

## Remember:

- If hospital staff ask you the same questions over and over, our process for your safety is working! Staff will check your ID band and ask for your birth date each time before giving medications, performing procedures or taking blood. Remind staff to properly identify you if they do not verify your ID. Tell them your birthdate and name.
- Family and friends are important and can be involved in your care—we will ask if you have provided the person you wish to be involved in your care with your unique privacy number before we disclose any information about your care.
- It's okay to ask staff to wash their hands before they provide care (if they haven't).
- Many doctors, students, residents and other caregivers may become involved with your care; they should introduce themselves, wear an ID and tell you why they are involved in your care. If not, ask.
- Belongings such as dentures, hearing aids, and glasses must be properly identified and stored appropriately. Please send items home with family whenever possible as we may not be responsible for lost items.

### *Speak Up • Ask Questions Get Answers*

- Be involved – be sure you are getting the right medication and tests.
- Tell us how we can make you more comfortable and take better care of you.
- Know your medications and what they are used for.



Patient Safety  
298 Memorial Drive  
Seneca, SC 29672  
(864) 885-7176  
[www.oconeemed.org](http://www.oconeemed.org)



For more information about patient safety, please call (864) 885-7915.

Unresolved concerns may also be directed to:  
The Joint Commission Office of Quality Monitoring  
(800) 994-6610 or  
[complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org).

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# Patient Safety

starts  
with

# You

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Oconee Medical Center's first priority is to promote safety for our patients and prevent injury. The most important way you can help is by being active in your own health care. The information in this brochure is provided to help you take an active role while you are in the hospital.



## How Can You Help?

- Ask questions. If you don't understand the answers, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.
- Make sure you are getting the right treatments and medications by the right healthcare professionals. 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 healthcare mistakes.
- Ask about the hospital's experience in treating your type of illness.
- Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the healthcare team.

## Medications

- Bring a list with you of all the medications you take (preferably written on a Universal Medication Form available to you from your physician, pharmacies and Oconee Medical Center), even the "over the counter" and herbal medications. Do not bring your pills if you have a completed medication form. Tell your nurse about your list. If you do not have a list of medications, please bring the pills themselves.
- Tell your nurse about your allergies to medications, foods, herbals and everyday things such as latex.
- Tell your nurse if the pill you are asked to take while hospitalized does not look like the one you take at home.
- Tell your nurse if you have already taken your medication from someone else.
- Ask about the purpose of the medication you are asked to take and ask for written information about it, including brand and generic names. Also ask about the side effects of the medication.
- If you are given an IV, ask your nurse how long it

should take for the liquid to "run out."

- Share with your doctors and nurses about negative reactions to medications you have had in the past.
- If you are taking many medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take them together.

## To Keep From Falling

- If you have a history of falling at home, please tell your nurse so that we can take extra precautions such as moving you closer to the nurses' station, putting the side rails up on your bed when you're in it and putting night lights in your room so you don't trip.
- If you feel dizzy, weak, or unsteady on your feet, please tell your nurse. Do not get up without help—even if you are just getting up to go to the bathroom.
- If you've been told by your doctor or nurse to use a walker or a cane, you should learn to use it correctly and use it all the time.
- Walk slowly and wear non-skid slippers or shoes.
- Use your call light. Someone will help you as quickly as possible.
- It's a smart idea for all patients to ask someone to assist them whenever they get up, and to make use of assistive devices such as walkers, canes and wheelchairs.

## Be Sure To Tell Your Nurse If

- You have problems walking.
- Any medications make you feel dizzy or unsteady on your feet.
- You cannot see and hear without problems.
- You have fallen in the past.
- You feel weak and shaky from being in bed.

## For Your Safety

- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room. You should also look for their identification badges. Clinical staff, medical students, trainees, interns and residents must wear ID badges that tell you their name, department, title, position and trainee title if applicable.
- All medical students, trainees, interns and residents are supervised by your attending physician. Questions related to their role may be directed to that physician.
- Should you have a medical concern, please inform your nurse so that the nurse can notify your physician. A Rapid Response Team is also available 24 hours a day by calling 885-7188 to assist you in resolving your medical concern. The director of quality is also available by calling 885-7915.
- If you are being transported, ask if you are being taken somewhere you didn't know about or your doctor or nurse did not tell you about.
- If you are not clear about procedures or treatments that are planned for you, ask your Registered Nurse and/or physician.
- Leave valuable items at home or send them home. Bring only basic necessities with your name on them.
- Review consents for treatment before you sign them and make sure you understand exactly what you are agreeing to do.
- If you have an advocate, make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Make sure you are familiar with equipment that is being used in your care. If you will be using oxygen at home, do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke near you while oxygen is in use.