

# **Welcome to Sanford**

*Improving the Human Condition*

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

# Condition Help

## Your Rapid Response Team

At Sanford Medical Center, we constantly work to provide safe care. We know that providing safe care requires teamwork. As patients and family members, you have important information that can help us give safe care. We want you to be a part of our care-giving team. We promise to listen when you have concerns about your care or the care of your loved one.

At Sanford, we have a Rapid Response Team of trained professionals that respond to our nursing staff when there are worries about a patient's condition.

We also have **Condition H** (H stands for HELP) for patients and their families to call the Rapid Response Team if they are worried about the condition or treatment of a patient. We encourage you to use this team if you have concerns that have not been addressed regarding the care of your loved one.

### When to Call

You may call if you have continuing concerns about a change in a patient's condition after you have brought them to the attention of your healthcare team.

### To access Condition H:

- **Dial 3-1234**
- Ask the operator to "**Activate the Rapid Response Team**"
- Make sure to give the operator the **patient's room number**
- Turn the nurse call light on.

The operator will immediately activate the Rapid Response Team. The team will come to the patient room, assess the situation and listen to your concerns. Additional clinical support will be called in as needed.



# Patient Rights & Responsibilities

Welcome to Sanford USD Medical Center. This brochure has been prepared to acquaint you with your rights as a patient and to inform you of your responsibilities in your medical care. We believe it is important that patients thoroughly understand their healthcare and participate in making decisions about that care. Therefore, we encourage a partnership between you and your healthcare providers. Your role as a member of this team is to actively participate in making decisions about your care, take responsibility for asking questions about things you do not understand, and to respect the rights of others.

# You Have the Right to Courteous Treatment

We respect your right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, type of illness, or, in emergencies, your ability to pay.
- know all the healthcare professionals involved in your care. You may ask personnel to introduce themselves, state their positions, and explain what they will be doing with you.



# You Have a Responsibility to Treat Others with Courtesy

You have a responsibility to treat others with courtesy, including other patients, their visitors, and staff members and physicians who are providing your care.

Loud voices are unnecessary in the hospital, as is inappropriate language. Please treat others with the respect and dignity that you want for yourself and your family members. If you have visitors, please limit the number of people present at any one time and help to keep the visits short and quiet. Telephone, television, radio and lights should be used in a manner agreeable to others.

# You Have the Right to Privacy

Sanford USD Medical Center will try to respect your privacy at all times. You have a right to:

- be interviewed and examined in surroundings that offer reasonable privacy.
- have a member of your own sex present during certain parts of a physical exam, treatment or procedure.
- close the curtain around your bed or close your door for privacy.
- be given respect and privacy during bathing and other personal hygiene activities.
- request no visitors.
- request confidential status to protect your identity as a hospitalized patient.

# You Have the Responsibility to Respect the Privacy of Others

Please be considerate of other patients by allowing them privacy and maintaining a quiet atmosphere.



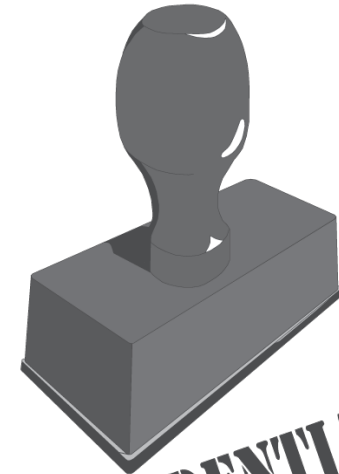
# You Have the Right to Confidentiality

Any discussion about your health or medical care will be conducted discreetly and only with individuals directly involved with your care or with your permission.

Your medical record will be read only by healthcare professionals directly involved in your treatment or in monitoring the quality of your treatment. Other individuals can read your medical record if you give authorization, and information from the medical record may be given to a third party payer if you so permit.

# You Have a Responsibility to Respect the Confidentiality of Others

Please respect the confidentiality of other patients and families. It is not appropriate to look into other patients' rooms and it is not appropriate to ask staff members for confidential information about other patients or their condition.



**CONFIDENTIAL**

# You Have a Right to Information About Treatment

Your medical diagnosis and proposed treatment will be explained to you. You may wish to have family members or friends included in this discussion.

You can expect your physician to explain:

- your diagnosis.
- alternatives for care or treatment.
- the risks and benefits of each alternative.
- probable and/or adverse outcomes.

It is your right to choose which method of treatment you prefer; you may choose to decline treatment.

As a patient at Sanford USD Medical Center, you can expect:

- information about pain and pain relief measures.
- a concerned staff committed to pain prevention and management.
- health professionals who respond quickly to reports of pain.
- health professionals who believe your reports of pain.



# You Have a Responsibility to Ask for Clear Explanations

If you do not understand the explanation of your medical problem or if the treatment plan is not clear, please ask for the information you need.

You are responsible for asking:

- why a treatment is recommended.
- what alternatives are available.
- what the prognosis might be.
- if the treatment is new or experimental.
- how long the treatment will take.
- the projected cost of treatment.
- what risks or side effects are involved.
- what the credentials are of the person providing treatment.

Once you and your physician agree to a treatment plan, it is important that you cooperate with the plan. Partial treatment may not be beneficial. If you feel that you may not be able to follow a certain treatment plan, please notify the staff as soon as possible.

# You Have the Right to Participate in Decisions About Your Care

We believe that if you understand and participate in your healthcare, better results will be achieved.

We respect your right:

- to informed consent: to receive a full explanation of your disease, the risks and benefits of the proposed treatment and alternative treatments.
- to refuse a diagnostic procedure or treatment.
- to consult with a specialist at your own expense.
- to participate in the development and implementation of your plan of care.
- to formulate an advance directive (living will or power of attorney for health care) and to expect that your health care providers will comply with this directive.
- to know of any professional relationship that may exist between your physician or Sanford USD Medical Center and other institutions or physicians.

We may require the consent of a relative or legal guardian if you are under 18, unconscious or too ill to give informed consent. You may be treated without consent if there is a medical emergency and immediate action must be taken.

If you have special spiritual or cultural issues that may have an impact upon your care, please notify your nurse and your physician.

# You Have a Responsibility to Make Informed Decisions

Because you are responsible for the decisions you make about your care, we encourage you to gain as much information as you may need to make your decision.

You may be asked to sign a written consent for certain tests or procedures. Please make sure you fully understand each document that you are asked to sign.

If you change your mind or refuse a treatment, please notify the staff as soon as possible and discuss your reasons with your physicians.



# Other Rights

To better participate in your healthcare you have the right:

- to have a family member or representative of your choice notified promptly of your admission to the hospital, if you so desire.
- to know of any continuing care requirements after discharge from the hospital.
- to not be transferred to another facility unless you have received a thorough explanation of the need for transfer and any alternatives to a transfer.
- to receive an itemized explanation of your total bill for services delivered in the hospital, regardless of the source of payment.
- to file a complaint about the quality of care or any violation of the rights listed in this booklet. Please contact your nurse or Patient Relations at 333-6546 to address your concerns.
- To be free from restraints of any form unless medically necessary to ensure your safety.

All the rights expressed in this booklet apply to all patients regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, type of illness, existence of an advance directive, or in emergencies, your ability to pay.

For patients who are local, state or federal prisoners, certain rights may not be applicable. State and federal policies may take precedence over patients' rights if there is a conflict.

# Other Responsibilities

Other responsibilities that will affect your treatment include:

- **honesty** in revealing your medical history. Please provide an accurate and complete history as well as an explanation of any symptoms you may be having now.
- **report any unexpected changes** in your status to your doctor or a staff person caring for you.
- **know your medications** by name and purpose.
- **keep appointments** for follow-up care, or give adequate notice if you must cancel.
- **know your financial responsibility** and make appropriate arrangements.
- **follow hospital policies** that may affect patient care and conduct, such as restrictions in smoking, certain dietary restrictions and respecting visitation policies.
- **to inform us** of any safety concerns you may have.

# Preventing Medical Errors

## *A Guide for Patient Safety*

Preventing medical errors and ensuring patient safety are critical issues in healthcare today. Sanford USD Medical Center is committed to making your stay as safe as possible. Here are some tips to help you partner with us to make your hospital stay safer.

### **What are medical errors?**

Medical errors can happen during even the most routine tasks, such as when a hospital patient on a salt-free diet is given a meal containing a high amount of salt. However, errors can occur anywhere in the healthcare system that involve medicines, surgery, diagnosis, lab reports, equipment, etc. Most errors result from problems created by today's complex healthcare system. Errors also happen when healthcare providers and their patients have problems communicating.

### **What can you do?**

Be involved in your healthcare.

- **Be an active member of your healthcare team.** Taking part in decisions about your healthcare is the single most important way you can help prevent medical errors. Research shows that patients who are more involved with their care tend to get better results.

- **Speak up if you have questions or concerns.**  
You have a right to question anyone who is involved with your care. It's OK to ask questions and to expect answers you can understand.
- **Ask all healthcare workers who have direct contact with you whether they have cleaned their hands.**  
Handwashing is an important way to prevent the spread of infections in the hospital. A recent study found that when patients checked whether healthcare workers washed their hands, the workers washed their hands more often and used more soap. Our employees have two ways to clean their hands. The first way is with usual soap and water. The second is with skin antiseptic, which is even more effective at killing germs. Don't be afraid to ask staff if they have cleaned their hands before touching you.
- **Make sure that all healthcare providers involved in your care have important health information about you.**  
Withholding certain information can be harmful. Do not assume everyone knows everything they need to, such as whether or not you smoke, consume alcohol, or have a bleeding disorder in your medical history. This information, if not shared, could be harmful, causing unexpected results.
- **Have a healthcare advocate — someone who can speak up for you if you can not.**  
Ask a family member or trusted friend to be with you. Even if you think you don't need help now, you might need it later. If no one can be with you, make sure your healthcare providers have the name and phone number of someone that can be contacted.

## **Medicines in the hospital**

- **Make sure all your healthcare providers know about everything you are taking.**

When admitted to the hospital, bring your medications or a current list of prescription medications, including drug names, dose, schedule and instruction for taking, with you. Make sure your nurse and doctor know of any vitamins, supplements, herbs, eye drops or over-the-counter medicines you have been taking. Any of these things could interfere with medicines your doctor may order, causing harmful and undesired reactions. At least once a year, bring all of your medicines and supplements with you to your doctor. This will allow you and your doctor to talk about them and find out if there are any problems. It can also help your doctor keep your records up-to-date, which will help you get better quality care.

- **Make sure your doctor knows about any allergies and side effects you have had to medicines.**

This can help you avoid getting a medicine that could harm you.

When your doctor writes you a prescription, make sure you can read it. If you can not read your doctor's handwriting, your pharmacist might not be able to either. If you are given or prescribed a medication that is new or unfamiliar to you, ask for information in terms you can understand.

### **Questions to ask about medicines:**

Q: What is the medicine for?

Q: How am I supposed to take it, and for how long? (In some cases you can stop taking a medication when your symptoms improve, but in other cases you must complete the full course of therapy, even though you are feeling better.)

- Q: What side effects are likely?  
What do I do if they occur?  
(Ask for written information on the drug and its possible side effects.)
- Q: Is this medicine safe to take with other medicines or dietary supplements I am taking?
- Q: What food, drink, or activities should I avoid while taking this medication?

## **Medicines at home**

- **Have all of your prescriptions filled at one pharmacy.**  
Your pharmacist can help to screen for drug interactions and other potential problems.
- **When you receive your prescriptions from the pharmacy, look at the medicine to make sure you have received the correct product.**  
If you have taken the same prescription before, double check that your medication is the same size, shape and color. If you notice any differences, ask your pharmacist to make sure it is the right medication before you take it.
- **If you have any questions about the directions on your medicine labels, call your pharmacist.**  
Medicine labels can be hard to understand. For example, ask if “four doses daily” means taking a dose every six hours around the clock or just during regular waking hours. Repeat the instructions you have been given to the pharmacist to make sure you understand the instructions.

- **Ask your pharmacist for the best device to measure liquid medicines.**

Also ask questions if you're not sure how to use it. Research shows that many people do not understand the right way to measure liquid medicines. For example, many use household teaspoons often do not hold a true teaspoon of liquid. Special devices, like marked syringes, help people to measure the right dose. Being told how to use the devices helps even more.

### **Other tips:**

- Recheck the label before each dose.
- Never take medications in the dark!
- Keep medications in their original container and store them out of the reach of children.
- Do not share your medications with others.

### **Surgery, tests & treatments**

- **Make sure healthcare workers in direct contact with you always check or verify who you are.**  
Your hospital armband has identification numbers that need to be double-checked before lab tests are drawn, before medications or blood products are given, and before procedures. Healthcare workers will ask you to state your name and birth date several times while you are in the hospital to make sure they are giving you the right medications or performing the right tests. If they don't ask, feel free to insist that they do.
- **If you are having surgery, make sure that you, your doctor, and your surgeon all agree and are clear on exactly what will be done.**  
Doing surgery at the wrong site (for example, operating on the left knee instead of the right) is rare, but even once is too often. The good news is that wrong-site surgery is 100 percent

preventable. Sanford has implemented a policy requiring that patients use a permanent marker to initial the site to be operated on before the surgery. We call this “signing the site.”

- **Know that “more” is not always better.**

It is a good idea to find out why a test or treatment is needed and how it can help you.

- **Make sure you get the results of any test or procedure.**

Ask your doctor or nurse when and how you will get the results of tests or procedures. If you do not get them when expected—in person, on the phone, or in the mail—don’t assume the results are fine. Call your doctor and ask for them. Ask what the results mean for your care.

- **Learn about your condition and treatments by asking your doctor and nurse and by using other reliable sources.**

Sanford USD Medical Center has many resources available. Ask your nurse about our Health Library, or visit it on-line at [www.sanfordhealth.org](http://www.sanfordhealth.org). Click on the Patients/Visitors link, then on the Health Resources link.

## **Handling an error**

If an error does occur, or you suspect an error has occurred, ask your doctor or nurse about it. If your questions are not answered satisfactorily, ask to talk with the department’s director, or patient relations.

If you have suggestions about how errors could be prevented, share them with your care provider or a member of the Patient Safety Taskforce. Your suggestions and involvement are welcome!

# Fall Prevention

## **Keep safe when you are in the hospital**

- Use your call light to ask for help, especially if you have tubes and wires attached to you. Don't get up without help—please call us for help.
- Change your position SLOWLY when getting out of bed.
- Sit at the side of the bed prior to standing or walking.
- Wear low heeled, tied shoes with non-skid soles when out of bed.
- Report any spills on the floor.
- Be careful when bending or leaning over to pick things up. Ask someone to pick it up for you.
- Bring your cane, walker or crutches and keep them close to your bed.
- Wear clean eyeglasses and wear your hearing aides.
- Don't lean on the bedside table or IV poles with wheels.
- Keep the phone, remote control and personal items close by.
- Consider requesting a commode or a urinal if it is hard to get to the bathroom.
- Anticipate when you might need to use the bathroom and put on your call light before it is an emergency.
- Nursing may check on you frequently and ask you to toilet frequently.
- If you are considered to be a fall risk, a yellow star will be used to increase staff awareness.
- Be careful of "Bones and Bleeds." If you have osteoporosis (fragile bones), you may be at higher risk for a bone fracture. If you are on a blood thinner the effects of a fall could cause bleeding which may be life-threatening.
- Patients older than 85 are also at a higher fall risk.

## **Keep Safe In Your Home**

- Remove items from stairs and paths to prevent tripping over them.
- Keep frequently used objects in cabinets you can easily reach.
- Install hand rails on both sides of steps and keep the lighting bright.
- Install grab bars next to your toilet and in your tub or shower.
- Begin a regular exercise program to improve balance and strength.
- Consider the Balance Clinic. Call (605) 328-1860 for an appointment.

# Frequently Asked Questions by Outpatients

## **Why so many questions?**

You may have received a phone call from our pre-registration staff before your visit and you may be asked questions upon your arrival. The hospital, your physician and your insurance company depend upon this information. We try to make this necessary process as brief as possible. It is helpful if you have your insurance card. Upon arrival, all patients need to sign authorization forms to give consent for treatment and to release information from your medical records if necessary.

## **Finding your way?**

A hospital this size can be a confusing place. We have placed signs in key areas. Whenever possible we provide an escort from registration to the department. If you are walking on your own and are unsure of directions, please feel free to stop any employee and ask for help. Our employees will be happy to assist.

If you have difficulty with walking, please let us know so that we can provide a wheelchair escort.

## **What if I have questions?**

Our staff will explain procedures to you and give you information regarding any follow-up care at home. Please let us know your questions or concerns. It is a good idea to have a friend or family member with you, especially if they will be helping with your care. Family and friends may be asked to leave the room during the test or procedure.

**How will I learn the results of my outpatient test?**

The results of your test or procedure will be sent to the physician who ordered or performed them. Please contact that physician to learn these results. Hospital staff are usually not able to give you information that is learned from tests.

**Can I drive home?**

For your safety and the safety of others, if you have received any medication to sedate you for your test or treatment you will not be allowed to drive home. You will be required to have someone take you home. If you have had surgery or anesthesia you may be required to have someone stay with you for the first 24 hours. Please check with your physician or nurse.

**What about my bill?**

As a courtesy, Patient Financial Service office of Sanford USD Medical Center will send hospital charges directly to your insurance company and you will receive a copy of the summarized charges. If you have questions about your bill please contact the Patient Financial Services at 328-6585 or toll free at 1-877-629-2999 for assistance.

You are considered to be responsible for your hospital bill and if your insurance company is slow in making payment, we encourage you to contact your insurance carrier or other third-party payer.

If you do not have insurance, you will receive a bill for your hospital services and payment is expected within 30 days of treatment. If you anticipate that it will be necessary to make payment arrangements, please call patient financial services at 328-6585 or toll free 1-877-629-2999.

## **Physician Charges**

If you are seen by a personal physician who is not a member of Sanford Clinic, you can expect a separate billing from that doctor's office for those services.

If you are having any procedure in which anesthesia is administered, you will receive a statement from Anesthesia Physicians, Ltd. You can call their office at 338-5488 if you have questions about their billing. If you have Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield, we encourage you to contact your insurance carrier about its coverage of anesthesia services.

## **Lab, Radiology and Nuclear Medicine Services**

Certain lab procedures are interpreted by physicians from the Laboratory of Clinical Medicine (LCM), so you may receive a separate billing for their services. For questions about LCM's bill, you can call 1-800-284-9806.

X-rays, CT scans, MRI scans, and some interventional work done in radiology may be read and interpreted by physicians from Medical X-Ray Center. Sanford will charge for performing the service of taking the images, and the radiologist from either Medical X-Ray Center or Sanford Clinic will charge for the reading and interpretation of the images. If you have questions related to billing from the Medical X-Ray Center, please call their office at 336-0515.

Nuclear medicine procedures are read and interpreted by physicians at Nuclear Imaging, Ltd. Sanford will charge for the service of performing the test, and the physicians will charge for reading and interpreting the images. A separate bill will be submitted by those physicians. If you have questions related to billing from Nuclear Imaging, please contact them at 977-0623.

If you have any questions or complaints about your rights as a patient at Sanford USD Medical Center, you may contact your nurse or Patient Relations at 333-6546, or write to:

**Patient Relations**  
**Sanford USD Medical Center**  
**P.O. Box 5039, Sioux Falls, SD 57117-5039**

Sanford USD Medical Center is a Joint Commission—accredited health care organization. If a patient care or safety concern cannot be resolved to your satisfaction by Patient Relations you may contact the Joint Commission.

**Telephone: 1-800-994-6610**  
**Email: [complaint@jcaho.org](mailto:complaint@jcaho.org)**  
**Mail: Office of Quality Monitoring**  
**The Joint Commission**  
**1 Renaissance Boulevard**  
**Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181**

At any time, you or your representative may contact the South Dakota Department of Health at:

**South Dakota Department of Health**  
**Licensure and Certifications**  
**615 East 4th Street, Pierre, SD 57501**  
**or Call (605) 773-3356**

If Medicare is paying your health care bills and you are an inpatient and believe that you are being discharged prematurely, you may contact:

**South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care**  
**2600 W. 49th Street, Suite 300**  
**Sioux Falls, SD 57105**  
**Telephone: (605) 336-3505**  
**Fax: (605) 373-0580**

# Quitting Helps You Heal Faster

*Your Hospital Visit is a Great Time to Quit Smoking*

## **Why should I quit now?**

- Smoking may slow your recovery from surgery and illness. It may also slow bone and wound healing.
- All hospitals in the United States are smoke free. You will be told NOT to smoke during your hospital stay - now is a great time to quit!



## **How do I quit in the hospital?**

- Ask your doctor or other hospital staff for help right away. We have experts who can help you with a plan for quitting.
- Ask your doctor for medicine to help you handle not smoking while in the hospital.

## **Helpful hints to stay quit**

- Ask your friends and family for support.
- Continue your quit plan after your hospital stay.
- Make sure you leave the hospital with the right medicines or prescriptions.
- If you "slip" and smoke, don't give up. Set a new date to get back on track.

## **More help for quitting smoking or chewing**

- Quit Lines

*South Dakota 1-866-737-8487*

*Iowa 1-866-822-6879*

*Minnesota 1-877-270-7867*

*American Lung Association Call Center 1-866-784-8937*

*National Cancer Institute 1-877-448-7848*

- Other Help

*Sanford Healthformation 1-800-445-5788*

*American Cancer Society 1-800-227-2345*

*Freedom from Smoking Online [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)*

