and your concern. The Medical Emergency Team will then be sent to your bedside.

YOUR DISCHARGE HOME

Remember, you are an essential part of your health care team. Be sure that your hospital doctor has the name of all your other doctors. When you are discharged your doctor will:

- Send a summary of your hospital care and condition to your regular doctors.
- A follow-up appointment with your regular doctor or the doctor who cared for you while you were in the hospital may be needed. If we are not able to make an appointment for you before discharge, a notice will be sent to your doctor's office to contact you.
- Your health care team will assess your discharge needs. Nurses can help with ordering equipment for home and coordinate any healthcare needs you may have after discharge.
- It is important to know that most patients are not completely healed when they are discharged from the hospital. Take time to recover at home and follow up with the care your doctor recommends after you leave the hospital.
- Remember to ask your nurse for information on protecting yourself or your loved one if you are concerned about falls at home.

FOLLOW-UP CARE IN THE MUSC OUTPATIENT CLINICS

In order to provide continuity of care after your discharge from the hospital, your doctor may set up an appointment for you in one of the MUSC outpatient clinics. The same doctors who provide care in the hospital also see patients in the outpatient clinics. You may be given an appointment with the same doctor who took care of you in the hospital, or depending on your follow-up needs, with another doctor. The doctor, nurses and staff in the outpatient clinics provide excellent care to our patients. To learn more about the comprehensive services offered throughout the MUSC Health network or to make an appointment, please visit www.muschealth.com or call 843-792-1414.

If you are scheduled for a follow-up appointment in one of the MUSC outpatient clinics, please remember to come early and bring the following: your photo identification, your insurance cards, your co-pay, your hospital discharge paperwork, as well as all the medicines you are currently taking (in the original containers).



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