



## 50 Ways to Be An Engaged Patient

1. Be your own quality and safety officer! Ask your caregivers if they have washed their hands.
2. Ask for care instructions to be provided to you in writing. Too many words? Ask for information in pictures and infographics, or however best you learn.
3. Document your wishes for end-of-life care, and encourage your loved ones to document their end-of-life care preferences, as well.
4. Identify your daily routine; the time your meds are taken, times you wake and go to sleep, preferred bathing times, and ask that these be honored.
5. Ask to see your medical record. And, if you don't understand what you read in your medical record, ask questions until you do.
6. Ask to contribute to your medical record.
7. Ask your care team to put their pictures on the white board instead of just names, and ask to write your own observations on the white board.
8. Sign on to your medical center's patient portal. When you read something you know is not right, ask to have it corrected.
9. Request a second opinion.
10. When you receive exceptional care, write a note to the highest levels of the organization letting them know. If you know them, use the names of those individuals who made you feel cared for.
11. When you have concerns about your care, speak up in the moment. Ask what your treatment options are. Ask, "what are the side effects of this medication?"
12. Find out whether your local hospital or care center has a patient and family partnership council. Ask how you can become involved.
13. If your care provider uses language you don't understand, ask them to repeat themselves using different words.
14. When your caregiver is entering information about you into the electronic medical record, ask what is being input.
15. Complete patient satisfaction surveys honestly and constructively. Take the time to answer open-ended questions.
16. When you are in the hospital, notify your care team that your loved one will be staying overnight.
17. If having visitors when you are in the hospital is not beneficial to your healing process, enlist the support of your care team to set parameters for guests.
18. Enlist a loved one to be your Care Partner. During a hospitalization, ask that they be provided education on your aftercare needs and that they be notified of the plan for your discharge.
19. Invite a loved one to accompany you to appointments, procedures and consultations to provide support, but also an extra set of eyes and ears.
20. Come to doctor's appointments prepared. Bring a notepad with questions, your medication list and any other pertinent personal healthcare information.
21. Wear the "I Am an Expert About Me" sticker... and embrace its spirit!
22. Use your cell phone to record important discharge/ follow-up instructions. Ask your care team to help you program reminders and alerts for appointments and medications before you leave the hospital. Ask them to highlight the most important information in your discharge instructions.



23. Articulate to your care provider how you would define a quality outcome – in your own terms (for instance, being able to walk up a flight of stairs, being able to play with your grandchildren without getting winded, etc.)
24. Ask your doctor these “Questions about Patient-Centered Care.”
25. Ask your hospital these “Questions about Patient-Centered Care.”
26. Proactively explore with your care team alternative solutions/remedies.
27. Keep a written record of all your care appointments, procedures, medications and therapies. Bring it with you to all your healthcare appointments.
28. If you are hospitalized and are having trouble getting the rest you need to heal, ask for ear plugs, soothing music, or to have the door to your room closed.
29. Volunteer at your local hospital.
30. Take advantage of community resources such as consumer health resource libraries, health and wellness fairs and free screenings to take the reins of your own healthcare.
31. Download a healthcare app to help you manage and monitor vital aspects of your personal health, such as diet, exercise, sleep patterns, blood pressure, etc.
32. Fill out a Patient Preferences Passport and share it with your care providers.
33. Engage a patient advocate or patient liaison if concerns are not being addressed to your satisfaction.
34. If you notice a concerning change in a loved one’s condition while hospitalized, initiate a rapid response team.
35. Embrace all of the options. Palliative care is a sign of strength.
36. Let your care team know how you best receive information.
37. Make your care team see YOU, not your diagnosis. Ask to be a contributing partner on your care team.
38. When instructions are being conveyed, ask your care team to SHOW you, not just tell you, so you are empowered to more confidently and competently care for yourself. Ask to have your care partner included in these instructions so they can be taught how you would like them to participate.
39. Act like you belong. Be a teammate, not a subject.
40. “Break up” with your doctor if s/he is not meeting your needs.
41. Be an informed healthcare consumer. Subscribe to RightCare Weekly
42. Insist that your Care Partner is documented in your medical record.
43. Don’t like the food you’ve been offered while in the hospital (or in a long-term care community)? Ask what other options are available to you.
44. During a hospital stay, ask if you can have input into when your blood will be drawn.
45. Don’t hesitate to let your care team know if you’re uncomfortable.
46. Ask, “how much will this cost?”
47. Become informed of when hospital rounds will occur so that you can make arrangements for family to be present.
48. Ask about your provider’s experience with your condition.
49. State your feelings. They matter just as much as your physical condition.
50. Get involved in patient-centered outcomes research opportunities.