

Staying Safe:

Going to Hospital

Easy Read





This document was written by the [Health Care Consumers Association](#).



We speak up for people in the ACT.
We work on health care issues.



This guide tells you how to get ready for hospital.



We also have guides for Staying Safe:

- In Hospital
- At Home.

Before Coming to Hospital



Hospital staff will contact you to ask questions.



They might:

- Call your phone
- Send a link to a form
- Ask you to come to the **pre-admission clinic** at the hospital.



Pre-admission clinic is where you see staff at the hospital before your stay.

They will do some health checks and make sure you have the right information.



They will ask for your information including:

- Your name
- Phone number
- Date of birth



You will be asked about:

- **Medical history**

Staff will need to know the facts about your health now and in the past.

- **Symptoms**

Staff will ask about the signs of an illness or health problem.



- **Medications**

Staff need to know about the things you take to feel better.

They might be pills, creams or injections.



They might be from your doctor or your **pharmacist**.

A pharmacist is a person who sells medicines and helps you take them safely.



- **Allergies**

Staff need to know if you have any allergies.

An allergy is when your body reacts badly to something that is usually safe.

For example, parts of your body might itch, swell or go red.



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Hospital staff will ask you:



- If you have a special diet



- What you need help with.



Staff will tell you if you need to:

- Have a test



- **Fast**

This is when you do not eat or drink before coming to hospital.



You can also ask them any questions you have.

If You Do Not Understand



You can get help if you do not understand something.



Someone can come with you:

- A friend
- A family member
- A support worker.



You can ask hospital staff for:

- A picture of the information
- Information in Easy Read



- A free interpreter
- Information in your own language.

The National Relay Service



The National Relay Service helps people who:

- Are Deaf
- Find it hard to hear

Find it hard to speak.



A **social worker** can help you.

A social worker gives you extra support and explains information.



An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer can help First Nations people.

They give support and explain information.

Giving Consent



Consent is when you say yes to something.

You or your **decision-maker** can choose to say yes or no to treatment in hospital.

A decision-maker is a person who makes decisions for you if you cannot.

Informed consent is important.



This means that you are given all the information you need to make the best decision.



You might need to sign a form to give consent.



You should be a part of decisions about your treatment and care.

Packing List for Hospital



This list gives suggestions for what to pack.

You can decide what to pack.

You can also ask the hospital what to bring.



1. Test results

- X-rays
- Scans

2. Health Care Cards



- Medicare cards
- Health care card
- DVA Card
- Private Health Insurance Card

3. Admission Forms

4. Your medications



- Pills
- Creams
- Injections

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5. Your aids

- Glasses
- Hearing aids
- Walker



6. Your medical equipment

- Glucose monitor
- CPAP machine
- _____

7. Clothes (if you are staying overnight)



- Footwear or slippers
- Pyjamas
- Dressing gown
- A warm jacket that opens in the front
- A set of everyday clothes



8. Things you use everyday

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Hairbrush or comb
- Deodorant



9. Things to do while waiting

- Books or magazines
- Your phone or laptop
- Charging cables for devices

More information about packing



The hospital can be noisy.

You can bring ear plugs or ask staff for them.

You can wear headphones.



If you are having a baby you might need other things.

Ask the hospital for their list.



Hospitals are public places.

Leave expensive things that you don't need at home.

Things To Do Before Going To Hospital

If Someone Cares For You At Home:



Ask them to come to the hospital with you.



Tell them about your treatments in hospital.



Staff can also tell them about your care and treatment.

If You Are A Smoker:



You must not smoke inside or outside the hospital.

It is a good idea to quit smoking before hospital.

If you cannot quit you will need a plan.



Talk to your doctor.

If You Live Alone



Make your house safer by:

- Cancelling deliveries
- Setting a timer that turns your lights on and off.



Find someone, like safe neighbours, to

- Collect your mail
- Watch your house
- Look after your pets
- Look after your plants.



Get ready for when you come home:

- Have stored food
- Organise for people to help you
- Put away things you might trip on.



See our booklet *Staying Safe – At Home* for more information about when you come home.

Transport To And From The Hospital



Do not drive yourself.



You could book a taxi or an Uber.



You could ask someone to drive you:

- A friend
- A family member
- A support worker

Parking At The Hospital



Sometimes parking at the hospital can be a long walk.

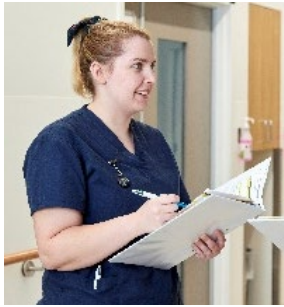
The hospital will have free pick up and drop off services.



There is a small bus which will drive you from the parking to the hospital entry.

You can ask to be dropped off or picked up there.

Your Medical Records



Hospital staff write notes in your medical record.



Your medical record has information about:

- Your illnesses or conditions
- Tests or treatments you have had
- Which doctors you saw.



Your medical record is private.

This means they will not share your record with anyone.



Staff will only read your medical record if they are giving you treatment.

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You can ask to see your medical record.

You might need to fill out a form first.



If you cannot see your record, staff need to explain why not.

Word list

Pre-admission clinic: This where you see staff at the hospital before you are admitted. They will do some health checks and make sure you have the right information.

Medical history: This is the facts about your health now and in the past.

Symptoms: Symptoms are signs of an illness or health problem that you can see or feel.

Medications: This includes things you take to feel better. They might be pills, creams or injections. They might be from your doctor or your pharmacist.

Pharmacist: A pharmacist is a person who sells medicines and helps you take them safely.

Allergies: An allergy is when your body reacts badly to something that is usually safe.

Fast: This is when you do not eat or drink before coming to hospital.

Decision-maker: A decision-maker is a person who makes decisions for you if you cannot.

Informed consent: This means that you are given all the information you need to make the best decision.

For more information you can:



Read the [other Staying Safe guides](#) on our website.



Read our [other resources on health care](#).



Read information about staying at:

- [The Canberra Hospital](#)
- [North Canberra Hospital](#)
- [University of Canberra Hospital](#)

**Our next booklet is called
Staying Safe – in Hospital.**

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Easy Read document written by Jacque Gibb and Karen Hedley from The Easy Read Toolbox for HCCA based on their document.