

# **Your child's safety at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta**



Patient and Family Education

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**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

***Our goal at Children's is to provide the safest possible care for all of our patients.***

At Children's, we invite you to partner with us and be involved in your child's care. You can help to keep your child safe by being an active member of your child's healthcare team.

***To help us keep your child safe, please do these things on an ongoing basis: Please Speak Up!***

- Ask a staff member when you have questions or concerns. Use a notepad to write down facts and questions you would like to talk with us about.
- Be involved in making decisions about your child's care. If you want to know something, **Please Speak Up!** and ask us.
- Know the results of your child's tests. If you have any questions about your child's test results, **Please Speak Up!** and ask your doctor. Ask for them to be explained to you in a way you can understand.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your child at any time, **Please Speak Up!**

***How can I help to prevent infection?***

The best way to prevent infections is to clean your hands often and well. All of us carry germs on us. To prevent these germs from harming your child:

- Clean your hands with soap and water or use the alcohol hand sanitizer.
- Clean your child's hands as well.

Always clean your hands at these times:

- When you enter and before you leave your child's room or exam room.
- Before and after eating, touching food or feeding your child.
- After using the bathroom or changing a diaper.
- After sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose and after wiping your child's nose.

***What should I do if I have a question about my child's care?***

If you have a concern or question about something, please ask our staff.

- You have a right to have things explained to you in a way that you understand.
- If you do not understand, **Please Speak Up!** and ask questions.
- Ask for a second opinion if you would like one. Your nurse can help you with this.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

## ***Patient Safety, continued***

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### ***What about taking medicines safely?***

You can help your child be safe with medicines by using these tips:

- Tell the doctor and nurses about any allergies or drug reactions your child has had in the past.
- Keep a complete and current list of the medicines your child is taking. This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, herbs and supplements. Share this list with each of your child's doctors at every visit.
- Know the name of your child's medicine, what it is used for, when and how to give it, and any side effects. Also know what medicines, foods or drinks to avoid when taking the medicine.
- Do not give your child any medicines unless you check with the nurse or doctor first. When you are ready to take your child home, make sure you receive an updated list of medicines. Know what medicines are new and what medicines your child will continue to take.

### ***Who should I speak to if I have concerns about my child's care?***

- If you have any concerns about the quality or safety of your child's care, please speak with your child's nurse or doctor. If needed, you may also talk with the manager for that area, the nursing supervisor or the patient representative.
- You may contact Joint Commission by e-mail [complaint@jcaho.org](mailto:complaint@jcaho.org) or by phone Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., CST at 800-994-6610.
- You may also contact the Georgia Department of Human Resources , Office of Regulatory Services at 404-657-5700.

### ***If your child is in the hospital***

#### ***Why does my child need an ID band?***

All patients in the hospital must wear an ID band. This helps keep your child safe by letting our staff know that they are giving a medicine or treatment to the right child. Even if the hospital staff knows your child, they should read the ID band.

- Keep your child's ID band on. Let the staff know **right away** if it comes off.
- Our staff will actively involve you when we ID your child. We will ask you to verify your child's name and we will check your child's ID band before: giving medicines, breast milk for babies, blood products, collecting specimens and labs or doing treatments or procedures. At night when you and your child are sleeping, we will check the ID band ourselves.
- If someone does not check the ID band first, **Please Speak Up!** and ask them to do so.
  - If your child has allergies, make sure that a separate RED band is used.
  - If your child is allergic to latex, make sure that a separate GREEN band is used.

#### ***Can I give my child medicines from home?***

- Take all of your child's medicines back home with you. Do not keep **ANY** medicines in your child's room or at your child's bedside.
- Do not give your child **ANY** medicines from home. This includes vitamins, herbs, supplements or over-the-counter medicines. The hospital will provide all of your child's medicines.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

## ***Patient Safety, continued***

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### ***My child has an isolation sign up on the door. What does this mean?***

- Your child may have an illness that could easily spread and make you and others sick.
- Sometimes, extra care is needed to help prevent the spread of the illness.
- Each type of illness and isolation has special guidelines to follow.
- **Please Speak Up!** Ask your child's nurse what you need to do if your child has one of these signs or if you do not know what to do.

### ***How can I help prevent falls?***

When a child is sick, taking certain medicines or undergoing certain procedures, his chance of falling is increased. If a child falls and gets hurt, the hospital stay can be longer than it should be. This may add to the stress of being sick.

To help prevent falls:

- Watch your child at all times. Always let your child's nurse or one of our staff know if you are leaving the room.
- Keep the side rails up and make sure they are locked. Also keep the bed at its lowest position to the ground.
- If you don't know how the bed controls on the side rails work, **Please Speak Up!** and ask our staff to show you.
- Make sure your child always sleeps in the bed. Do not allow your child to sleep on the couch or in the chair.
- Have your child wear shoes or non-skid socks each time he gets out of bed. If you don't have any, **Please Speak Up!** and ask our staff for a pair.
- Please do not allow your child to:
  - Play with or on medical equipment such as monitors or I.V. poles.
  - Run in the hallway.
  - Climb on furniture.
- Tell your child's caregiver **right away** if your child falls.

### ***If one of my child's monitors is beeping, what should I do?***

Most medical equipment has an alarm to help keep your child safe. **Please do not turn off the alarms.**

- When the alarm sounds, use the nurse call button to let the nurse know something needs to be checked.
- If someone does not come right away, please leave the alarm on. Then push the nurse call button again. If needed, go out into the hallway and get a nurse.

### ***Can I sleep in the same bed as my child?***

Sleeping in the same bed with your child can cause him harm. This is especially true if your child is:

- Less than 2 years old.
- Has an artificial airway (tracheostomy) or other medical problem that can cause harm when sleeping right next to someone.
- Small enough that part of his body could become trapped between your body and the bedrails.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

## ***Patient Safety, continued***

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Instead, move your child's crib or bed closer to your bed if his equipment allows. This will make it easier for you to care for and feed your child. Other children and adults are also not allowed to share a bed with your child.

Ask your child's nurse for other safe sleeping ideas. Also ask for ideas about how to be closer to your child without getting into the same bed with him.

### ***If your child is at one of our outpatient or neighborhood locations***

#### ***Will my child have an ID band on?***

- Some locations will place an ID band on your child. Even if the staff knows your child, they should read the ID band.
  - Keep your child's ID band on. Let the staff know **right away** if it comes off
  - Our staff should check your child's ID band before giving any medicines, collecting specimens and labs, or doing procedures. If someone does not check the ID band first, **Please Speak Up!** and ask them to do so.
- If the location does not use an ID band, staff should check your child's name and date of birth before care is given.
  - This helps to make sure that your child receives the correct, medicine, tests and treatments.
  - If someone does not check your child's name and birth date, **Please Speak Up!** and ask them to do so.
- In some locations, your child may also receive a red or green armband.
  - If so and your child has allergies, make sure that a separate RED band is used.
  - If so and your child is allergic to latex, make sure that a separate GREEN band is use

#### ***How can I help prevent falls?***

To help prevent falls, watch your child at all times. Please do not:

- Leave your child alone on an exam table or stretcher.
- Allow your child to play with or on medical equipment.
- Allow your child to run in the waiting room.
- Allow your child to play on rolling stools or climb on furniture.

#### ***If my child is on a monitor and it is beeping, what should I do?***

Most medical equipment has an alarm to help us keep your child safe. Please do not turn the alarm off.

- When the alarm sounds, let a nurse or staff member know something needs to be checked.
- If someone does not come right away, please leave the alarm on. If needed, please go out to the workstation to let someone know that the monitor is alarming.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**