

Keeping Your Child Safe

Speak Up at SickKids

**Working together is the best way to keep your child safe.
Please read the important information below.**

WE WANT YOU TO SPEAK UP!

Patients and families who are informed and involved in their health care stay safer. We encourage you to talk to us and ask us questions. Working together with respect and understanding is the best way to keep your child safe.

- You know your child best. Tell us about your child and any concerns you or your child have. If you are unsure whether something is important, tell us.
- It is important that you ask questions about your child's care and understand the answers.
- Don't be embarrassed if you don't understand something. Ask questions until you understand. Ask for things to be explained in non-medical language.
- Understand as much as you can about your child's medical condition, tests, treatments, procedures and medications.

COMING TO THE HOSPITAL

- Bring all of your child's medicines with you to the hospital, including herbal supplements, vitamins and any over-the-counter medicines.
- Ask for an interpreter if you don't speak English or need a sign language interpreter.
- Ask for assistive technology or other resources, like a teletypewriter or wheelchair, if you need it.
- Before meeting with a health-care provider, it's helpful to write down your questions so you don't forget them.
- Consider bringing a family member or friend with you to the hospital for support. They can take notes so you can focus on what you need to.

AT THE HOSPITAL

- Give us the most up-to-date and complete information about your child's health.
 - Tell us about any previous treatments or surgeries by any other doctors or health-care professionals, such as naturopaths or herbalists.
 - Tell us if your child has any allergies.
- Before you agree to a test, treatment or procedure:
 - Ask why it is being done and what the expected outcome is.
 - Make sure you know the risks and benefits.
 - Ask if there are other options.
 - Find out when and how you will get test results.
- Encourage your child to ask questions. Ask for your child's opinion.
- Make sure you and the health-care team agree on next steps.
- Tell a member of the health-care team if you have concerns about your child's care. Continue to work with the health-care team until the concern is addressed.
 - If you need more assistance addressing your concern, please contact the Office of Patient and Family Experience in Room M223 on the main floor, by phone at 416 813 6181, or by email at patient.experience@sickkids.ca.
- Tell us if your child's condition or behaviour changes. You know your child best so you may notice things we don't.
- If your child sees more than one service or specialist, ask how one treatment plan fits in with another. Make sure all the specialists know what the others are doing. If issues arise between the services or specialists caring for your child, ask for a meeting where you can all discuss your child's care.
- If you want to see your child's medical chart, ask a member of the health-care team. Ask if you need help understanding anything in it.

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- Participate in your child's care to the level you are comfortable. Have staff walk you through procedures, such as changing a dressing.
- Tell us what comforts your child, such as a favourite toy.
- Tell us when you will be away from the hospital. Give the nurse a number where you can be reached. Pagers are available through the Office of Patient and Family Experience.
- Visit the Family Centre to learn about your child's health issues. The centre is in Room M200 on the main floor, close to Shoppers Drug Mart. Ask where to get more information about your child's condition.

GOING HOME

- Know who your health-care team is and how to contact them.
- Ask for written instructions on how to care for your child once you leave the hospital.
- Make sure you understand what to expect, how medicine should be given, and how medical equipment should be used.
- Ask about how to get help in your home if you need it.
- Ask about who to contact if you have a problem when you arrive home. Know what to watch for and when to contact the hospital, your health-care provider or, if necessary, 911.

SPEAK UP AND ASK QUESTIONS. TALK TO YOUR HEALTH-CARE TEAM

- You know your child best. Speak up if you feel something's not right or you have concerns about your child's care.
- Give your health-care team an up-to-date description of your child's health.
- Tell us about any treatments or surgeries by any other health-care professionals, including naturopaths or herbalists.
- Tell us about your child's special physical, emotional or equipment needs or about any special aids like glasses or hearing aids.
- Share unique things about your child with caregivers that may be important for your child's overall care (e.g. if they dislike loud noises or bright lights).
- Tell us if there are any changes in your child's condition that concern you. You may notice things the health-care team doesn't.

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