

# GOOD NEIGHBOR SCRIPT™

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY



## Tips for Caregivers:

### What to Know Before Your Loved One Comes Home From the Hospital

Nothing brightens the face of a hospital patient like the moment the doctor tells them they can go home. As a family member, you're also happy and relieved, knowing your loved one's condition has improved enough for discharge.

But before you leave with your loved one, make sure you understand how to help him or her transition successfully from hospital care to recovery at home. To prepare you for what comes next, a hospital staff member will explain the discharge plan. Here's a brief guide to understanding what a discharge plan is — and how your role as a caregiver is key in ensuring the plan is followed.

#### What is hospital discharge planning?

The Family Caregiving Alliance describes hospital discharge planning as a process that includes evaluating patients, discussing their condition and care, arranging for follow-up appointments and tests, determining the need for family caregiver training and making referrals to home care services and other sources of support. A social worker, nurse, case manager or other hospital care provider may handle discharge planning, although a doctor must authorize the discharge itself.

#### What is my role as a caregiver?

As the designated family caregiver, you'll probably receive a list of the doctor's orders. But you also need to be involved in the discussion of what it will take to help your family member get well at home. Because you already know what the home environment is like, you know what changes may be necessary to meet your loved one's needs. You can also assess which caregiving duties you can perform yourself and which ones you can't. For example, maybe you're not physically able to lift your family member, or you're not comfortable providing bathing or toileting assistance.

The time to speak up about these concerns is before you leave the hospital. The discharge planner can help you figure out a solution, like perhaps sharing caregiving responsibilities with other relatives and volunteers, or bringing in a professional home care provider. They may also offer training for some of the more challenging caregiving tasks, such as cleaning and dressing a wound or giving an injection.

#### What should I ask before we leave the hospital?

You'll likely leave the hospital with a thick packet of information about the patient's medication schedule, any restrictions on diet or activities, home exercises for physical rehabilitation and the like. But it doesn't hurt to prepare a list of questions, so you can ask for further explanations or address additional topics or concerns.

Pay special attention to any changes to the medication regimen your family member was following before entering the hospital. Ask if you'll need to acquire special equipment, such as a wheelchair, walker or bedside commode, and whether your loved one is eligible for any assistance to pay for it. Learn what to expect for your loved one's physical condition and progress, so you'll know what's normal, and what might signal a problem. Get a name and number to call if you have concerns.

Medicare.gov offers a print-ready discharge planning checklist that includes several items specifically for caregivers. The entire document can be a handy resource for patients and family members.

#### What is the hospital's responsibility?

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, created a best-practices guide for discharge planning using the acronym IDEAL. You should expect the hospital's staff to follow these guidelines when they discharge your loved one:

- Include the patient and family in the process
- Discuss key areas for preventing problems at home
- Educate the patient and family about the patient's condition
- Assess how well caregivers can explain the patient's condition and next steps
- Listen to and honor the patient's and family's goals and concerns

By being an engaged participant in the discharge process, you help ensure those standards are met. It's an essential step to putting your loved one on the road to better health when you take them home.

### Health & Fitness Tips for Dining Out With Diabetes

Managing diabetes is hard enough at home. But when it comes to eating out, typically, the challenges are magnified. Larger portion sizes, unexpected ingredients and tempting treats can often lead to increased blood glucose levels, even when you think you are selecting a diabetic-friendly menu option.

You don't have to forgo a good meal out to maintain your blood sugar level, however. Here are four tips to maintain a healthy, diabetic-friendly diet while still enjoying a meal out with friends or family at your favorite eatery.

**Check out the menu before you go.** It's easy to be tempted by all the amazing foods on a menu. That's why it's recommended that you plan ahead, and look at the menu options before you even enter the restaurant. This will give you the time to count carbs — and choose wisely.

**Exercise portion control.** Restaurants often give patrons large portions. The Mayo Clinic suggests that individuals living with diabetes exercise good portion control by ordering a child's or lunch portion instead of a larger dinner portion. You can also avoid eating too much by placing half your meal in a to-go container before you even pick up your fork.

**Avoid the extras.** The Mayo Clinic also cautions against eating the "extras." Tell the server not to bring a bread basket to the table, and be sure to avoid (or at least account for) any free refills of sugary drinks. Those extras can quickly add up, resulting in increased blood glucose levels.

**Substitute, substitute, substitute.** Too often, your favorite entrees come with carb-loaded side dishes. To help control your carbohydrate intake, the Mayo Clinic recommends that you ask for a side salad or fruit instead of fries.



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## 5 Ways to Improve Your Gut Health

The digestive system is also referred to as the gut. Your gut contains trillions of bacteria that are responsible for breaking down food, absorbing nutrients and expelling waste.

Many of the microorganisms in your gut are helpful. These "good" bacteria can ward off infection, help you digest food and keep your gut healthy.

However, problems arise when there are too many so-called "bad" bacteria. Normally, these problematic bacteria are kept in check by the good bacteria. However, if your gut becomes imbalanced (meaning there's too much of the bad bacteria), it can cause inflammation.

Bad bacteria can also break down the lining of your gut, leaking toxins into your bloodstream. In fact, gut health imbalances can affect everything from the effectiveness of diabetes medication to cancer cell growth and anxiety.

Here's how to tell if you gut is out of balance, and ways to strengthen your digestive health.

### Signs of an unhealthy gut

Bloating, gas, diarrhea and constipation are common signs of an imbalanced gut. Signs also include inflammation and immune disruption, which can show up in other ways, such as:

- Migraines and headaches
- Eczema, acne or skin rashes
- Chronic fatigue
- Joint pain or arthritis
- Cravings for sugar or carbs
- Unintentional weight changes
- Food intolerances or food allergies
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease or heartburn

### How to improve gut health

**1. Eat fermented foods.** Fermented foods — such as yogurt, kimchi, kefir and kombucha — contain good bacteria that help rebalance your gut. Naturally fermented foods containing live cultures pack the biggest benefit.

**2. Focus on fiber.** Fiber aids elimination and feeds the beneficial microorganisms in your colon and gastrointestinal tract. Skip processed foods like lunch meat, ice cream and white bread that contain added sugar, fat and salt. Instead, opt for whole food sources of fiber, like legumes, nuts, seeds, whole grains, vegetables and fruit.

**3. Get tested for food allergies.** Research has linked bad gut bacteria to food allergies. Your doctor can perform a blood test to determine if you have food allergies that need to be addressed. A breath test can be performed to identify food intolerances to fermentable carbohydrates (FODMAPS), such as milk (lactose), beans, certain vegetables, fruits, grains and sweeteners.

**4. Avoid unnecessary antibiotics.** Antibiotics disrupt your gut biome, killing off the good bacteria along with the bad. A gut-friendly diet or probiotic supplement can help repopulate your digestive tract after a course of antibiotics.

Practicing good hygiene is the best way to avoid bacterial conditions like bacterial pneumonia, bacterial meningitis or eye infections that require antibiotics. You should also avoid taking antibiotics for a cold, flu, bronchitis or another viral infection, because antibiotics don't effectively treat viral infections. Do not continue taking antibiotics after you have finished the course prescribed by your doctor, and never take leftover antibiotics for another illness.

**5. Implement healthy habits.** Stress has a direct impact on your gut. So much so that the stomach is sometimes called the second brain. Stress can increase diarrhea, and contribute to inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome and other gastrointestinal diseases. Practicing mindfulness, getting plenty of sleep and exercising are smart ways to keep your stress in check. When your mind is balanced, it helps your gut be balanced, too.

## Ask a Pharmacist What Support Can My Local Pharmacy Provide to Me As a Caregiver for a Loved One?

Your pharmacists and staff care about your needs, well-being and health. We can help save you money or find cheaper alternatives by knowing your needs, budget and lifestyle. Some of our services can help make it easier for you to act as a caregiver for a loved one. We package medications to increase medication compliance, and avoid the need to fill weekly pill boxes. We also have durable medical equipment. Insurance companies may take weeks to approve and send out a wheelchair, whereas we can provide you with a lightweight and easy-to-use wheelchair that can be purchased immediately, along with lift chairs, scooters and walkers. In addition to durable medical equipment, we offer products that will help on a daily basis, such as bathroom safety equipment, crutches, canes and more. We even offer home modification services to keep your loved one in their home longer!



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Pharmacists understand that supporting family caregivers improves the lives of both the caregiver and the care receiver. In the coming years, the role of the pharmacist in assisting family caregivers is expected to expand. Because pharmacists are trusted, respected and readily available, they will play a much greater role in supporting family caregivers in the future, such as ensuring caregivers stick to the medication regimen of their loved one, identifying caregiver distress and suggesting resources and products that can help in the care of a loved one. If you are a family caregiver, consider your pharmacist a "care partner," and find out what programs they offer.

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## Local ♥ Love Apothecary Shoppe

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

"Every patient is precious, and is a part of the Apothecary Shoppe family. We have a connection with our patients to Shop Local, Buy Local and Love Local!"



### How many years has the Apothecary Shoppe been in business?

45 wonderful years!

### How do your patients and community shape your offerings...What keeps your patients coming back?

Our pharmacy is located in downtown Salt Lake City with patient populations that include the homeless, individuals with substance abuse disorders, people with behavioral health challenges, the elderly and patients living with HIV. We have developed specialized and proprietary treatment programs to improve health and wellness with optimum patient outcomes in these unique areas of our community. What keeps our patients coming back? We know their names and they know ours. We have confidential face-to-face conversations about their concerns and needs. Our patients know we are dedicated to their overall health and happiness.

### What do you think your patients love most about your pharmacy?

They love our staff! We have amazing, caring, loving, dedicated people who are dependable and accountable, and consistently deliver superior service and superior results.

### What are your favorite ways to get involved with your community?

I participate in a volunteer service for a non-profit organization. I serve on several local boards for Behavioral Health, HIV/AIDS and food banks. The Apothecary Shoppe supports and donates time, resources and funding to local charities for cancer research, substance abuse programs, foster care programs and Naloxone Emergency Kit education and distribution. We also sponsor a Little League baseball team and a football team.

### What does Locally Loved mean to you?

We are part of the community, and the community is part of us. Our patients express gratitude and appreciation by sending us cards, letters and online posts. They bring our staff gifts from their vacations and travel destinations, and let us know about newborn babies, graduations, weddings and losses of loved ones. Every patient is precious, and is a part of the Apothecary Shoppe family. We have a connection with our patients to Shop Local, Buy Local and Love Local!