New Patient Admission Guide

Whittier Hospital Medical Center, AHMC
Our Promise to you

Welcome to Whittier Hospital Medical Center. It is our privilege to care for you. We understand that this may be a difficult time for you and your loved ones and want to assure you that meeting your needs is our top priority.

During your stay, your patient care team will communicate with you frequently about your treatment plan and progress toward discharge from the hospital. You are a key member of the care team, thus it is very important that you are kept informed throughout your stay.

- **We promise** that your nurse and other members of your care team will introduce themselves and will inform you of any treatment or procedure ordered by your physician and will explain why you are having the treatment or procedure and what to expect.
- **We promise** that your nurse will visit you frequently to check on your progress. You will see your nurse at least hourly during the day, every two hours during the night, or more frequently as needed.
- **We promise** that when you press the “Call Light Button” for assistance, a member of the care team will respond promptly.
- **We promise** that you will be frequently asked if you are experiencing any pain. One way we assess pain is by asking you to rate your pain level on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest level of pain. Managing your pain is extremely important to us. Please let your nurse or any member of the care team know immediately if you are experiencing any pain.
- **We promise** that before you are given any medication, your nurse will tell you the name of the medication, the purpose of the medication, and any potential side effects you may experience.
- **We promise** that between each nursing shift, your care team will meet at your bedside and will report on your progress and status of your treatment plan.
- **We promise** that a communication board located near your bed will be used to record important information including your pain level and goals for the day.
- **We promise** that the Nursing Director and other healthcare professionals will visit you to ensure that we are meeting your needs. We are continually looking for ways to be better at what we do and we appreciate your feedback.

As always, our goal is to provide you with the best care possible in a compassionate, respectful manner. We hope that we exceed your expectations and provide you with a positive patient care experience. If there is anything we can do for you, please call us at (562) 464-6341.

We wish you well and thank you for the honor of caring for you.

Sincerely,

Richard Castro

*Chief Executive Officer*
Telephone Directory

“Added Touch” Gift Shop  (562) 907-7370
Asian Programs  (562) 464-2933
Bloodless Medicine Program  (562) 464-6323
  Community Events: Health Fairs
  Free screenings, Free educational
  and Social Programs  (800) 613-4291
Community Outreach  (562) 464-6345
Customer Service  (562) 464-6346
Diagnostic Services  (562) 945-3561
Direct Observation Unit (DOU)  (562) 907-7200
Hispanic Programs  (562) 464-6345
Human Resources  (562) 464-6354
Intensive Care Unit/CCU  (562) 907-7102
Marketing  (562) 464-6347
Maternal Services  (562) 907-1633
Maternity Tours and Education  (800) 613-4291
Medical Staff Services  (562) 907-1502
Medical Surgical Floor (MS)  (562) 907-7300
Rehabilitation Services  (562) 464-6336
Patient Portal information  (562) 907-1718
Peds Sub Acute Unit/The
  Children's Center  (562) 907-1770
Perinatal Specialty Center  (562) 696-2053
Physician Referral Line  (800) 613-4291
Transportation Services
  For appointments,
  questions or Comments  (562) 907-1600
Surgical Services  (562) 907-7315
Volunteers  (562) 464-6341
Women’s Health Centers
  La Puente  (626) 913-4795
  La Mirada  (562) 941-9110
  Up Town Whittier  (562) 693-8541
  Pico Rivera  (562) 801-2287
  La Habra  (562) 905-2660
  Rowland Heights  (626) 965-0150
  Norwalk  (562) 868-6919

MAIN NUMBER
(562) 945-3561

Administrative Supervisor
(562) 945-8432

Admitting – Main office
(562) 907-1607

Business Office/Medi-Cal
Eligibility Program
(562) 907-1612

Case Manager/Discharge Planning
(562) 907-7310

Dietitian
(562) 907-1687

Financial Counselors
(562) 907-1568
(562) 907-1610
(562) 464-6318
(562) 464-6376

Food Request Hotline
(562) 907-1688

Front Desk/Security Guard
(562) 907-1620

Lactation Specialist
(562) 945-3561 extension 1422

Social Services
(562) 907-7191

Volunteers
(562) 464-6341
Financial Information

For ER Physician billing, please call
Emergency Medical Management Association
(909) 629-8088

For Radiology/Pathology billing, please call
Rand Medical Billing
(888) 582-3397

For Anesthesia billing, please call
Colima Anesthesia Group
(949) 588-2190

Patient Billing

Remember that hospitals and doctors charge separately.
Your account with us consists of charges for services provided by the hospital's staff, your room, meals, and the use of equipment and supplies. Physicians are not employees of the hospital. Your doctor(s) will bill you separately, as will any in-house physicians encountered during your stay, including emergency department physicians, anesthesiologists, pathologists, radiologists and consulting physicians.

Insurance Information

Medicare
Medicare will be billed directly for your hospital stay. After the hospital receives payment from Medicare, you will be billed for any remaining co-pays or deductibles not covered by your insurance company. Payment or balance will be due upon receipt of notice.

Other Insurance (including HMOs and PPOs)
Your insurance company will be billed directly for your hospital stay. You will be notified of co-pays or deductibles not covered by your insurance company. Payment of balance will be due upon receipt of notice.

Uninsured Patients
You will be asked to pay an estimated deposit based on your anticipated length of stay and type of service. If necessary, we can help you arrange a payment plan. We also provide a special cash pricing program. For more information or assistance, please call our Financial Counselor at (562) 907-1568. For other questions regarding billing or collections, please call our Central Business Office at 888-214-3874.

Covered California
Individuals or families that are interested in obtaining information regarding health insurance coverage through Covered California, Whittier Hospital’s certified educators are available to answer any questions or address any concerns you might have. Please call us at (888) 214-3874, we will be glad to assist you in any way we can.

Financial Counselors

If you are uninsured or underinsured, Financial Counselors are available to help you make arrangements for a payment program. For your convenience, we accept the following types of payment:

- Checks (personal or traveler’s)
- Cash
- American Express
- Visa
- MasterCard
- Discover
Directions for Telephone Use

**Internal Calls**
Dial only the four-digit extension

**Local Calls**
Dial 9 + number

**Operator Assisted**
Dial 0 and ask the operator for assistance

**Calling Cards**
Dial 9, then follow calling card instructions

**Hospital Operator**
Dial 0 or ask your nurse for assistance

Telephone Usage

Private phone lines are provided by the hospital in each patient room at no charge. Local calls are free of charge. For sensory impaired patients, Whittier Hospital Medical Center provides interpreters (language/sign) and TDD telephone access.

Parking

The parking lot in front of the hospital is reserved for handicapped persons and physicians. Parking for visitors and guests is available in the parking lot across Janine Drive. Proceed through the parking attendant gate and retain your ticket. The volunteers at the Information Desk in the main Lobby will be happy to validate your parking ticket.

Interpreters

Because we serve a multi-ethnic community, many of our patients do not speak English fluently. In response to that need, we have bilingual interpreters who communicate with our non-English speaking patients and visitors. If a bilingual interpreter is not immediately available, we will use a blue double handset phone to contact certified translators so we can communicate with you and treat your needs.

Visitor Information

We welcome family and friends who play an important part in the health care of their loved ones. We strive to balance the support of visitors with the rest patients need and the quality care we need to give to them.

Whittier Hospital offers patients the comfort and convenience of having family members and friends visit 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout the year.

Please help us ensure the comfort and safety of all patients by following the guidelines below.

Some units have special visiting hours because of the nature of the patient care, or the special needs of the patients. For example, Intensive Care Units have special requirements as follows: Only immediate family members may visit patients in Intensive Care. Visiting times and duration of stay are determined by the nurse, depending on the patient’s condition, and visitation is not allowed from 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m. or 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

In order to assure that patients receive proper attention, and to maintain the patient’s privacy, we ask that visitors leave the patient’s room while the doctor is there or when treatment is being given.

To locate the room number of a patient in the hospital, inquire at the Information Desk in the lobby or call the PBX Operator.

In order to protect the health of our patients, visitors with cold, fever and cough symptoms may not visit at any time.
Visiting Hours

**Intensive Care Unit**
Immediate family only. Limited to two visitors at a time.

**Labor and Delivery**
Support persons are allowed during labor. No children in labor rooms.

**Med/Surg and DOU**
Limited to two visitors at a time. Visit should be limited to one hour.

**Post-Partum Unit**
Limited to two visitors at a time.

**Siblings Visits**
Limit to ½ hour. Children must be accompanied by an adult and children with symptoms of illness may not visit.

Quiet Time
We observe Quiet Time daily from 2:00pm – 4:00pm. At this time, the lights are dimmed in the hallways, staff and visitors are requested to keep interactions with patients at a minimum so our patients can REST. We know that when patients are allowed to rest, they heal more quickly and have shorter hospital stays. Please assist us to observe Quiet Time.

Zen Garden
Please enjoy the serenity of our Zen Garden while you visit your loved one. To access the Garden please use the entrance next to the Intensive Care Unit (See map).

Food Services

**Patient Meals**
The goal of our Food Services Department is to provide you with a nutritious and satisfying meal so you can heal. Our dietitians prepare a variety of menus according to your doctor’s instructions. Each day, you are given a menu to select meals for the following day.

If your doctor wants you to adhere to a special diet after you are discharged form the hospital, the dietitian will be available to explain the diet and how you can adapt it to your lifestyle.

Cafeteria
The cafeteria is located on the first floor of the hospital. Whether you want a meal, a sandwich or a visit to the salad bar, this is the place to come! Coffee and tea are available 24 hours/day and are complimentary.

Cafeteria weekday/weekend hours are as follows:

- **Breakfast**: 6:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
- **Lunch**: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- **Dinner**: 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Vending machines are available in the cafeteria if you want a quick snack or soft drink.

“Added Touch” Gift Shop
The Gift Shop is located in the Front Lobby. It is open from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. It provides a variety of books, gifts, flowers, candy and personal care supplies. (The Gift Shop accepts either cash, MasterCard, Visa or American Express. Gift shop proceeds go toward the Whittier Hospital Volunteer Scholarship Fund.)
Wireless Network for Internet Access

Whittier Hospital offers free wireless high-speed Internet access to our patients and visitors. In order to connect to wireless networks, follow these steps:

1. Enable the wireless feature on your computer
2. Connect to the WhittierWIFI network
3. Once you are connected, open your web browser
4. You can now browse the web normally.

Below you will find some important facts you need to know about your use of Whittier Hospital guest wireless network internet connection.

- As with most public wireless hot spots, WHMC Guest Wireless Network is not secure. There can be unknown third parties between a user and anybody with whom the user communicates. Another wireless user could potentially intercept any information being sent or received. Cautious and informed wireless users should not transmit their credit card information, passwords and any other sensitive personal information while using any wireless “hot spot.”
- Whittier Hospital assumes no responsibility, and shall not be liable for any loss of data, damages, or viruses that may infect your computer equipment or other property on account of your access to, use of, or browsing in any website, or your downloading of any materials from websites.
- Any restriction or monitoring of a minor’s access to the hospital’s guest wireless network is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- Whittier Hospital cannot guarantee that your hardware will work with the hospital's Guest Wireless Network.
- If you have problems accessing the Internet over the hospital Guest Wireless Network, staff cannot assist in making changes to your network settings or perform any troubleshooting on your device. You should refer to the owners’ manual for your device or other support services offered by your device manufacturer.

Whittier Hospital is not responsible for the security of any electronic devices and will not assume liability for these devices.

Patient Portal

Your patient portal is a free online service that gives 24/7 access to information about your visit. Your Patient Portal is a secure and convenient way to:

- View prescribed medications
- View allergies identified during your visit
- Discuss your medical information with your physicians
- Be more informed and prepared for planned follow-up care.

Your Patient Portal uses a secure, encrypted connection that meets the highest industry standards. Your personal and medical information in your Patient Portal is confidential.
Only you or those you authorize will be able to see or access to the information in your Patient Portal. We will not share, sell or lease your information.

To set up and access your Patient Portal, all you need is access to a computer, tablet, laptop or smartphone, an internet connection and an email account. You will receive an email invitation to create your Patient Portal account. Follow the instructions on the link in the email to start registration. If you have any questions, please call us at (562) 907-1718, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at whmcportal@ahmchealth.com.

**Catch our Shining Stars Caring!**

Our goal is to deliver compassionate, quality care and services to our patients and their families at all times. We want to celebrate staff that demonstrate our core values and go above and beyond the normal expectations of their job. Please let us know if you would like to recognize your shining star. “Catch our Shining Stars Caring” cards are available for you to complete in all units.

**Discharge Phone Call**

Once you go home, you may get a discharge call from someone calling for Whittier Hospital. The call is to make sure you are doing well, and to see if you have any questions or concerns about your medications or discharge information. If you do, we will be notified so our Nursing staff can return your call. The call will be coming from an outside company in Alabama, with a 205 area code; they will be representing Whittier Hospital. In addition, two weeks later, you may get another phone call from Alabama from the same company asking how well we took care of you. We would really appreciate your responding to these calls.

**Fall Prevention**

We are concerned about your safety and want to take every precaution possible to prevent a fall while you are in the hospital. Your hospitalization alone puts you at an increased risk for falls, but other factors such as fatigue, weakness, pain and medications may distort your ability to function normally. Listed below are some tips for you to use while you are in the hospital, so that we can help prevent a fall or accident from occurring:

- Keep the call light within reach at all times
- Keep the walkway around your bed free of obstacles and/or tripping hazards.
- Observe any “wet floor” signage and avoid walking on the surface until dry.
- Keep the bed in the “LOW” position at all times. Keep the side-rails at the head of the bed up so they can be used as supports.
- Wear anti-slip walking slippers when walking.
- Leave the light on in the bathroom.
- If you feel weak and/or dizzy, do not try to get out of bed without the assistance of one of your caregivers.
- If you received a medication within the past hour, call for assistance to ambulate or get out of bed.
- Do not go to the bathroom alone.
- Do not get up alone following a procedure. Ask for assistance.
Patient Safety

The Safety of our Patients is the **number one priority** for all of our staff in the hospital, at all times. Our commitment to safety and a safe environment is enhanced when our patients and their families take an active role in assuring the care they are receiving is safe and appropriate for their condition. Patients and families can actively participate in their care plan by asking questions, becoming involved, expecting explanations, observing hand washing and/or sanitizing before all patient encounters, and questioning the caregivers about medication and their effect. We are committed to improving the quality of care and service provided by our hospital and we can accomplish our goal with your feedback.

How to file a complaint or grievance

**Directly to the Hospital**

Mail: Whittier Hospital Medical Center, 9080 Colima Road, Whittier, CA 90605-1898  
ATT: Quality/Risk Management  
Phone: 562-945-3561 and ask for the Director of Quality/Risk Management

**To California Department of Public Health Licensing**

Mail: California Department of Public Health Licensing Division –  
3400 Aero Jet Avenue, Suite 323 – El Monte, CA 91731  
Phone: 626-569-3724 OR 800-228-1019

**To The Joint Commission (the accrediting agency utilized by WHMC)**

Online: Submit a new complaint. | Submit an update to a complaint.  
(You must have your complaint reference number)  
E-mail: complaint@jointcommission.org  
Fax: 630-792-5636  
Mail: Office of Quality and Patient Safety  
The Joint Commission - One Renaissance Boulevard - Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181

*SPEAK UP™  HELP PREVENT ERRORS IN YOUR CARE*

Speak up if you questions or concerns. If you still do not understand, ask again. It is your body and you have a right to know. If you do not understand because you speak another language, ask for someone who speaks your language. Do not be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to get the wrong medicine.  
Pay attention to the care you get. Always make sure you are getting the right treatments and medicines by the right health care professionals. Do not assume anything. Expect caregivers to introduce themselves. Look for their identification (ID) badge. Notice if the caregiver washed or sanitized their hands before providing care – do not be afraid to remind him or her to do so. Make sure that the caregiver checks your ID – make sure he or she asks your name before they give you medicine or treatment.  
Educate yourself about your illness. Learn about the medical tests you get, and your treatment plan. Ask for information about your condition. Read all forms before signing them – if you do not understand, ask the caregiver to explain them. Make sure you know how to work any equipment that is being used in your care.  
Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate (advisor or supporter). Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think about when you are stressed or may remember answers to questions you have asked. Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. They should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse. He or she should know who to call for help.
Know what medicine you take and why you take them. Medicine errors are the most common health care mistake. If you do not recognize a medicine, have the caregiver double-check that it is really for you. Tell your doctors and nurses about allergies that you have, or negative reactions you have had to medicines. Carry an up-to-date list of medicines you are taking in your purse or wallet. Go over the list with your doctor and other caregivers.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has been carefully checked out. For example, The Joint Commission visits hospitals to see if they are meeting The Joint Commission's quality standards. Before you leave the hospital, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all the instructions.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team. You and your doctor should agree on what will be done during each step of your care. Know who will be taking care of you and how long the treatment will last. Talk to your doctor and your family about your wishes regarding resuscitation and other life-saving actions.

We encourage you to SpeakUP™ for your safety! Thank you for choosing Whittier Hospital Medical Center for your healthcare needs.

**SPEAK-UP™ FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT INFECTION**

Avoiding contagious common cold, strep throat, and the flu is important to everyone. Here are five easy things you can do to fight the spread of infection.

1. **Clean your hands.**
   - Use soap and warm water. Rub your hands really well for at least 15 seconds. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers, and the backs of your hands.
   - Or, if your hands do not look dirty, clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Rub the sanitizer all over your hands, especially under your nails and between your fingers, until your hands are dry.
   - Clean your hands before touching or eating food. Clean them after you use the bathroom, take out the trash, change a diaper, visit someone who is ill, or play with a pet.

2. **Make sure health care providers clean their hands or wear gloves.**
   - Doctors, nurses, dentists and other health care providers are exposed to lots of bacteria and viruses. So before they treat you, ask them if they have cleaned their hands.
   - Health care providers should wear clean gloves when they perform tasks such as taking throat cultures, pulling teeth, taking blood, touching wounds or body fluids, and examining your mouth or private parts. Do not be afraid to ask them if they should wear gloves.

3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**
   - Many diseases are spread through sneezes and coughs. When you sneeze or cough, the germs can travel 3 feet or more! Cover your mouth and nose to prevent the spread of infection to others.
   - Use a tissue! Keep tissues handy at home, at work and in your pocket. Be sure to throw away used tissues and clean your hands after coughing or sneezing.
   - If you do not have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with the bend of your elbow or hands. If you use your hands, clean them right away.

4. **If you are sick, avoid close contact with others.**
   - If you are sick, stay away from other people or stay home. Do not shake hands or touch others.
   - When you go for medical treatment, call ahead and ask if there is anything you can do to avoid infecting people in the waiting room.
5. Get shots to avoid disease and fight the spread of infection. Make sure that your vaccinations are current—even for adults. Check with your doctor about shots you may need. Vaccinations are available to prevent these diseases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Disease</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken pox</td>
<td>Mumps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Diphtheria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tetanus</td>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shingles</td>
<td>Meningitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flu (also known as influenza)</td>
<td>Whooping cough (also known as Pertussis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>German measles (also known as Rubella)</td>
<td>Pneumonia (Streptococcus pneumoniae)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human papillomavirus (HPV)</td>
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SPEAK-UP™  WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PAIN MANAGEMENT

Talking About Your Pain

- **Is it important for doctors and nurses to constantly ask about your pain?**
  Yes. This is because pain changes over time or your pain medicine may not be working. Doctors and nurses should ask about your pain regularly.

- **What do you need to tell your doctor and nurse about your pain?**
  First, tell them that you have pain, even if they do not ask. Your doctor or nurse may ask you to describe how bad your pain is on a scale of 0 (zero) to 10 with 10 being the worst pain. They may use other pain scales that use words, colors, faces or pictures. Tell them where and when it hurts. Tell them if you cannot sleep nor do things like dressing or climbing stairs because of pain. The more they know about your pain the better they can treat it. The following words can be used to describe your pain:

  - □ aching
  - □ bloating
  - □ burning
  - □ cramping
  - □ comes and goes
  - □ constant
  - □ cutting
  - □ dull
  - □ numbing
  - □ pressing
  - □ pressure
  - □ pulling
  - □ radiating
  - □ searing
  - □ sharp
  - □ shooting
  - □ soreness
  - □ stabbing
  - □ throbbing
  - □ tightness

- **What can you do when your pain gets worse?**
  Tell your doctor or nurse. Tell them how bad your pain is or if you are in pain most of the time. Tell the doctor if the pain medicine you are taking is not helping.

- **Should you include pain medicine on your list of medicines or medication card?**
  Yes! Even pain medicine that you will take for a short time should be listed with all of your other medicines. List all of your pain medicines—those prescribed by your doctor and those you buy over-the-counter.
Managing Your Pain

- **What can be done to treat pain?**
  There are many ways to manage your pain. There are medicines that can be used to relieve pain. There are also other ways to treat pain without taking medicine. Your doctor will work with you to find out what works best for you.

- **What are some of the medicines used to treat pain?**
  Some pain medicines are acetaminophen, aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen and opioids. Opioids include morphine, oxycodone and hydromorphone. Many of these medicines come in pills, liquids, suppositories and skin patches. Some pain may be treated with medicines that are not usually thought of as pain relievers. For example: antidepressants.

- **Are there other ways to relieve pain?**
  That will depend on your illness or condition and how much pain you have. Sometimes pain can be relieved in other ways, such as exercise, positioning, heat, or cold, etc.

- **What are the side effects of pain medicine?**
  It depends on the medicine. Side effects can include constipation, nausea, vomiting, itching and sleepiness.

- **What can you do if you have side effects or a bad reaction?**
  Call your doctor or nurse as soon as possible. Find out what can be done to treat the side effect. As if there is another pain medicine that may work better for you.

- **Are you afraid to take a pain medication?**
  You may have had a bad experience taking pain medicine in the past, such as a side effect or bad reaction. Or you may be taking a lot of other medicines. Your doctor or nurse should be able to ease your fears. It's important that you take your medicine.

- **Are you afraid that you'll become addicted to pain medicine?**
  This is a common concern of patients. Studies show that addiction is unlikely. This is especially true if the patient has never had an addiction. Talk to your doctor or nurse about your fears.

- **Are you afraid that your pain medicine won't work if you take it for a long time?**
  This is called “tolerance”. It means that after a while you body gets used to the medicine and you need to make a change to get pain relief. It’s also possible that the condition causing your pain is getting worse or you have a new type of pain. You may need more medicine or a different kind of medicine to control your pain. Talk to your doctor or nurse.

- **Can you crush pills if you can’t swallow them?**
  Check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Some medicines can be crushed and some cannot. For example, time-release medicines should not be crushed. Ask your doctor or nurse if the medicine comes in a liquid or can be given another way.

**SPEAK-UP™ HELP AVOID MISTAKES WITH YOUR MEDICINES**

**Who is responsible for your medicines?** A lot of people—including you!
- Doctors check all of your medicines to make sure they are OK to take together. They will also check your vitamins, herbs, diet supplements or natural remedies.
- Pharmacists will check your new medicines to see if there are other medicines, foods or drinks you should not take with your new medicines. This helps to avoid a bad reaction.
- Nurses and other caregivers may prepare medicines or give them to you.
- You need to give your doctors, pharmacists and other caregivers a list of your medicines. This list should include, prescription medicines, vitamins, over-the-counter medicines (for example, aspirin), herbs, diet supplements, natural remedies, recreational drugs and the amount of alcohol you drink each day of the week.
What should you know about your medicines?

- Make sure you can read the handwriting on the prescription. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to read it either. You can ask to have the prescription printed.
- Read the label. Make sure it has your name on it and the right medicine name.
- Make sure that you understand all of the instructions for your medicines.
- If you have doubts about a medicine, ask your doctor, pharmacist or caregiver about it.

What if you forget the instructions for taking a medicine or are not sure about taking it?
Call your doctor or pharmacist. Don't be afraid to ask questions about any of your medicines.

What can you do at the hospital or clinic to help avoid mistakes with your medicines?

- Make sure your doctors, nurses and other caregivers check your wristband and ask your name before giving you medicine. Some patients get a medicine that was supposed to go to another patient.
- Don't be afraid to tell a caregiver if you think you are about to get the wrong medicine.
- Know what time you should get a medicine. If you don't get it then, speak up.
- Tell your caregiver if you don't feel well after taking a medicine. Ask for help immediately if you think you are having a side effect or reaction.
- You may be given IV (intravenous) fluids. Read the bag to find out what is in it. Ask the caregiver how long it should take for the liquid to run out. Tell the caregiver if it's dripping too fast or too slow.
- Get a list of your medicines—including your new ones. Read the list carefully. Make sure it lists everything you are taking. If you're not well enough to do this, ask a friend or relative to help.

Questions to ask your doctor or pharmacist

- How will this new medicine help you?
- Are there other names for this medicine? For example, does it have a brand or generic name?
- Is there any written information about the medicine?
- Can you take this medicine with your allergy? Remind your doctor about your allergies and reactions you have had to medicines.
- Is it safe to take this medicine with your other medicines? Is it safe to take it with your vitamins, herbs and supplements?
- Are there any side effects of the medicine? For example, upset stomach. Who can you call if you have side effects or a bad reaction? Can they be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week?
- Are there specific instructions for your medicines? For example, are there any foods or drinks you should avoid while taking it?
- Can you stop taking the medicine as soon as you feel better? Or do you need to take it until it's gone?
- Do you need to swallow or chew the medicine? Can you cut or crush it if you need to?
- Is it safe to drink alcohol with the medicine?
SPEAK-UP™ UNDERSTANDING YOUR DOCTORS AND OTHER CAREGIVERS

What can you do if you don’t understand what your caregiver is saying?
Tell them you don’t understand. Use body language. If you don’t understand shake your head to show that “No, I don’t understand.” Ask lots of questions. By asking questions you’re helping them understand what you need.

What can you do if they explain and you still don’t understand?
Tell them you still don’t understand. Try to be as clear as possible about what you do not understand. Caregivers have a duty to help you understand. You should not leave until you understand what to do and what is happening to you.

What if the caregiver is rushed and doesn’t have time to answer your questions?
Tell them you need more information and ask for a time when they can come and answer your questions.

What can you do if you speak another language?
Ask for someone who speaks your language. This person can help you talk to caregivers. This person should work for the hospital or health center. Their job is to help people who speak other languages. This person may not be present, but may be on the telephone. You have the right to get free help from someone who speaks your language. Ask if there is paper work in your language.

What can you do if you have trouble reading or if you cannot read?
Don’t be embarrassed. Tell your caregivers. They can help you. They can explain paper work to you. They may even have paper work that is easy to read and understand.

Your doctor’s instructions are not clear. Should you try to figure it out yourself?
No. Instructions from your doctor or others are important. Tell them what you think the instructions are. Tell them if they need to write down the instructions. Tell them if you have a family member or friend who helps you take your medicine. Ask the doctor to have someone talk to your family member or friend, too.

What if you don’t understand written instructions?
Tell your caregivers. Tell them that you need to have the instructions read to you. Tell them you need instructions that are easy to read. Or that you need instructions in your language.

What can you do if you don’t understand the instructions for your medicine?
Tell your doctor if you need help. Tell them what you think the instructions are. Tell them if you don’t understand how to take your medicine. Tell them if you don’t understand when to take your medicine. Some patients don’t understand and take too much or too little of the medicine. That can be dangerous.

How can you remember all of your medicines?
Ask for a card for your medicines. Ask your caregiver to help you write down the medicines and the amount you take. Bring the card with you every time you go to the doctor.

The doctor says I need to have a “procedure”. What does that mean?
A procedure can be an operation or a treatment. A procedure can be a test with special equipment. You might be put to sleep or a part of your body might be numbed. Ask questions about what will be done to you. If you speak another language, ask for someone who speaks your language. Even if you’re in the emergency room, you need to understand what will happen to you.
What is informed consent?
Informed consent means that you know how your illness or condition will be treated. It means that you agree to the operation or treatment. It means that you understand the risks. That you know about other treatments available to you. And that you know what can happen if you aren’t treated. You will be asked to sign paperwork after you agree to the treatment. You need to decide if you will sign or not sign the paperwork only after you understand all that was explained to you.

You don’t understand the paperwork you’re given to fill out. What can you do?
Ask caregivers to explain the paperwork. Ask them if they can help you fill it out.

Your caregiver asked you to do something that is against your culture or religion. What can you do?
Tell your caregiver about your culture. Or tell them about your religious beliefs. Explain to them what you need to do. When they know what is important to you, they can understand better how to take care of you. There may be a way to meet your care giver’s needs and your needs.

Where can you find more information about your illness or condition?
You can ask another doctor for their opinion. Visit your local library. Ask the people who work at the library for help. If you use a computer, you can look on the Internet. You can try the Medical Library Association by typing in www.mlanet.org/resources/consumer_index.html. Or try Medline Plus by typing in http://medlineplus.gov. You should talk to your doctor about what you learn.

SPEAK-UP™ HELP PREVENT MEDICAL TEST MISTAKES

What if you don’t understand the medical forms you’re asked to sign?
Ask staff to explain the forms. Don’t sign anything until you understand what you are signing. Also, keep your eyeglasses with you so you can read forms, labels and other information.

How do you know that the test results are yours?
Staff should ask for your full name and another piece of information, such as your birth date. If they don’t, speak up. Ask to see the labels on the containers that your samples are put in. The label should have your full name and another piece of personal information. Also, make sure that the containers are immediately sealed to prevent mislabeling and contamination.

What if you don’t understand what is being done and why?
Ask the health care worker to stop the test and explain what he or she is doing.

How can you be sure that the test you get is the one ordered by your doctor?
Get a copy of the test order from your doctor and take it to the test. Also, if you think you are about to get the wrong test, don’t be afraid to tell staff.

You’re supposed to get a “contrast agent.” What is this?
A “contrast agent” is a liquid that makes organs and blood vessels more visible on X-rays and other tests. If you get a contrast agent and begin itching or have trouble breathing, tell the health care worker. If you are pregnant or nursing, ask your doctor and the health care worker if there is anything that should be done before or after the test to protect you and your baby.

What is a “MRI” and how do you prepare for it?
MRI stands for magnetic resonance imaging. The MRI machine has magnets inside it that are used to take a picture of your body. These strong magnets can quickly pull metal objects into the MRI machine, which can cause injuries. The machine also can heat up metal objects causing burns. If you get a MRI, be sure to remove all metal from your body—such as hairpins—and tell the health care worker if you have any implants in your body.
Your test results show something is wrong. What should you do?
Talk with your doctor and with one or more specialists to decide what the best treatment is for you. You’ll be able to make the best decision when you have more information.

What should you do if you have a bad experience at the laboratory or test facility?
If the lab or facility is part of a hospital, call them so that they can correct the problem. You can also file a complaint with the accrediting organization (like the Joint Commission) or licensing authority. The Joint Commission provides a complaint form on its website at www.jointcommission.org.

Don’t assume that no news is good news.
Always ask how and when you should get your test results. Follow-up with the doctor who ordered the test. Talking with your doctor and other health care workers can be important in getting the treatment you need as soon as possible.

Questions to ask your doctor…
- Why is this test being done? What should it tell you about my health?
- Can I get a copy of my test order to take to the place where the test is being done?
- Are there any foods or drinks I should avoid before or after the test? For how long before or after the test should I avoid the food and drink?
- Should I take my medicine before the test?
- Is there anything else I need to do to prepare for the test?
- Are there any side effects of the test? Will it be painful or uncomfortable? Is it unusual to have pain or discomfort?
- Can I call or visit the laboratory or test facility before I go to take the test?

Questions to ask the health care workers who give the test or take your blood…
- Is this facility accredited? Is it inspected by a government agency? When was the last inspection? What was the result?
- Have you washed your hands?
- Do you need to wear gloves while you take my blood or sample?
- When will the results be ready? How will my doctor and I be informed of the results?
- Will you quickly notify me if the test shows a problem that needs immediate action? Will you notify my doctor, too?
- Can you give me a telephone number to call if I have questions?

SPEAK-UP™ HELP AVOID MISTAKES IN SURGERY

For your safety, the staff may ask you the same question many times. They will ask:
- Your name
- Your date of birth
- What kind of surgery you are having
- The part of your body to be operated on
- They will also double-check the records from your doctor’s office.

Preparing for your surgery
Ask your doctor…
- Are there any prescription or over-the-counter medicines that you should not take before your surgery?
- Can you eat or drink before your surgery?
- Should you trim your nails and remove any nail polish?
- If you have other questions, write them down. Take your list of questions with you when you see your doctor.
Ask someone you trust to…
- Take you to and from the surgery facility
- Be with you at the hospital or surgery facility. This person can make sure you get the care you need to feel comfortable and safe.

Before you leave home…
- Shower and wash your hair. Do not wear make-up. Your caregivers need to see your skin to check your blood circulation.
- Leave your jewelry, money and other valuables at home.

At the surgery facility
The staff will ask you to sign an Informed Consent form. Read it carefully. It includes:
- Your name
- The kind of surgery you will have
- The risks of your surgery
- That you talked to your doctor about risks and benefits of the surgery and have your questions been answered. If you do not understand something on the form – SPEAK UP.

Before your surgery
- A health care profession will mark the spot on your body to be operated on. Make sure they mark only the correct part and nowhere else. This helps avoid mistakes.
- Marking usually happens when you are awake. Sometimes you cannot be awake for the marking. If this happens, a family member or friend or another health care worker can watch the marking. They can make sure that your correct body part is marked.
- Your neck, upper back or lower back will be marked if you are having spine surgery. The surgeon will check the exact place on your spine in the operating room after you are asleep.
- Ask your surgeon if they will take a “time out” just before your surgery. This is done to make sure they are doing the right surgery on the right body part on the right person.

After your surgery
- Tell your doctor or nurse about your pain. Hospitals and other surgical facilities that are accredited by The Joint Commission must help relieve your pain.
- Ask questions about medicines that are given to you, especially new medicines. What is it? What is it for? Are there any side effects? Tell your caregivers about any allergies you have to medicines. If you have more questions about a medicine, talk to your doctor or nurse before taking it.
- Find out about any IV (intravenous) fluids that you are given. These are liquids that drip from a bag into your vein. Ask how long the liquid should take to “run out”. Tell the nurse if it seems to be dripping too fast or too slow.
- Ask your doctor if you will need therapy or medicines after you leave the hospital.
- Ask when you can resume activities like work, exercise and travel.
- Your agreement to have the surgery.
WHITTIER HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER
FIRST FLOOR

CAFETERIA
CAFETERIA HOURS
BREAKFAST 6:30 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.
LUNCH 11:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
DINNER 4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

* PLEASE ENJOY THE SERENITY OF OUR ZEN GARDEN WHILE YOU VISIT YOUR LOVED ONE.