

SPEAK UP!

Speak up if you have questions or concerns. If you still don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

Pay attention to the care you get. Always make sure you're getting the right treatments and medicines by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

Educate yourself about your illness. Learn about the medical tests you get, and your treatment plan.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate (advisor or supporter).

Know what medicines you take and why you take them. Medicine errors are the most common health care mistakes.

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.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

Adapted from:

The Joint Commission's award-winning patient safety program

In March 2002, The Joint Commission, together with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, launched a national campaign to urge patients to take a role in preventing health care errors by becoming active, involved and informed participants on the health care team. The program features brochures, posters and buttons on a variety of patient safety topics.

For more information on how to be an active member of your health care team, go to

<http://www.jointcommission.org/speakup.aspx> or call 1-630-792-5000.



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