



Preparing to Leave the Hospital

What you need to know. How you should prepare.

This brochure will help you manage your health once you leave the hospital. As you are getting ready to leave the hospital, there are some things you should know to help you reduce the chances of coming back. You should also share this brochure with family members or friends who help with your care. Let's start with some background on schizophrenia.

Understanding Schizophrenia

Reducing risk of relapse is important for managing your health.

Schizophrenia is a chronic condition. You may have it for the rest of your life. One way to help reduce your chance of having a relapse is to follow your treatment team's directions and take your medicine exactly as it was prescribed for you. It is also important for you to keep all of your appointments with your treatment team. Every appointment is important for you to stay healthy.

Relapses in schizophrenia

Relapse is when your symptoms get worse after you have been feeling well for some time. During a relapse, you may need to go to the hospital again. Relapses can keep happening, and for some, may get worse over time. That is why reducing your chances of having a relapse is so important. Schizophrenia is not your fault! There are things you can do to help reduce your chances of having a relapse. Your treatment team can help you stay well and avoid relapses.

Below are some symptoms of schizophrenia. If you experience any of these symptoms or they become severe, it could be a sign of relapse and you should contact your doctor or treatment team right away.

- **Feeling tense or angry**
- **Feeling afraid**
- **Difficulty sleeping such as sleeping during the day or nighttime activity**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Feeling confused**
- **Having disorganized speech**
- **Not trusting other people**
- **Hearing, seeing, or sensing things that others do not (e.g., delusions and hallucinations)**
- **Having unusual thoughts or beliefs that are untrue (e.g., about fame, power, wealth, and abilities)**
- **Thinking, speaking, or behaving in a way that is chaotic, confused, and does not make sense to others**
- **Not being able to follow conversations**



Your symptoms may be similar or different than other patients with schizophrenia. If you are worried about the way you are feeling, call a member of your treatment team right away. You can also ask friends and family to be aware of these symptoms so they can help you stay well.

Medication for schizophrenia

Medication is an important part of the treatment for schizophrenia.

Medications for schizophrenia may help:

- **manage your symptoms**
- **reduce your chances of relapsing**

Taking your medicine as instructed can help you manage your schizophrenia. If you have problems with your medicine, talk to your doctor or treatment team. Do not stop taking your medicine without talking to them first.

Talk to the hospital team about your medicines before you leave the hospital. Some of your medicines may have changed. Be sure you know what you should be taking and when.

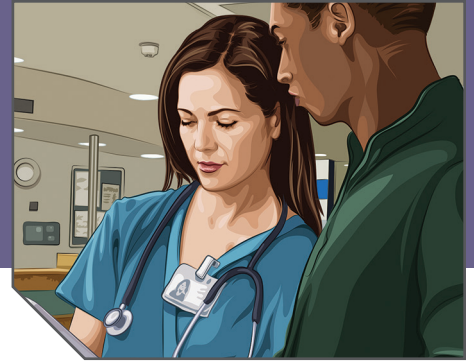
Taking your medication may help manage your schizophrenia.

Follow-up appointments

Follow-up appointments will be part of your care after you leave the hospital. Make every effort to keep these appointments, even if you are feeling fine. They are important. If you are not able to keep an appointment as scheduled, be sure to reschedule it as soon as possible.



Getting Organized



There are a few things you should know before you leave the hospital.

You should have answers to all the following questions before you leave. You can write the answers in the blank spaces provided. Or, have someone else fill in the answers for you. Just be sure that you understand all the information provided.

Emergency Contact Information:

Who do I contact if I have questions or problems after I leave the hospital and before my first follow-up appointment?

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Diagnosis and Medicines:

What is my diagnosis? _____

What signs of relapse should I be watching for? _____

What should I do if I suspect a relapse is coming? _____

What can I do to help prevent a relapse? _____

Am I being prescribed any new medicines? _____

Before you leave the hospital, work with the treatment team to help you fill out the following medications table.

Medication 1:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Medication 2:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Medication 3:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Medications table continued from previous page.

Medication 4:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Medication 5:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Medication 6:

Name:

Dosage:

What is it for/How does it help me:

How and when should I take it:

Are there special instructions
(e.g., with or without food):

What side effects may occur/
What should I do about them:

When and where will I refill
my medicine:

Case managers, social workers, and advocates are important members of your treatment team.

Your treatment team can help you:

- understand and manage your schizophrenia
- understand why your treatment is important
- make arrangements as you leave the hospital, including transportation
- manage your follow-up care and appointments
- fill out Medicaid and Social Security Disability forms
- find a place to live if needed



Follow-up Care:

My next appointment with my doctor or treatment team is _____

My doctor or primary care team contact name and phone number are _____

My next appointment with my community mental health clinic is _____

The name and phone number for my health clinic are _____

If you need to arrange transportation to your appointments, be sure to schedule it several days in advance. If you need help finding transportation, talk to your case manager or social worker.

Additional Help:

If you feel overwhelmed by the follow-up care that you need, ask a case worker for referrals for support groups or home care services.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay for your care, ask about payment options, including whether financial assistance is available.

Questions? Concerns?

Never hesitate to ask. You have a right to know everything about your health and your care.

If you have any questions or concerns about your condition or your care, ask your doctor or member of your treatment team right away. They are there to help you.