

Patient Safety Goals

- ◆ Provide a safe environment for patients, visitors, and staff.
- ◆ Prevent injuries; manage injuries that do occur so as to minimize negative consequences.
- ◆ Enhance performance through:
 - Comprehensive monitoring
 - Standardized reporting
 - Thorough analysis of untoward events
- ◆ Establish a “culture of safety” throughout the clinic.

Learn about your medical condition, diagnosis, and treatment by asking your health care professionals.

Do not be afraid to ask questions!
Ask about your care!

Patient Safety Links

Interesting Websites for you to explore:

Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Safety Center

www.afip.org/Departments/Psc/Index.html.

Links to other sources

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

www.AHRQ.gov

Medical Errors and Patient Safety Section

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations:

www.JCAHO.org

Full subscriptions to newsletters and news releases

National Patient Safety Foundation

www.NPSF.org

Information on Patient Safety Programs

NAVAL MEDICAL CLINIC, QUANTICO



PATIENT SAFETY

Tips To Make Your Health Care As Safe As Possible

Q. What can you do?

A. Be involved in your health care.

MEDICINES

- ◆ Make sure that all of your doctors know everything you are taking. This includes prescription, over-the-counter medicines, and dietary supplements such as vitamins and herbs. Keep a list of your current medications with you at all times.
- ◆ Make sure your doctor knows about any allergies and adverse reactions you have had to medicines or foods.
- ◆ When your doctor writes you a prescription, make sure **you** can read it! If you can't read it, your pharmacist might not be able to either!
- ◆ When you pick up your medicine from the pharmacy, ask: "Is this the medicine that my doctor prescribed?" Confirm with pharmacist of its intended use. Also, ask the pharmacist to open the bottle and show you the medication. Compare it with what your doctor wrote for you. Check to see if there are any differences.
- ◆ If you have any questions about the directions on your medicine labels, ask. Medicine labels can be hard to understand.
- ◆ Ask for written information about the side effects that your medicine could cause and which ones to worry about. Medicines may have many minor side effects. You need to know what is serious. If you know what might happen, you will be better prepared if it does. Find out what to do if medication is not working.

CLINIC

- ◆ If you have a choice, choose a facility that has experience with the treatment you need. Research shows that patients tend to have better results when they are treated in facilities that have experience with their condition.
- ◆ Consider asking all healthcare workers who have direct contact with you whether they have washed their hands. Hand washing is an important way to prevent the spread of infections in hospitals.
- ◆ Whenever you are about to receive any medications or treatments, always ask what they are giving you and what it is for. Ask your health care professional to check to be sure that you are the patient who is supposed to receive the treatment and/or medication. Asking questions helps you understand your medications and treatment and makes you part of the team.
- ◆ If you are having a procedure, make sure that you and your doctor all agree and are clear on exactly what will be done. Doing procedures on the wrong site is rare, but even once is too often.



GENERAL INFORMATION

- ◆ **SPEAK UP** if you have questions or concerns. You have a right to question anyone who is involved with your care.
- ◆ Make sure that someone, such as your personal doctor, is in charge of your care. You need to know who is in charge and who will coordinate all your care.
- ◆ If you have a test, don't assume that "no news is good news". Ask about the results.
- ◆ Ask a reliable family member or friend to be there with you and to be your advocate. Even if you think you don't need help now, you might need it later.
- ◆ Learn about your condition and treatments by asking your doctor and nurse and by using other reliable sources. Treatment recommendations based on the latest scientific evidence are available from the: *National Guidelines Clearinghouse* at www.guidelines.gov

