

Patient Handbook



Northwest
Medical Center

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Tucson, AZ 85741
520-742-9000
northwestmedicalcenter.com



Northwest Medical Center

Patient's
Name: _____



Northwest Medical Center • Northwest Medical Center Oro Valley
Marana Urgent Care & Outpatient Services
Rancho Vistoso Urgent Care & Outpatient Services
Urgent Care and Pediatric Urgent Care • The Women's Center
Women's Imaging & Diagnostics • Lazos de Familia



On behalf of Northwest Medical Center, I would like to welcome you to our hospital. Since 1983, we have been committed to the health and well-being of people in our community. I sincerely hope you take as much pride in having NMC in your neighborhood as we do in being your health-care provider.



We are proud of our legacy of caring and our history of excellence in medicine. Our dedicated staff of more than 500 physicians represents more than 30 specialties including obstetrics and gynecology, surgery, cardiology, oncology, neurology, orthopedics and many others. Our well-trained and compassionate nurses and professional staff are here to serve your needs.

Remember that you, as a patient, are also a member of your healthcare team. We encourage you to ask questions and be an active participant in your treatment and care. This Patient Handbook has been created to provide you with important information about our facilities, services and policies to help make your stay as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

The handbook is divided into two parts: *Preparing for Your Hospital Stay* and *During Your Hospital Stay*. We ask that you not only read the book to familiarize yourself with the hospital environment but also bring the handbook with you as a reference tool while you are here.

We recognize that you have many healthcare options. Thank you for choosing Northwest Medical Center. We are honored to be your healthcare provider. I offer you my best wishes for a full and complete recovery.

Phil Gustafson
CEO
Northwest Health System



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Preparing for Your
Hospital Stay

Your Hospital *Admission*

When checking in for inpatient admission or outpatient services, you may be asked to provide personal and financial information about yourself. The information you share with our trained admissions representative becomes part of your medical record and is kept confidential.

Don't Forget to Bring Your:

- > Social Security Card
- > Picture Identification
- > All Active Insurance Cards
- > Any Advance Directive (Living Will, Power of Attorney)

Payment Options

Arrangements for payment of your hospital bill should be made prior to or at the time of admission. If you do not have insurance, or your insurance coverage is insufficient, one of our financial counselors will work with you to discuss payment options. An advance deposit is required for non-emergency care when your insurance company is not expected to cover anticipated charges, or you have no insurance coverage.

Pre-Admission Testing (P.A.T.)

Some surgery patients are required to undergo simple pre-admission testing prior to admission. These tests are usually ordered by your physician's office or by the anesthesiologist. You will be called to schedule an appointment if you need to come to the hospital for testing. For your convenience, Pre-Admission Testing (P.A.T.) is in the same location as Outpatient/Admitting. Hospital representatives will make sure test results are communicated to your physician prior to your admission.

If you have questions about whether you need to come in for Pre-Admission Testing, or if you need to make arrangements in advance, call Central Scheduling Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m., 469-8810.

Preparing for *Surgery*

Inform your physician of any treatments you are currently using such as herbal medicines, vitamins, nutritional supplements, prescription or over-the-counter medications.



- > Inform your physician of any type of appetite suppressant/weight loss medication, either prescription or over-the-counter, that you are or have been taking. These medications pose a dangerous risk when combined with anesthesia. Patients must discontinue use two weeks prior to surgery.
- > If you take blood pressure or heart medications, diuretics, coumadin or if you are diabetic, ask your physician what medications you may take with a small sip of water the day of surgery.
- > DO NOT eat or drink anything including water, gum and breath mints after midnight the night before surgery unless otherwise instructed by your physician.
- > DO NOT take aspirin, ginkgo biloba, feverfew, garlic, ginseng, vitamin E, or other medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen for two weeks prior to surgery.
- > DO NOT wear makeup, hairpins, nail polish or jewelry.
- > For outpatient procedures, you must arrange for someone to drive you to and from the hospital (A bus or taxi is not considered appropriate transportation, unless the patient is accompanied by an adult).
- > Notify your physician and Pre-Admission Nurse (469-8668) if you have latex sensitivity or allergy.

What to bring *to the Hospital*

If you are scheduled for surgery, do not bring these items into the hospital until after you have been moved to an inpatient room.

Personal Items

- > Pajamas or nightgown
- > Bathrobe
- > Slippers
- > Non-electric shaver
- > Daily personal hygiene supplies
- > Eyeglasses
- > Reading material

Do NOT Bring

- > Personal valuables
- > Medications from home
- > Electric radio, fan or other appliances

Safeguarding your Valuables

Please do not keep valuables such as jewelry, credit cards or money in your room. If you bring such items, please ask a family member to take them home. If you have valuables and cannot arrange to send them home, please ask your nurse for assistance to place these items in a hospital safe. Northwest Medical Center cannot be responsible for personal belongings kept in your room.

Please take extra care with eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids and dentures. They should be stored in the bedside table when not in use.

The Day of Your Procedure *or Surgery*

Arrival Times (unless otherwise indicated by the admissions representative or your physician)

- > Outpatient Diagnostic Procedures—30 minutes prior to appointment. Arrive at Outpatient/Admitting entrance.
- > Outpatient Surgery—2 hours prior to appointment, arrive at Surgery entrance.
- > Inpatient Surgery—2 hours prior to appointment, arrive at Surgery entrance.

After You Arrive

- > Upon arrival, check-in at the front desk in the waiting area.
- > A pre-operative nurse will greet and escort you to the pre-operative area.
- > Depending on your surgery, you will be asked to remove all clothing and put on a hospital gown. (Your nurse will instruct you to do what is appropriate for your surgery.)
- > You will be asked to use the restroom before going to the operating room.
- > An intravenous line for fluids and medications will be started.
- > You may receive medication, which will make you drowsy and may also make your mouth dry.

-
- > For your safety, please stay on your stretcher with your side rails up. If you need anything after receiving the medications, use your nurse call light button.
 - > Patients having eye surgery may receive multiple eye drops prior to surgery.
 - > An operating room nurse will take you to the operating room and direct your family or friends to the waiting area.
 - > Following your surgery, your physician will call or visit your family or friends in the waiting area.
 - > If you are having an outpatient procedure, it is recommended that the person who will be taking you home remain in the waiting area.
 - > Please do not leave children unattended in the waiting area or anywhere in the hospital.

Anesthesia

An Anesthesiologist will speak with you in the pre-operative area before your surgery. The type of anesthesia you receive will be based on your needs.

Types of Anesthesia

- > General Anesthesia—will make you sleep and unable to feel pain.
- > MAC Anesthesia—Monitored Anesthesia Care (MAC) is a local or regional anesthesia that numbs the area of surgery. An intravenous line (IV) will also be started through which medicine may be given to make you drowsy and comfortable.

- > **Regional Anesthesia**—numbs the area of the body by injecting medicine near a nerve. IV medication may also be given to make you drowsy and comfortable. Examples of regional anesthesia include epidural and spinal anesthesia.
- > **Local Anesthesia**—the surgeon will administer medicine that will temporarily numb the surgical area.

P.A.C.U. or Recovery

After surgery, you will go to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (P.A.C.U.). Your vital signs will be taken frequently and you will be monitored for any adverse reactions. When you are fully recovered, the nurse will review discharge instructions with you and answer your questions. Visitors are not permitted in the P.A.C.U.

Keeping You Comfortable After Surgery

Pain management is an important part of your recovery and a variety of methods may be used to relieve your pain and discomfort. Pain medication may be given through an IV, injection or orally. Speak with your physician about the best method for you.



Your Rights and *Responsibilities*

In caring for the medical problems of patients, Northwest Medical Center strives at all times to respect the patient's individuality, privacy and other rights.

All patients have the right to:

Receive considerate, respectful and medically appropriate care regardless of age, sex, religion, race or the source of payment for their care. A patient may wear religious, other symbolic items or appropriate clothing as long as they do not interfere with procedures and treatment.

Be well informed about your illness, possible treatments, and likely outcome and to discuss this information with your doctor. You have the right to know the names and roles of the people treating you. If you do not speak English, you may have an interpreter present.

Have an advance directive, such as a Living Will or health care proxy. These documents express your choices about your future care or name someone to decide if you cannot speak for yourself. If you have a written advance directive you should provide a copy to the hospital, your doctor and your family.

Know if this hospital has relationships with outside parties that may influence your treatment and care. These relationships may be with educational institutions, other health care providers or insurers.

Expect that the hospital will give you necessary health services to the best of its ability. Treatment, referral or transfer may be recommended. If transfer is recommended or requested, you will be informed of the risks, benefits and alternatives. You will not be transferred until the other institution agrees to accept you.

Privacy. The hospital, your doctor and others caring for you will protect your privacy as much as possible. Treatment records are confidential unless you have given permission to release information or reporting is required by or permitted by law. When the hospital releases records to others, such as insurers, it emphasizes that the records are confidential.

Know about hospital rules that effect you and your treatment and about charges and payment methods. You have the right to know about hospital resources, such as patient representatives or ethics committees, that can help you resolve problems and questions about your hospital stay and care. You have the right to voice complaints without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

Decline to take part in research affecting your care. If you choose not to take part, you will receive the most effective care the hospital otherwise provides.

Expect reasonable personal safety within the hospital.

Receive and review an itemized bill for hospital services. You have the right to be informed of your post-discharge healthcare needs.

To help facilitate your care, you are responsible for:

Providing information about your health, including past illnesses, hospital stays and use of all medications, including prescription, herbal and over-the-counter.

Asking questions when you do not understand information or instructions.

Telling your doctor if you believe you can't follow through with your treatment.

Being considerate of the needs of other patients, staff and the hospital.

Providing information for insurance and for working with the hospital to arrange payment, when needed.

Recognizing the effect of lifestyle on your personal health.

Your health and well being if the recommended treatment is not followed or is refused.

Speak Up!

NMC supports the “Speak Up” program. It is a national campaign sponsored by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). The “Speak Up” program urges patients to get involved in their care. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience.

- > **Speak up** if you have questions or concerns, and if you don’t understand, ask again. It’s your body and you have a right to know.
- > **Pay attention** to the care you are receiving. Make sure you’re getting the right treatments and medications. Don’t assume anything.
- > **Educate yourself** about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing and your treatment plan.
- > **Ask** a trusted friend or family member to be your advocate.
- > **Know** what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.
- > **Use** a hospital or other type of health organization that has undergone a rigorous on site evaluation against established quality and safety standards, such as those provided by JCAHO.
- > **Participate** in all decisions about your treatment. YOU are the center of the healthcare team.
- > **Please do not hesitate to “SPEAK UP”.**

Advance *Directives*

A Living Will

A Living Will is a document that describes the kind of life sustaining care you want if you become terminally ill and are unable to make your own decisions. The law allows your doctor to continue to give pain medication and perform procedures to make you more comfortable, even though all other treatment may have been withdrawn.

A Health Care Power of Attorney

A Health Care Power of Attorney allows you to designate another person to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to communicate your wishes.


Organ and Tissue Donations

Arizona hospitals are required to provide information regarding organ and tissue donation in the event a patient dies. It is never easy to discuss these things at the time of death, especially when family members have no idea what the patient might have wanted. We suggest you discuss these issues with your family and make your wishes known.

Web Site

You can visit our web site for more information on the hospital at www.northwestmedicalcenter.com.

We would also be happy to deliver an e-mail greeting to your loved one who is in the hospital. Just click on "Patient E-mail Service" on our Northwest Medical Center home page and write your greeting. *We'll do the rest!*



During Your
Hospital Stay

Telephone *Directory*

Active Advantage 469-8194

Admitting 469-8605

Billing/Business Office 469-8118

Chaplain 469-8675

Gift Shop 469-7114

Housekeeping 469-2292

Local Calls 9 (+ local number)

Hospital Switchboard 742-9000

Medical Records 469-8150

Security 469-8196

Women's Center 877-4000



Hospital

Amenities

Cafeteria

'**The Spice of Life**' is located on the first floor of the main hospital and the first floor of The Women's Center. We welcome patients, their families and guests to dine in the cafeteria or to purchase take-out food. The cafeteria provides a wide selection of hot meals, snacks and beverages. Patients who wish to dine in the cafeteria will need to obtain a pass from their nurse.

Main Hospital – 7 days a week

Location: First floor near main entrance, west side of building

Breakfast: 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Lunch: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Dinner: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Grab and Go menu selections only)
5 p.m. to 7 p.m. (hot entrees)

**Visa/Mastercard accepted, ATM services available*

***24-hour vending services available in dining area*

The Women's Center – Seven days a week

Location: Near main entrance of The Women's Center,
next to the gift shop

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**24-hour vending services available in dining area*

Gift Shop

Main Hospital

Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday: Noon to 4 p.m.

The Women's Center

7 days a week: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Vending Machines

Vending machines are located in the cafeterias and all visitor lobbies.

Smoking Areas

Smoking is only permitted outside of the hospital in designated areas.

Automated Teller Machines (ATM)

An ATM is located inside the Admitting/Outpatient entrance of the main hospital and at The Women's Center.

Mail and Flowers

Deliveries are made daily. Any mail received after you leave the hospital will be forwarded to your home address. Flowers will be delivered to your room unless your medical condition or area prohibits it. Flowers are not allowed in ICU rooms.

Chapel & Chaplains

Spiritual needs of all patients are respected and supported through the services of the volunteer chaplains. Patients, families, visitors or staff members regardless of religious affiliation may request Pastoral Care. To request spiritual services, please call 469-8675.

The NMC Interfaith Chapel is located on the first floor of the hospital, near Radiology. You are invited to enter for prayer, meditation or quiet reflection 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

Notary

Notary Services are available. If you need assistance, please ask your nurse for help.

For Your *Visitors*

Visiting Hours

During posted visiting hours, your family and friends are welcome visitors—we consider them good medicine! We recommend brief visits and ask that no more than two individuals visit in your room at a time. People with colds, sore throats or contagious illnesses should not visit.

General Guidelines

Visiting Hours: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week. In some cases visitors will be allowed to stay after 9 p.m. but they will need a badge from security. Ask a nurse for help. Children under 12 years of age are welcome to visit patients between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. They must be accompanied by an adult.

Parking

Visitor parking is free of charge. NMC also offers a free valet service at our main entrance and our emergency room entrance: Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Courtesy carts are available Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., dial 7090 on the courtesy phones. To have Security escort you to your vehicle, dial "0" from a courtesy phone.

Restrooms

Public restrooms are located in the visitor waiting areas throughout the hospital.

Smoking

Smoking can be hazardous in a hospital, especially in areas where oxygen is being used. Smoking is prohibited in the hospital and must be confined to designated outside areas.

Telephones

Cell phones are permitted inside the hospital. They may only be used in the lobby and waiting areas.

Courtesy phones are located at each information desk. Please limit calls to three minutes.

Pay phones are located in all visitor-waiting areas.

Newspaper Dispensers

USA Today, Arizona Republic, Arizona Daily Star and Tucson Citizen are available for purchase at the Main entrance and the Outpatient/Surgery entrance.

Your *Healthcare Team*

Here are some of the medical professionals you can expect to see during your stay:



Your Doctor

Your personal physician may admit you to NMC. If not, you will be assigned an attending physician. In either case, this physician heads your medical team and oversees all aspects of your care.

Your Nurse

Twenty-four hour nursing care is provided by a team of professional registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and nurse assistants. A unit manager is responsible for directing and coordinating nursing care on each unit. When the unit manager is not on the unit, a charge nurse is designated to coordinate nursing care.

Your Medical Technologist

A medical tech is based in the laboratory. They conduct routine laboratory tests on body fluids such as drawing blood.

Nutritional Services

An important part of your treatment is your diet. Your doctor may prescribe a special diet that limits the amount of food, seasonings and selections. A registered dietician supervises all meals. They are prepared and delivered by NMC's Nutritional Services Staff. Always check with your nurse before asking visitors to bring you food, as it may not be part of your care plan.

Volunteers

NMC's volunteers are area residents who generously donate their time to provide a wide range of services designed to make your stay more comfortable. You will recognize our volunteers because they wear light blue vests. Our volunteers may deliver flowers to your room, assist your family in finding your room or perform a variety of other tasks.

Your *Room*

Room Assignments

We make room assignments on the basis of a patient's medical and surgical needs, such as the nature of the illness and the intensity of care required. While we will make every effort to provide you with the room of your choice, rooms must be assigned on the basis of availability and medical needs of all patients. If we are unable to immediately accommodate your room preference, we will try to move you at the most appropriate or earliest convenience.

Hospital Beds

Hospital beds are electrically operated and the nurse will show you how to work the bed properly. The hospital bed is probably higher and narrower than your bed at home. Bedside rails are for your protection. They may be raised at night or during the day if you are resting, recovering from surgery or taking certain medications. Extra pillows and blankets are available upon request.

Calling Your Nurse

Calling your nurse is as easy as pushing the call button at your bedside. When the button is pressed, a light will signal the nursing staff that you need assistance. A nursing staff member will answer the call as promptly as possible. A call button is also located in the bathroom.

Telephone

A telephone is in every patient room. To place a local call, dial "9" and then the local number. There is no charge for local calls. To place long distance calls, dial "0" to reach the hospital operator. Long distance calls must be charged to your home phone, calling card or placed collect. Calls cannot be billed to your hospital account. Callers who wish to speak to you should dial the main hospital number, **742-9000**, and give the operator your name, room number or extension.

Meals

You will be served three meals a day during your stay at NMC.

Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Dinner: 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

You may eat in the cafeteria at no cost with an appropriate pass from your nurse. Visitors are encouraged to use the hospital cafeteria. Guest trays are available for an additional fee. Guest trays must be ordered through your nurse and must be paid for in cash only when the meal is delivered.

Television

Television is available in your room at no charge. It may be operated from your bedside control.

2 ESPN	12 QVC	30 FSAZ
3 KTTU (UPN 18)	15 WGN	42 Cardiac Channel
4 KVOA (NBC)	17 Comcast Info Channel	43 Healthy Living
5 UNIVISION	18 C-SPAN	44 Diabetes I
6 PBS (KUAT)	21 GALA (Spanish)	45 Diabetes II
7 CBS (KOLD)	22 Weather	46 Diabetes I (Spanish)
8 WB (WB 58)	26 NMC Relaxation Channel	47 Diabetes II (Spanish)
9 ABC (KGUN)	29 CNN Headline News	
10 TELEMUNDO		
11 KMSB (FOX 11)		

Bathing

Shower facilities are available in most rooms. Please check with your nurse before showering. You may be asked to take sponge baths depending on our condition or treatment.

Safeguarding Your Valuables

Please take extra care with eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids and dentures. They should be stored in the bedside table when not in use. Northwest Medical Center cannot be responsible for personal belongings kept in your room. Please do not keep valuables, such as jewelry, credit cards or money, in your room. If you have valuables and cannot arrange to send them home, please ask your nurse for assistance to place these items in a hospital safe.

Your Care & Safety

Patient Identification

You will receive a wristband that includes your name, date of birth and other information. It is important that you wear this wristband throughout your hospital stay.

Before your patient care staff will give you any medication, treatment or procedure, they will ask or check for two patient identifiers: your name and your date of birth. Please understand that when our staff requests verification of this information it is in the interest of your safety, not because they do not remember you!

Hospital Staff

All NMC employees, volunteers and students wear identification badges. If an unfamiliar person without such identification enters your room or directs you to do something, please notify staff immediately by pressing your nurse call button.

Fire Drills

For your protection fire and disaster drills are routinely conducted. If one of these drills occurs, please remain in your room and stay calm. Your door will be closed and the staff will alert you if you need to take any special actions.

Electrical Appliances

For safety reasons, plug-in electrical appliances such as radios, clocks, razors and hair dryers must be inspected before they are permitted in your room. Battery-operated devices are permitted.

Security

Security officers patrol the hospital and grounds. They are trained and available to assist in emergency situations. Video surveillance cameras are also located in some areas of the hospital and grounds.

Medication Safety

- > Tell your nurse or doctor about all medications you are taking at home; include herbs and over-the-counter medicines.
- > Do NOT continue taking medications that you have brought from home without first discussing it with your doctor.
- > If you have questions about the medications that are given to you in the hospital, ask your nurse or doctor for clarification.

Allergies

- > Tell your doctor or nurse about any allergies to medication, food, latex etc.
- > Your hospital identification wristband will list any allergies. Please check the wristband for accuracy and legibility.
- > Your nurse will look at your wristband for allergy information before administering any medication.

Infection Prevention

- > Family, friends and children should not visit if they are sick.
- > Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water. Rub your hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds. Or, if your hands do not look dirty, clean them with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. 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, after you use the bathroom, change a diaper or handle money. Doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers come into contact with lots of bacteria and viruses, so before they treat you, ask them if they've cleaned their hands.
- > Cover your mouth and nose with either a tissue or the crook of your elbow or hands. Be sure to throw away used tissues and wash your hands right away.
- > Tell your nurse immediately if the dressing on your IV becomes wet or loose. Also report any signs of redness or swelling.

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- > If you have a catheter or drainage tube, let your nurse know if it becomes loose or dislodged.
 - > If you have diabetes, discuss the best way to control your blood sugar with your doctor. High blood sugar increases the risk of infection.
 - > If you smoke, consider a smoking cessation program. This will reduce the chance of developing a lung infection while in the hospital.

Avoiding a Fall

- > Make sure that your nurse puts your call light, bedside table and telephone within easy reach.
- > Wear slippers with non-skid soles and avoid wearing long nightgowns or robes.
- > Ask for help before you get out of bed, especially if you feel weak, lightheaded or dizzy.
- > Never lean on or use an IV pole or anything else with wheels to support yourself.
- > Alert staff to spills on the floor.
- > Ask your nurse or doctor what activities are safe for you to do on your own.
- > Do activities at a slower speed. Sit at the side of the bed and wait to see how you feel before you stand up.
- > If you need help with any activities, ask the staff for help.
- > Pull the emergency cord if you are in the bathroom and need assistance.
- > Please ask someone to unplug and plug in your IV pump.
- > Allow a night light on during night hours.

Surgical Site Verification

For your safety, we have several processes in place to verify that we are performing the correct procedure on the correct patient and on the correct site/side.

- > For surgical cases involving right/left distinction and/or multiple structures (such as fingers or toes) your surgeon will verify the surgical site/side with you and mark the correct surgical site/side with their initials, using a non-erasable marker, in the preoperative area, prior to your being moved to the operating room.
- > If you are having spinal surgery, the level of your spine to be operated on is verified by x-ray in the operating room.
- > In the operating room, prior to your procedure being started, the surgical team stops and takes a “TIME OUT” to obtain final verification that we are performing the correct surgical procedure on the correct surgical site/side of the correct patient, before proceeding with surgery.

Preventing Skin Breakdown (Bedsore)

When you are very sick, you are prone to have skin breakdown wherever the weight of your body presses into the bed. You are at greatest risk if you move very little or you are in bed or a chair for a long time. It is worth a great deal of effort to keep skin well protected as skin breakdown is uncomfortable, slows your overall healing and is costly to treat once acquired.

- > Change your position every two hours. If you are in bed and comfortable in most positions, it is good to lie on one side, then your back, then the other side. Have one of your nurses or nursing assistants show you and your family members how to help you shift positions comfortably.
- > Use pillows to protect common pressure points where skin breaks down easily. This includes the heels and elbows, the back of the head, the buttocks and between the knees. The pillows will help support your body so that areas with breakdown or at risk for breakdown are not bearing weight.

- > Ensure that you are eating a balanced diet. Good nutrition promotes skin health.
- > Maintain a clean, dry environment for all areas of skin. Alert your nurse if any of the conditions occur: moisture from weepy skin, excessive perspiration or incontinence of urine or bowel.
- > Your skin should be assessed at least once per day. If you or your family notices reddened or broken skin on pressure points, notify your doctor or nurse immediately. You may need special treatment to provide added skin protection.

Pain Management

We Care About Your Pain

Northwest Medical Center wants you to be comfortable during your stay. If you experience pain due to surgery, burns, trauma or any other reason, our dedicated staff will work with you to get the best possible pain relief.

Facts About Pain

Despite our best efforts, you may experience pain that we are not able to completely eliminate. Make sure you communicate with your healthcare staff and set goals for pain relief. Work with your nurse to decide what level of pain will allow you to rest and participate in your care.

Don't worry about getting "hooked" on pain medicines. Studies show that this is very rare – unless you already have a problem with drug abuse.

Measuring Your Pain

There is no "right" way to handle the experience of pain. Tell your caregivers about your pain, describe it and rate it the best you can and we will work with you to find relief.

Your doctors and nurses may ask you to rate your pain on a scale of 0 to 10 or select a face or words that describe your pain. This will help your caregivers know how well your treatment is working and whether to make any changes.



Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA)

What is it?

PCA is a method of giving medicine into the vein with a pump that you control so that you receive medicine when you need it. The PCA machine contains a syringe of pain medication as prescribed by your doctor. It is attached to your intravenous (IV) line.

Often the PCA is set to deliver a small, constant flow of pain medication. If you continue to feel pain or discomfort, you should firmly press the button on your PCA and it will give you additional medication.

How often should I press the button?

Press the button when you are having pain. Don't press the button if you are feeling too sleepy. The more alert you feel, the better you are able to participate in your recovery.

Only the patient should push the PCA button. If family members try to help by pushing the button for the patient, it may result in over sedation or other serious outcomes. If the patient is too weak or sleepy to press the button, family should notify the patient's caregiver immediately.

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Know if this hospital has relationships with outside parties that may influence your treatment and care. These relationships may be with educational institutions, other health care providers or insurers.

Expect that the hospital will give you necessary health services to the best of its ability. Treatment, referral or transfer may be recommended. If transfer is recommended or requested, you will be informed of the risks, benefits and alternatives. You will not be transferred until the other institution agrees to accept you.

Privacy. The hospital, your doctor and others caring for you will protect your privacy as much as possible. Treatment records are confidential unless you have given permission to release information or reporting is required by or permitted by law. When the hospital releases records to others, such as insurers, it emphasizes that the records are confidential.

Know about hospital rules that affect you and your treatment and about charges and payment methods. You have the right to know about hospital resources, such as patient representatives or ethics committees, that can help you resolve problems and questions about your hospital stay and care. You have the right to voice complaints without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

Decline to take part in research affecting your care. If you choose not to take part, you will receive the most effective care the hospital otherwise provides.

Expect reasonable personal safety within the hospital.

Receive and review an itemized bill for hospital services. You have the right to be informed of your post-discharge healthcare needs.

To help facilitate your care, you are responsible for:

Providing information about your health, including past illnesses, hospital stays and use of all medications, including herbal, prescription and over-the-counter.

Asking questions when you do not understand information or instructions.

Telling your doctor if you believe you can't follow through with your treatment.

Being considerate of the needs of other patients, staff and the hospital.

Providing information for insurance and for working with the hospital to arrange payment, when needed.

Recognizing the effect of lifestyle on your personal health.

Your health and well-being if the recommended treatment is not followed or is refused.

Your Privacy

Condition Reports

Any personal information about your diagnosis and treatment must come from your doctor. This information is available only to members of your immediate family or others you designate to receive it.

Media Relations

Occasionally the news media may want to interview you or a family member. If you choose to be interviewed, our Public Relations staff will act as a liaison between you and the media. If you choose not to be interviewed, the Public Relations staff will protect your privacy and comfort. Call the hospital operator (dial 0) if you need Public Relations assistance.



Speak Up!

NMC supports the “Speak Up” program. It is a national campaign sponsored by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). The “Speak Up” program urges patients to get involved in their care. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience.

- > **Speak up** if you have questions or concerns, and if you don’t understand ask again. It’s your body and you have a right to know.
- > **Pay attention** to the care you are receiving. Make sure you’re getting the right treatments and medications. Don’t assume anything.
- > **Educate yourself** about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing and your treatment plan.
- > **Ask** a trusted friend or family member to be your advocate.
- > **Know** what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.
- > **Use** a hospital or other type of health organization that has undergone a rigorous on site evaluation against established quality and safety standards, such as those provided by JCAHO.
- > **Participate** in all decisions about your treatment. YOU are the center of the healthcare team.

Please do not hesitate to “SPEAK UP”.

Complaints *and Grievances*

Northwest Medical Center strives to provide the best possible care during your hospital stay. If you feel that you have not received the best care possible, NMC's Complaint Policy provides you with a mechanism to voice your concerns. All complaints and concerns are given the utmost attention and courtesy.

If you have any concerns, questions or complaints about your care or treatment, please let your care provider know on the hospital unit where you are receiving treatment. If you have a complaint, we want to resolve it as soon as possible. If during your care at NMC you have voiced a concern to your care provider and feel it has not been resolved, or if you wish to make a formal complaint, please contact NMC's Hospital Administration by calling 469-8100 during business hours.

If you believe your concern has not been addressed by NMC, you may contact:

Arizona Department of Health Services
400 West Congress, Suite 116
Tucson, Arizona 85701
Phone: 520-628-6965
Fax: 520-628-6991

Or

Joint Commission on Accreditation of
Healthcare Organizations
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
Fax: 630-792-5636
E-mail: complaint@jcaho.org

Your *Hospital Bill*

The charges listed on your NMC bill include your room, diagnostic and therapeutic services, supplies and drugs ordered by your physician. Fees charged by your doctor, consulting doctors or surgeons, anesthesiologists, radiologists, pathologists, private duty nurses and other professionals will be billed separately. If you have any questions or concerns about hospital charges or your bill, please call one of our customer service representatives in the business office at 469-8118.

Your *Opinion Matters*

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and encourage your input to help us improve our service to you. After hospital discharge, a random number of patients are called by the Gallup Organization to conduct a survey. The survey consists of approximately 25 questions and may take up to 20 minutes. The results are calculated quarterly to keep us informed of our patient satisfaction rates and to gain feedback so we can improve patient services. We thank you in advance for your participation in this survey and we understand if you choose not to participate.

Going *Home*

When it is time for you to go home, the staff will help you prepare to leave. There are a few steps you should know which will make your discharge go smoothly.

- > Confirm your discharge time with your nurse.
- > Call family or a friend to pick you up.
- > Discuss post-hospital care with your doctor or nurse.
- > Review information on medications and special diet requirements.
- > Ask questions.
- > Allow hospital staff to accompany you from your room to the main entrance of the medical center where your family or friends are waiting.



