

HELP US PROVIDE THE  
**BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH CARE**

DON'T HESITATE TO SPEAK UP

**Avera** 



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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We are dedicated to providing you with the best possible health care. As part of this commitment to quality, we want to make sure you are treated with dignity and respect, and that you are given all the information you need to understand your condition and make decisions about your treatment. These components of care are known as your **Patient Rights**.

In addition, you have **Patient Responsibilities** that can help us work together to ensure you receive quality care. Please take time to read about your Patient Rights and Responsibilities. Your health care professionals are available to answer any questions you may have.

# YOUR RIGHTS AS A PATIENT

## 1. Respectful Care

You have the right to be treated with dignity, concern and respect. You have the right to care that takes into account the social, spiritual and cultural matters that have an effect on your illness. You will be treated with respect regardless of your age, race, ethnicity, national origin, culture, color, religion, language, physical and/or mental status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or your ability to pay.

## 2. Complete Information

You have the right to and are encouraged to obtain from your doctor complete and current information about your diagnosis, treatment and treatment outcomes in words you can understand. You have the right to know the names and roles of the professionals taking care of you. You have the right to know when something goes wrong with your care.

## 3. Care Decisions

You have the right to participate in making decisions about the medical care you receive. Others may be included in care decisions, but you have the right to agree to or refuse treatment as permitted by law and hospital policy, and to know the risks and benefits of your actions. If you refuse a suggested treatment, you will receive other care and services as needed. The hospital will make every attempt to provide you with care based on the seriousness of your illness and the hospital's ability to treat you. You can expect to be told about care alternatives when hospital care is no longer appropriate.

When medically proper and legally permitted, or on your request, you may be transferred to another facility. Upon your request, you have the right to have a family member or representative and your own doctor notified promptly on your admission to the hospital.

## 4. Restraints

You have the right to be treated in the least restricting way that preserves your safety and that of other patients and staff. This means that you will be free from physical restraints and excessive medications unless necessary for the protection of your health or safety.

## 5. Pain Management

You have the right to receive information about pain and pain relief measures. You can expect staff commitment to pain management and health professionals to respond to your reports of pain. You can expect that your reports of pain will be believed and that pain management will be provided.

## 6. Advance Directive

You have the right to have an advance directive such as a living will, health care proxy or durable power of attorney for health care. You have the right to have hospital staff and other health care providers in the hospital act in accordance with these directives. These documents state your wishes about treatment or name someone to decide for you if you are unable to do so.

Avera will honor the intent of your advance directive to the extent permitted by law and hospital policy. Avera, a Catholic Health Care Institution, adopts and adheres to the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services. Advance directives will be honored in every way possible as long as they do not conflict with the religious directives. If the advance directive conflicts with the Ethical and Religious Directive for Catholic Health Care, the hospital will work with you and your family to discuss options of transferring to another facility that would meet the request.

You may inquire with facility personnel if you wish to create, review or revise an advance directive.

In the absence of an advance directive and you are incapacitated or otherwise unable to communicate your wishes, health care decisions may be made by the following members of your family who are available to consent, in the order stated as recognized by state law:

1. Spouse, (if not legally separated)
2. Adult child
3. Parent
4. Adult sibling
5. Grandparent or adult grandchild
6. Adult aunt or uncle, adult cousin, adult niece or nephew
7. Close friend

## **7. Patient Needs**

- **Privacy:** You have the right to every consideration of privacy. All parts of your medical care, examination and treatment will be conducted so as to protect your privacy.
- **Confidentiality:** You have the right to expect that all communications and records related to your care will be treated as confidential by the hospital, except when reporting is permitted or required by law.
- **Security:** You have the right to have all care and treatments provided to you in a safe and secure area, free from neglect and abuse.
- **Communication:** You have the right to expect unrestricted access to communication. When it is necessary to restrict visitors, mail, telephone calls or other forms of communication as a part of your care, you have the right to be included in any such decision. You have the right to expect any communication to be given in a language you can understand.

## **8. Review Records**

You have the right to review the records related to your medical care and to have the information explained or interpreted as necessary, except when restricted by law. You have the right to access this information within a reasonable time frame. You have the right to request amendments or corrections to your medical record.

## **9. Business Relationships**

You have the right to ask about, and be informed of, the existence of business relationships among the hospital, educational institutions, other health care providers or payers that may influence your treatment and care.

## **10. Research Treatment**

You have the right to know about research or experimental treatment that your doctor may make available. You have the right to consent to or refuse to participate in proposed research studies or experimental care.

## **11. Hospital Policies**

You have the right to be informed of hospital policies and practices that relate to patient care treatment and responsibilities. You have the right to be informed of available resources for resolving problems or questions about quality of care, such as ethics committees or patient representatives. You have the right to expect a timely response to your problem or question. You have a right to be informed of the hospital's charges for services and available payment methods.

## 12. Visitation

You (or support person) have the right, subject to your consent, to receive the visitors you designate, including but not limited to a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), or another family member, or a friend; and you have the right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time. Visitation privileges will not be restricted, limited or otherwise denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

Some patient care units may have clinically necessary or reasonable restriction of visitation because of patient's condition. You will be advised of specific visitation policies upon arrival to the patient care unit, if applicable.



# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PATIENT

## 1. Correct and Full Information

You are responsible for providing information to health care providers about symptoms, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications or other pertinent information. You are responsible for informing your health care providers about any changes in your condition.

## 2. Responsible for Your Actions

To participate effectively in decision making, you are encouraged to take responsibility for asking questions about your care. You are responsible for following the care, service or treatment plan developed for you. You should express any concerns you have about your ability to follow and comply with the proposed care plan or course of treatment. You are responsible for understanding the consequences of the treatment alternatives and not following the proposed plan. You are responsible for the outcomes if you do not follow the care, service or treatment plan.

## 3. Pain Management

As a patient of this hospital, you are responsible for expressing your expectations regarding pain and pain management and discussing pain relief options with your doctors and nurses. Please work with them to appropriately assess your pain and develop a pain management plan. Ask for pain relief when your pain first begins and tell your doctors or nurses if your pain is not relieved.

## 4. Advance Directive

You are responsible for making sure that the hospital has a copy of your living will and/or durable power of attorney for health care if you have one.

## 5. Following Rules and Regulations

You are responsible for following the hospital's rules and regulations concerning patient care and conduct. Please also consider the privacy and rights of others when you have visitors or are using the television, radio or telephone.

## 6. Payment of Bills

You are responsible for providing necessary insurance information and for working with the hospital to make payment arrangements when necessary.

# TO HELP PREVENT HEALTH CARE ERRORS, PATIENTS ARE URGED TO SPEAK UP.

**Speak Up**

**Pay Attention**

**Educate Yourself**

**Ask**

**Know**

**Use**

**Participate**

## **Speak Up:**

- If you don't understand something or if something doesn't seem right.
- If you speak or read another language and would like an interpreter or translated materials.
- If you need medical forms explained.
- If you think you're being confused with another patient.
- If you don't recognize a medicine or think you're about to get the wrong medicine.
- If you are not getting your medicine or treatment when you should.
- About your allergies and reactions you've had to medicines.

## **Pay Attention:**

- Check identification (ID) badges worn by doctors, nurses and other staff.
- Check the ID badge of anyone who asks to take your newborn baby.
- Don't be afraid to remind doctors and nurses to wash their hands.

### **Educate Yourself:**

- So you can make well-informed decisions about your care.
- Ask doctors and nurses about their training and experience treating your condition.
- Ask for written information about your condition.
- Find out how long treatment should last, and how you should feel during treatment.
- Ask for instruction on how to use your medical equipment.

### **Advocates (family members and friends) Can Help:**

- Give advice and support, but they should respect your decisions about the care you want.
- Ask questions, and write down important information and instructions for you.
- Make sure you get the correct medicines and treatments.
- Go over the consent form, so you all understand it.
- Get instructions for follow-up care, and find out who to call if your condition gets worse.

### **Know About Your New Medicine:**

- Find out how it will help.
- Ask for information about it, including brand and generic names.
- Ask about side effects.
- Find out if it is safe to take with your other medicines and vitamins.
- Ask for a printed prescription if you can't read the handwriting.
- Read the label on the bag of intravenous (IV) fluid so you know what's in it and that it is for you.
- Ask how long it will take the IV to run out.

### **Use a Quality Health Care Organization That:**

- Has experience taking care of people with your condition.
- Your doctor believes has the best care for your condition.
- Is accredited, meaning it meets certain quality standards.
- Has a culture that values safety and quality, and works every day to improve care.

### **Participate in All Decisions About Your Care:**

- Discuss each step of your care with your doctor.
- Don't be afraid to get a second or third opinion.
- Share your up-to-date list of medicines and vitamins with doctors and nurses.
- Share copies of your medical records with your health care team.

## **HELP FIGHT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION**

Preventing the spread of infection is important to everyone. Here are some easy things you can do to help protect yourself, our employees and other patients during your stay in the hospital.

### **1. Clean your hands**

Use soap and warm water. Rub your hands really well for at least 15 seconds. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers and the backs of your hands.

### **OR**

If your hands do not look dirty, clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Rub the sanitizers all over your hands, especially under your nails and between your fingers, until hands are dry.

Clean your hands before touching or eating food. Clean them after you go to the bathroom, change a diaper, visit someone who is ill or play with a pet.

### **2. Make sure health care providers clean their hands**

Doctors, nurses and other providers come in contact with lots of bacteria and viruses. So before they treat you, ask them if they have cleaned their hands.

### **3. Cover your cough or sneeze**

Many germs are spread through the air when you cough or sneeze. When you cough or sneeze, it can travel 3 feet or more. Using a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze protects those around you. Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. If a tissue is not available, your nurse will obtain some for you. Meanwhile when you can cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with the bend of your elbow.

#### **4. Intravenous (IV) line or urinary catheter**

If you have an IV line or urinary catheter, ask if you still need it. Let your doctor or nurse know if the area around these devices becomes tender or sore.

Make sure your IV insertion site stays covered with a dressing and that the lines do not become disconnected.

Make sure your urinary catheter stays connected to the bag and hangs below the level of your bladder. Make sure the urinary catheter is secured to your leg with a special device made for this purpose.

#### **5. Antibiotic resistance is a major concern**

Make sure you finish your antibiotics and take them as prescribed. Not doing so may lead your body to develop antibiotic resistant germs.

Not all infections require antibiotics. Misuse of antibiotics jeopardizes the usefulness of essential drugs.

Antibiotics can sometimes cause an infectious diarrhea. Please tell your health care provider if you experience this.

#### **6. Isolation**

Patients who have an antibiotic resistant or communicable infection may be placed in isolation. Isolation means that health care workers and visitors wear protective clothing and take other precautions when entering a patient's room. If you have questions, please ask your health care provider.

#### **7. Get vaccinated**

Make sure your vaccinations are current. This is important even for adults. You are never too old to be vaccinated!

Vaccinations are available to prevent the following diseases:

- Chickenpox
- Diphtheria
- German measles (rubella)
- Hepatitis A and B
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza
- Measles (rubeola)
- Meningitis
- Mumps
- Pneumonia
- Shingles
- Tetanus
- Whooping cough (pertussis)

## HELP US REDUCE YOUR RISK OF FALLING

Accidental falls may occur at any time. Please help us keep you safe.

Several factors may increase your risk of falling while you are in the hospital, including:

- Unfamiliar surroundings
- Medication
- Not eating or drinking for periods of time
- Tubes or other equipment attached to your body

There are some things you can do to prevent falls, including:

- Use your call light and wait for help to arrive. We are happy to assist you.
- Follow your doctor's orders and/or nurse's instructions regarding whether you must stay in bed or require help when getting up.
- Wear low-heeled shoes or non-skid slippers while walking. Ask the nurse for slippers.
- Sit on the edge of the bed for a short time before standing up. Getting up too quickly may make you feel faint or dizzy.
- Do not use the IV pole or bedside table to lean on. Both of these have wheels and are not sturdy enough to support you.
- Keep your phone and personal items within reach.
- Turn room lights on before getting up.

To keep you as safe as possible, we have a fall prevention program. If you are considered at risk of falling, your caregivers will do a number of things to help prevent a fall. Examples include:

- Using a bed or chair alarm that alerts staff you are getting up unassisted.
- Staying with you while you use the bathroom, assisting you to the bathroom before bedtime and before administration of some medications such as narcotics or sedatives.
- Checking on you every hour even if you do not have your call light on.

## **DISCHARGE PLANNING**

Avera will work with patients to address discharge planning needs. If, at any time, you or your representative sees a need for more in-depth discharge planning or you wish to review your specific discharge plans, feel free to discuss with your care team. There is no charge to you for these visits.

There may be things you can do to prevent returning to the hospital. Make sure you have an appointment with your primary care provider before being discharged. At discharge, make sure you understand and are able to get all medications.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy/Limited English Proficiency**

Avera does not discriminate against any person on the basis of your age, race, ethnicity, national origin, culture, color, religion, language, physical and/or mental status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or your ability to pay.

Avera will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs and other benefits. All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served, and patients/clients and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance free of charge.

**This Avera facility is a healing environment. Behaviors should be collaborative and promote health and healing.**

Unacceptable behavior includes:

- Physical assault
- Verbal harassment
- Abusive language
- Sexual language directed at others
- Threats
- Failure to respond to staff instructions

Our first priority is keeping all patients and staff safe.

Incidents may result in removal from this facility and prosecution.

Our administration supports staff in pressing charges for aggressive behavior they encounter while caring for patients.

## **YOUR SAFETY IS IMPORTANT TO US**

If you have questions or concerns, please let us know. Your caregiver is your advocate, so he or she should be the first person involved and we encourage you to ask questions. However, please never hesitate to take your concerns to a higher level if you feel it is necessary, such as voicing them to your clinic or department manager.

Should you have a concern that is unresolved, you have the right to contact:

### **South Dakota Department of Health**

600 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3361

### **Minnesota Department of Health**

P.O. Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164  
651-201-5000

### **Nebraska Department of Health**

Health Facility Investigations  
P.O. Box 94986  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4986  
402-471-0316

### **Iowa Department of Health**

321 E. 12th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
515-281-7689

### **North Dakota Department of Health**

600 E. Boulevard Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0200  
701-328-2372

AND/OR

### **The Joint Commission**

One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
Fax: 630-792-5636

[jointcommission.org](http://jointcommission.org)

*Go to "Action Center" and click "Report a Patient Safety Event."*

If You Have  
**Questions**

Please use this space to make notes about your care.

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**HELP US PROVIDE THE  
BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH CARE**

DON'T HESITATE TO SPEAK UP

If you are concerned that your health care team  
has not recognized a change in your condition

**OR**

if you have a serious concern about how your  
medical care is being provided ask to speak with the  
department manager or nursing supervisor.

