

My Next Steps

Getting ready to leave the hospital

As you get ready to leave the hospital, you may feel unsure about what to expect and how to continue getting better at home.

This guide will help you think about what questions to ask your healthcare team so you feel ready and confident to go home. It was created with patients for patients like you. You can review it on your own or with a friend or family member, along with other discharge papers you'll receive with details of your hospital stay and medicines.

How to use this guide

- Look for information about what resources will be helpful to you after you leave the hospital.
- Use the “Notes” section at the end to write things down.
- Tell your care team what you need and ask for answers to your questions before you leave the hospital.

My discharge conversation

Take an active role in your healthcare. Ask your healthcare team to have a discharge conversation. This is a conversation about what to expect as you prepare to leave the hospital and when you are home. It helps you to get answers to all your questions.

Have someone you trust - a family member, caregiver, friend, or other support person - join your discharge conversation. They can join in person, by phone, or video chat.

You can also record the conversation. Tell your healthcare provider that you would like to record your discharge conversation using your phone's voice recorder or the Alberta Health Services My Care Conversations app by downloading it on your smartphone. Learn more at ahs.ca/careapp.



My questions and concerns

Below are questions you can ask your healthcare provider as you prepare to leave the hospital. You have a lot going on and it can be hard to remember everything. If there's anything you don't understand, ask your provider to explain.

Going home

- How will I get home? Who can help me get home from the hospital if I don't have transportation?
- If I leave the hospital over the weekend:
 - What are my care options if services are not available until the next working day? (See the "My healthcare options" section of this guide.)
 - Do I have enough medicine to get me through the weekend?
- Do I have an advance care plan or Green Sleeve to take home?

Advance care planning is how you plan and document your wishes for the healthcare you want now and in the future. It's for every adult, and it's especially important for people with health issues.

A Green Sleeve is a plastic green pocket that holds your important advance care planning forms. In an emergency, healthcare providers can look at your Green Sleeve and quickly know your healthcare wishes. Visit myhealth.alberta.ca and search "Green Sleeve" to watch a short video about how advance care planning and a Green Sleeve can help you.

My medicines

- What changes did the doctors make to my medicine while I was in the hospital?
- When will I get my medicine schedule to use at home?
- Who will go over my medicine schedule with me to make sure I understand what medicine has been added, kept, or stopped? Where is this information written so I can refer to it?

Medicine Questions

If you think of questions or concerns about your medicines after you leave the hospital, speak with your healthcare provider, talk with a pharmacist, or call Health Link at 811.

- Will I need to fill any prescriptions when I go home?
- How do I know if my insurance plan will pay for my medicine?
- What medicine can I safely take for pain when I go home?

Medicine Safety

Make sure your doctor and pharmacist know all the medicines (prescription and over-the-counter) and health supplements you take. They can make sure the medicines work well together and can run your medicines through a drug interaction checker.

Almost any medicine can cause harm if you take too much of it. If you have concerns about the potential for an overdose, talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Extra care, supplies, or equipment

- What supplies or equipment will I need (such as handrails, a walker, or medical supplies)? Who can help me get these?
- Do I need Home Care services and supports, and why do I need them?
 - Has a referral been sent?
 - When can I expect a call from Home Care?
 - Whom should I contact if I have Home Care questions?
- Do I need community rehabilitation and if so, has a referral been sent?

Home Care

Home Care helps you stay well, safe, and independent in your home. Services may include help with:

- personal hygiene (bathing, getting dressed and undressed, grooming)
- medicine
- wound care
- rehabilitation

Visit ahs.ca/homecare or call 811

Community Rehabilitation

Community rehabilitation services help patients and families identify goals and activities to help them prevent, heal from, or manage health conditions.

Visit ahs.ca/adultrehab

Follow-up appointments and tests

- Does my family doctor, community health team, or other supports know I was in the hospital?
- When should I see my family doctor or specialist?
- What tests or bloodwork will I need after I leave the hospital?
- What other appointments will I need after I leave the hospital? Have these been booked, or do I need to book them? Where is the contact information so I can refer to it?

Seeing a Specialist?

To help you through the referral and consultation process, search “QuRE Patient & Caregiver Journal” on ahs.ca or scan the QR code with your smartphone:



Accessing MyAHS Connect

Get secure access to your health info with MyAHS Connect. Manage AHS appointments and interact with your AHS healthcare team. Ask your healthcare provider how to access your MyAHS Connect account.

Visit ahs.ca/myAHSconnect

Accessing MyHealth Records

You can view your lab results and some other results securely online with a MyHealth Records account.

Sign up at myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords

Call 1-844-401-4016 for support.

Worries I may have after I leave the hospital

- Do I have to isolate when I leave hospital? Visit ahs.ca/isolation
- Where can I get support if I am:
 - worried about doing my usual activities (such as making meals, caring for children or pets, dressing, bathing, eating, sleeping)?
 - not able to return to work or school?
 - worried about my ability to drive?
 - needing help to meet money, housing, food, or other basic needs?
 - not able to get my medicines from the pharmacy or pay for them?
 - struggling with my feelings or worried about how I am doing?
- Can I talk to someone about my concerns before I leave the hospital?

My activities

- Do I need to make changes to my everyday activities or hobbies as I heal at home?
- What are these changes, and for how long should I maintain them? Examples:
 - driving
 - going to work or volunteering
 - exercising
 - eating and what foods to eat or limit (For ideas visit ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts)
 - using tobacco, vape products, alcohol
 - going to social events, visiting family and friends
 - having sex
 - seeing a therapist (such as community rehabilitation, physiotherapy, massage)
 - spiritual practices

My healthcare options

Know where to get help or where to call if you have questions about your health. Go to ahs.ca/options to learn more.

911 Emergency Services



Always call 911 when your or someone else's health or safety is at risk. It is the number to call any time you have an emergency that needs police, fire rescue, or an ambulance. When a life is in danger, 911 is the fastest way to get the help you need.

Emergency Department



Emergency departments help you with your emergency health needs—major trauma, heart events, serious injuries, and other serious medical problems—any time of the day or night. If you have an emergency and need help now, call 911.

Urgent Care



Urgent Care services are walk-in services for unexpected health concerns that are not life-threatening but need treatment today. Examples include:

- broken bones
 - sprains
 - deep cuts
 - asthma
 - infections
 - pain
- Airdrie Community Health Centre
 - Cochrane Community Health Centre
 - East Edmonton Health Centre
 - Okotoks Health and Wellness Centre
 - Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre
 - South Calgary Health Centre

To find a health facility near you visit ahs.ca/findhealth

Advanced Ambulatory Care Centres



Ambulatory Care Centres offer faster diagnosis and treatment for urgent, non-life-threatening health concerns. These are sudden illnesses or injuries that are normally treated in a doctor's office but need attention right away.

- La Crete Ambulatory Care Centre
- Piyami Health Centre in Picture Butte
- Sylvan Lake Community Health Centre

Family Doctor



Your family doctor is your best option for your regular health needs. If you do not have a family doctor, visit [AlbertaFindADoctor.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/AlbertaFindADoctor.ca)

811



Call Health Link at 811 to speak to a nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Health Link offers health advice and information. 811 can also help you with nutrition and rehabilitation questions, and mental health issues.

Addiction & Mental Health



A confidential service open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, that provides support, information, and referrals for people with addiction and mental health concerns. Visit ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes.

Addiction Helpline:
1-866-332-2322

Mental Health Helpline:
1-877-303-2642

Community and Social Supports



- **Alberta Supports:** Get emergency financial assistance to help with basic needs like shelter, food, clothing, and transportation. 1-866-644-5135 (open 24 hours) alberta.ca/alberta-supports
- **Alberta's Income Support program:** You may be able to get help to pay for your medicines if you need it. Visit alberta.ca/income-support.aspx, call 1-877-644-9992 or contact your Income Support worker
- **211 Alberta:** Call 211 (open 24 hours) to help you find the right resource or service for any issue you need help with, at the right time.
- **Family Violence Information Line:** 310-1818 (open 24 hours)

More information and resources

If you are looking for more health information or resources, call 811 (open 24 hours).

- Alberta Healthy Living Program: Offers group classes to help improve your health and quality of life if you have a chronic condition. ahs.ca/ahlp
- COVID-19 information: ahs.ca/covid
- Home Care: ahs.ca/homecare
- Languages: Get health information in your language. ahs.ca/languages
- Medicine Safety:
 - Visit Health Quality Council of Alberta hqca.ca and search for “Your Guide to Medication Safety”
 - Search [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://myhealth.alberta.ca) for information about “Staying Safe When You Take Several Medicines” and “Accidental Overdose of Medicine: Care Instructions”
- [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://myhealth.alberta.ca): Trusted, easy-to-understand health information and tools for Albertans.
- Nutrition Services: ahs.ca/nutrition
- Patient Relations Department: For patient concerns and feedback, visit ahs.ca/patientfeedback or call 1-855-550-2555
- Spiritual Care Services: Visit ahs.ca/spiritualcare and search for “Spiritual Practices Workbook”.

