



Fact sheet

10 tips for safer health care

1. Be actively involved in your own health care

Take part in every decision to help prevent things from going wrong and get the best possible care for your need.

2. Speak up if you have any questions or concerns

Ask questions.

Expect answers that you can understand.

Ask a family member, carer or interpreter to be there with you if you want.

3. Learn more about your condition and treatments

Collect as much reliable information as you can/ ask your health care professional

- > What should I look out for?
- > Please tell me more about my condition, tests and treatment?
- > How will the tests or treatments help me and what is involved?
- > What are the risks and what is likely to happen if I don't have this treatment?

4. Keep a list of all the medicines you are taking

Include prescriptions, over-the-counter and complementary medicines, such as vitamins and herbs, and include information about any drug allergies you may have.

5. Make sure you understand the medicines you are taking

Read the label, including the warnings.

Make sure it is what your doctor ordered for you.

Ask about directions for use, possible side effects or interactions and how long you will need to take it.

6. Get the results of any test or procedure

Call your doctor to find out your results.

Ask what they mean for your care.

7. Talk about your options if you need to go to hospital

Ask the following:

- > How quickly does this need to happen?
- > Is there an option to have the surgery or procedure done as a day patient, or in an alternative hospital?

8. Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery or a procedure?

Ask the following:

- > What will the surgery or procedure involve and are there any risks?
- > Are there other possible treatments?
- > How much will it cost?

9. Make sure you, your doctor and your surgeon agree on exactly what will be done

Confirm which operation will be performed and where, as close as possible to it happening.

10. Before you leave hospital, ask your health care professional to explain the treatment plan you will use at home

Make sure you understand your continuing treatment, medicines and follow-up care.

Visit your GP as soon as possible after you are discharged.

For more information

**Australian Commission on
Safety and Quality in Healthcare**
www.safetyandquality.gov.au