

## TIPS AND RESOURCES: GETTING THROUGH THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

At times, it may seem hard to get through the health care system. To help you, below are some tips and resources for you.

**MAIN NOTE:** Always talk to your doctor about your health care questions.

### 1. KNOWING ABOUT DRUG SAFETY

1. Learn the names of each of your medicines and why you take them.
2. Know how and when to take them.
3. Make a list of your medicines. Know how many pills you take and when you should take them. Also know how your medicine helps you.
4. Ask your doctor or pharmacist:
  - What are the chances of side effects of your medicines?
  - What should you do if you miss taking the drug?
  - Should you take your medicine with food?
- Take your medicines the same day every day.
- Plan ahead for your refills so you do not run out.
- Use a medicine holder. This will help remind you of the days and times to take your medicine.
- Never stop taking your medicine without asking your doctor first.

### 2. STAYING HEALTHY: SOME GENERAL TIPS

- Avoid colds and flu.
  - Wash hands often.
  - Get plenty of rest.
  - Keep your hands away from your nose and mouth.
  - Eat a well-balanced diet.
  - Do not use the same eating and drinking utensils for each family member.
  - Cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough.
  - Clean phone headsets regularly.
- Stop smoking.
- Workout regularly.

### 3. BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM.

- Ask your doctor three questions:
  - What is my main problem?
  - What do I need to do?
  - Why should I do this?

Go to the Web site: [www.askme3.org](http://www.askme3.org). This Web site can help you know how to talk with your doctor.

### 4. KNOW ABOUT THE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN YOUR AREA. Visit three Web sites:

[www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov)

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

[www.leapfroggroup.org](http://www.leapfroggroup.org)