

HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS

Hospital can prove to be a very stressful time for everyone, it is a scary, an unknown environment. It can be isolating and put excessive strain on families and relationships that may already be strained. It helps to be prepared to ease stress and overwhelm. Here are just a few tips to make your stay in hospital as comfortable and stress free as possible:

✓	What to bring and how to prepare
	<p>SHARE: Tell family/friends that you are going in to the hospital. Be clear on the help you would appreciate. People want to help but often don't know how. Prepare a list of things that help. ie dinners, care of children/animals, housework, washing, visiting, meals, etc.</p>
	<p>COMFORT: A sense of 'home' in the hospital helps significantly. ie. pillow, blanket/quilt, teddy.</p>
	<p>MEDICINES LIST: You will be asked multiple times about current medications. Take multiple copies of your list to hand out (saves you from having to remember). Take your folder of medical information.</p>
	<p>YOUR MEDICAL EQUIPMENT: Check with your doctor or nurse if there are any medications or extras you need to bring from home to the hospital ie puffers/machines/devices that aid therapy.</p>
	<p>QUESTIONS: Have prepared any questions you would like answered (you can use the 'questions chart' I have prepared as a start. It is difficult to remember this type of thing when under stress.</p>
	<p>FOOD/BEVERAGES: Take food/snacks/tea/coffee/beverages. Food is expensive and soon adds up when you are on an extended stay. While food is provided for the patient it is not provided to you.</p>
	<p>OWN CUP: Take your own coffee/tea mug with a sealable lid. Foam cups are not permitted on most wards due to risk of burns.</p>

✓	What to bring and how to prepare
	ACTIVITIES: Take things to do to pass the time ie. Devices (don't forget your chargers and extension cord), board games, puzzles, crafts, movies etc.
	CLOTHING: Clothes for all conditions. Underwear and extra socks the floors are dirty.
	TOILETRIES: Take in your own toiletries and thongs for the shower (watch out for fungal infections).
	SLEEPING AIDS: Ear plugs, eye mask, etc to help sleep in noisy and lit rooms.
	HELP: It is worth mentioning again, accept offers of help ie. Cooking, care of other children/animals, housework, errands to be run, washing, food (hospital is an expensive place to be), company, reading materials. SAY YES PLEASE! This is not weakness and is a win/win situation. Create that list!!
	LISTEN, ASK, REPEAT & BREATHE! Listen to the doctor/specialist (hear what they are saying). Ask any questions you may have. Repeat back what you understand/have heard and check if it is correct. Take deep breaths to keep calm.

NOTE: When you don't agree with the course of action, tensions get high (enter resistance). You are all there for the same reason – to get your loved one better. You are on the same team – remember this. Often there is significant fear and much to process that you can miss what is being said or the intention behind it. LISTEN.

You may be overwhelmed. It is OK to slow down and go over the conversation again. If you are feeling emotional, I would suggest writing your questions or concerns down because a case of the water works can and will pop up out of nowhere making it difficult for you to focus. You can request information to be written down.

Hospital specific information you may like to collect, ask or be aware of:

Question/Information required	Detail
Treating doctor's name	
Consultant in charge name	
<p>Other treating specialist details ie Physiotherapy, Social Work, Psychology</p>	
<p>Ward details: name, location, phone number</p>	
<p>Ward Information Ensure you have a tour of the ward and know who to ask questions, is there a play therapist and ensure you have contact details for the social worker. There should be information provided on the hospital, ward, parking, rights & responsibilities, complaints and access to services.</p>	

Question/Information required	Detail
<p>Current Diagnosis</p> <p>Find out what all of the diagnoses are at time of admission. This means anything new, new complications etc. Write them all down. If you are unsure of anything, please ask for more details.</p>	
<p>Tests</p> <p>Keep a list of all of the tests that have been carried out and when they are due back for follow up. Also ask what tests are planned and record these too. If you are not sure what the tests are for, then ask, you have every right.</p>	<p>Eg Bloods – (specify) vitamin levels, liver function etc / X-Ray/CT / Swabs, samples</p>
<p>Results</p> <p>Record your results if you are unsure of what the results mean, ask – it may not seem relevant at the time but could very well be. If you didn't understand, please know it is okay to ask again and if the doctor minds writing it down OR if you can record their voice so you can write it down later.</p>	
<p>Boundaries</p> <p>Does my child need to remain in the hospital the whole time or can we take him/her out? What are the restrictions and the process for this?</p>	
<p>Activities in the hospital – ie school, starlight room, therapy sessions, communal areas, etc</p>	

Question/Information required	Detail
Entertainment: ie TV, Movies, other & costs	
Parking	
Cafeteria, Café's, other convenience places	
Prayer room, emotional support, other facilities	