

Baystate Medical Practices

Patient Information

Educational Materials

We feel it is important for you and your family to understand as much as possible about your health problems. We have educational materials available for your use at our office.

Emergency Services

- Should an urgent illness or an unexpected event occur, you should call your primary care physician.
- In life threatening emergencies, always go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Have the physician on duty notify our office.

Open Communication with Your Physicians

- If there is something that we have not covered, please let us know.
- Your suggestions and comments about our practice are welcome.
- Finally, good communication between you and your doctor is vital. If you have questions, write them down and bring them with you at the time of your visit. Please also bring your medications to each office visit. If you do not understand instructions or anything about your health condition, or if new problems or questions come up, please let us know. We try to provide you with the best medical care, and making sure you understand will help us succeed.

Prescriptions and Refills

- We encourage you not only to check your prescriptions before coming in for a visit with your provider, but actually to bring the medications in to be reviewed. If you need a renewal, the provider will do it at that time.
- When medication is prescribed for you, you are responsible for taking it as directed. Please let your provider know about any side effects or problems immediately. It is equally important that you let your provider know about any other medications you may be taking, either prescription or over-the-counter, to avoid any potentially dangerous interactions.
- When you call our office for a prescription renewal, please provide our office staff with:
 - Your medical provider's name;
 - The name and phone number of the pharmacy;
 - The name and dosage of the medication; and

- The amount requested in each bottle.
- This information will be passed on to your provider. Please try to call several days (72 hours) before your medication runs out. Since providers do not routinely have access to your medical record on evenings and weekends, prescriptions can only be refilled during our regular office hours.

Referrals

- If your insurance requires a referral for specialized treatment, please let our staff know at the time you book the appointment.
- If you call our office for a referral, please provide the following information:
 - Your home address
 - Date of birth
 - Health plan
 - Name of physician
 - Location of physician
 - Date of appointment
 - Medical reason.
- We will pass the information to your physician who will review and address your request. Please allow our office at least one week to process your referral, unless the specialist appointment is urgent.

Ten Ways to Maximize Your Health Safety

- Your doctors, your nurses, and other members of your health care team are committed to providing safe and excellent care.
- We encourage you to be involved in your care. A family member or friend may want to help you. That person is called your health care advocate.
- Here are ten ways that you and your health care advocate can make your health care experience safer.
 1. Ask questions about your illness or disease. Ask again if you don't understand the answers. Communicating with you is part of your doctor's and nurse's job. Keep a pad and pen at your bedside to write down questions and answers.
 2. Ask the names of the medications you are taking and what they are for. Medication errors happen more often than any other type of medical error. Use this medication safety checklist. Write down the answers.
 - What medications am I taking?
 - What do they look like?
 - How much am I getting and how often?
 - Are there side effects?
 - Does my medication interact with foods or other medications?
 3. Ask about safety. If you are having surgery, ask the doctor to mark the area so you can be sure there is no confusion. Ask what to expect after surgery and how you should feel.

4. Ask the names of the doctors and nurses treating you. Members of your health care team will introduce themselves to you. Everyone who works in the hospital also wears an ID badge. Write down the names of your doctors and nurses so you don't have to worry about forgetting. Some even have business cards they can share with you.
5. Tell your doctor or nurse if something doesn't seem right. You know better than anyone else if something seems odd, new, or different. Instead of worrying about it, ask for clarification.
6. Tell your doctor or nurse if you think they have confused you with another patient. If you get called by the wrong name or if what they are saying doesn't sound familiar, tell them.
7. Tell your doctor or nurse if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication or treatment. You may recognize your medications by their name, shape, and color. If medication doesn't look familiar, ask your doctor or nurse before taking it. Also, if you are not familiar with a certain treatment or test, ask what it is for and be sure it is for you.
8. Tell your doctor and nurse about medication allergies you have had in the past. Tell them what other medications you are taking, including vitamins and alternative or herbal therapies.
9. Tell your doctor or nurse who may be helping you make health care decisions. Introduce this person to your doctor and nurse and explain how he or she is helping you.
10. Before you leave the hospital, ask your doctor or nurse about follow-up care. Use this follow-up safety checklist.
 - What medications do I take and how often?
 - What appointments do I have or do I need to make?
 - What special things do I have to know about caring for myself?
 - What symptoms should I be looking for?
 - The more people looking out for your health and safety, the better off you will be. Please help us give you and your family the best possible care. Don't be afraid to speak up. We welcome your questions.