



Partners in Patient Safety: Working together to keep you and your baby safe at BC Women's Hospital

www.bcwomens.ca

At BC Women's, our goal is to ensure safe, high quality care. We encourage you to become part of the team and take an active role in your care. Here's how you can help:

1. Identify yourself

- ▶ You need to wear an identification band at all times. Staff will check it before all procedures and medications.
- ▶ Check to see that all the information on the identification bands is correct.

2. Share information with us

- ▶ Tell us about your health and any conditions you have, including allergies to food, medications or latex; symptoms of colds or flu, diarrhea, rashes or other signs and symptoms of infection.
- ▶ Give us a complete list of what you are taking at home, including over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or acetaminophen, vitamins, herbs or natural supplements. In order to safely treat you in the hospital, it is important that the doctor or midwife knows what medications you are taking.
- ▶ Let us know if you want your visit/admission to the hospital kept private for safety reasons.

3. Get the most from your medications

- ▶ Make sure you have correct identification and allergy bracelets on, so that the nurse can check them before giving medications.
- ▶ Ask the nurse for the names of the medications being given to you and your baby, and what they are used for.

- ▶ If you notice that a medication looks different from what you were given before, ask the nurse to check the medication and to explain why it has changed.
- ▶ If you have a reaction to any medication given, tell the nurse or doctor or midwife right away.
- ▶ Do not take any medications, vitamins or remedies while in the hospital without asking your doctor, midwife or nurse.

4. Ask questions

- ▶ Speak up if you don't understand something about your care. It's your body and your right to know.
- ▶ Write down your questions so you don't forget them.
- ▶ Ask for an interpreter if you are deaf or hearing-impaired or if English is not your first language.
- ▶ Feel free to bring a family member or friend with you to BC Women's Hospital to provide support.

5. Help stop the spread of germs!

Germs and healthcare-associated infections (infections that patients can get in healthcare settings while receiving treatment for other conditions) can be prevented. Here's how you can help stop the spread of germs!

- ▶ The best way to prevent infection is by cleaning your hands. Use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizers should only be used if soap and water is not available since alcohol-based sanitizers do not kill all germs.

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- ▶ Cover your mouth or nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue into a garbage can and then clean your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not your hand.
- ▶ Tell your healthcare provider about any new symptoms, such as diarrhea, fever, or rash as soon as possible.
- ▶ Take antibiotics only if your healthcare provider prescribes them to you and take them exactly as directed.
- ▶ Ask your visitors if they have cleaned their hands. If a visitor has a cold or other contagious illness, ask them not to visit the hospital.
- ▶ It's okay to ask nurses, doctors or other health care providers if they have cleaned their hands before and after they care for you.

6. Avoid a fall

You may feel weak the first few times you get out of bed.

- ▶ Make sure you can reach the call bell and call for help if you need it.
- ▶ Make sure you wear non-skid slippers.
- ▶ Let us know if you have a history of falling.

7. Avoid risk of blood clots

- ▶ Your care provider will do a review of any risks you might have for blood clots. If you do have risks, you will wear anti-embolism stockings until you are up and moving around, and you will be given a daily medication to prevent clots, until you go home.

8. If you are caring for your baby in hospital

- ▶ Place your baby to sleep on his or her back unless otherwise instructed.
- ▶ Dress your baby in a one piece sleep suit and cover with a blanket leaving your baby's arms free - do not tightly bundle your baby

- ▶ Keep the bassinet free of extra blankets, towels and toys. Never cover your baby's face.
- ▶ Place your baby in the bassinet when you are moving outside of your room.
- ▶ Return your baby to the bassinet before you get tired and fall asleep.
- ▶ Your baby needs to wear an identification band at all times. Staff will check it before all procedures and medications.
- ▶ Always clean your hands before and after touching your baby and before and after you leave your room.
- ▶ It's okay to ask nurses, doctors or other health care providers if they have cleaned their hands before and after they care for your baby.

9. When you go home

Know what to do after you get home. Ask for written information on medications, treatments and follow-up appointments.

10. Let us know when there are problems

- ▶ If you have any concerns about your care, discuss them with the nurse, doctor or midwife right away. This helps us give the best and safest care to you and your family.
- ▶ If you feel that your problem has not been resolved, contact:

Patient Care Quality Office



Toll free number 1-888-875-3256

Website www.phsa.ca/PatientCareOffice

Fax 604-875-3813

Address: 4th Floor, Room F404,
4500 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC
V6H3N1

Remember: It's Good to Ask!

Developed by the health care professionals of the Department of Quality, Safety & Outcome Improvement with help from the Department of Learning & Development, BC Women's Hospital, Vancouver, BC.