Partners in quality healthcare:  
A guide for patients and their families
When seeking medical attention, patients and families are asked to put their trust in doctors, nurses, technologists and other health professionals involved in a patient’s care. At Baptist Health, we work hard to ensure that we earn that trust by exceeding your expectations. We want you to feel safe and to have confidence in the quality of our medical services. To help us achieve that goal, we want patients and families to be active, involved and informed healthcare team participants.

This brochure is a guide to help patients and family members participate in the decisions that affect a patient’s health and well-being.

Patient- and Family-Centered Care

Research shows that the quality of medical care improves when patients and families have input into the planning, delivery and evaluation of healthcare services. Baptist Health embraces this philosophy of patient- and family-centered care. The core concepts of this philosophy include:

- **Dignity and respect** — Listening to and honoring patient and family values, beliefs, cultural backgrounds and choices.
- **Information sharing** — Offering timely, accurate and complete information to patients and families.
- **Participation** — Encouraging patients and families to take part in care and decision making.
- **Collaboration** — Seeking the opinions of patients and families.

We encourage all patients and their loved ones to be active partners in their healthcare. Remember to speak up about any concerns or questions that you may have.

Always Remember to Be SAFE.

**Safety first** — Know about all your allergies, medications and health history, and share that with healthcare providers.

**Ask, ask, ask** — Know who, what, when, where and why about any care and treatment. Always ask if something doesn’t seem right. Key questions might include:
- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do?
- Why is it important for me to do this?

**Feel respected** — Everyone has a right to be treated with respect, dignity and confidentiality. Always remember that your opinion matters.

**Educate** — Learn all you can about the medical condition, treatment options and your caregivers’ qualifications.
- Make sure you understand the words used by your caregivers.
- Be sure to ask any questions before signing any forms.
- Write down important facts your doctor tells you.
- Ask a trusted friend or family member to be your advocate.
Help for Managing a Hospital Stay

**Call devices** — Hospital beds and bathrooms are equipped with call devices; always keep them within reach to call for help.

**Code HELP** — Ask the nurse about Code HELP. It’s a way to call for immediate medical assistance if the patient’s condition is quickly worsening and help is not readily available.

**Hand washing** — Staff members take many steps to reduce the risk of patients developing an infection during their hospital stay. You can help protect yourself by asking anyone entering your room — doctors, nurses, family, friends, whoever — to wash their hands before touching you. Most patient rooms have soap dispensers at the sink, as well as an alcohol-based hand rinse that cleans hands without water.

**Identification** — Expect everyone involved in your care to introduce themselves by name and to wear an identification badge. For your safety, your nurses, doctors and other caregivers will ask you to state your name and date of birth before giving any medication or treatment. They will match what you tell them with the information on your wristband identification bracelet to make sure they have the correct patient for care and treatment.

**Invasive lines and tubes** — Patients who are confused because of illness, injury, unfamiliar settings, effects of medication or other reasons may try to pull out intravenous (IV) lines or other tubes. To help with this, the nursing staff will:

- Explain what is happening.
- Work with the family and patient to help make the patient more comfortable; this may mean asking a family member to stay with the patient.
- Assist with visits to the bathroom.
- Cover tubes and bandages.

Restraints are used only when other methods have failed and when necessary to prevent patient injury. These devices will be used only after consulting with a supervising nurse and physician, and discussing with the family.

**Medication safety** — Make sure to ask questions about medications, such as what the medication does, possible side effects and any other concern. Also:

- Always bring a complete, updated list of all your medications for any visit to the doctor, hospital or any other healthcare provider. Even better, bring the containers. Include prescription drugs; birth control pills and hormones; over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, antacids, laxatives, eye drops and cough medicine; and herbal supplements, vitamins, minerals, diet pills and dietary supplements.
- Include information about how each medication is taken.
- While in the hospital, patients should not take medications from home of any kind.
- Report any allergies or adverse reactions.
- Give a family member or friend a current copy of your list of medications. (Ask your nurse for a Health Passport from Baptist Health.)
- Call your primary care doctor about any problems with your medications.

**Nurse rounding** — Nurses make frequent visits to check on patients. At the end of a nurse’s shift, important information about each patient’s care and condition is shared with the oncoming nurse. This nursing report takes place at the patient’s bedside. We encourage you to participate and have someone stay with you during the report. However, for your privacy, the nurses will
Tobacco-free campus — All Baptist Health campuses are tobacco-free; no smoking or tobacco use is allowed inside the buildings or on the grounds. Talk to the nurse or doctor for help managing nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

In Closing

It’s important that patients and families participate as much as possible during each step of a patient’s care. Studies show that being informed and involved leads to more confident decision making and improves patient outcomes. If you have suggestions for enhancing patient safety and quality care, please contact the office of Patient Safety Partnership at 786-596-1630.

For more information, call the Patient Safety Officer at these locations:

- Baptist/Baptist Children’s Hospitals . . . . . . . 786-596-6526
- Doctors Hospital . . . . . . . . . . 786-308-3181
- Homestead Hospital . . . . . . . . . . 786-243-8546
- Mariners Hospital . . . . . . . . . . 305-434-1623
- South Miami Hospital . . . . . . . . . . 786-662-5018
- West Kendall Baptist Hospital . . . . . . 786-467-2090
- Baptist Outpatient Services . . . . . . . . 786-596-4043

Tips for Managing Pain

Managing pain is an important part of treatment. Pain makes it hard for the body to heal. Also, pain interferes with the ability to participate in activities. Patients have a right to adequate pain management. Patient and family opinions about how to manage pain are important. In order for nurses and doctors to help control a patient’s pain, they need to know the following:

- Where the pain is located.
- Whether the pain is felt all the time or just some of the time.
- What it feels like.
- How bad it feels on a 0-10 scale (0 — no pain, 10 — worst possible pain).
- When the pain started.
- What makes the pain feel better and what makes it worse.
- What are possible reasons for the pain.
- What effect the pain has on the patient’s life (e.g., sleep, appetite, work).
- Anything else the health providers should know about the pain.

Although medications are frequently used to treat pain, there are other pain-reducing methods, such as massage, relaxation techniques and application of heat or cold. Check with the doctor, nurse, social worker, chaplain and/or physical therapist for suggestions that may help.