

# Reducing Hospital Readmissions

## When leaving the hospital:

1/5

Almost **one in five** elderly patients return within 30 days

1/3

patients can't explain their medications

3/4

Three-fourths of chronically ill patients wouldn't need a return trip if **they had a plan for follow-up care**

1/2

patients can't state their diagnoses

## How to Avoid Going Back to the Hospital



Get a **discharge plan** and bring it to all follow-up appointments. It should include:



Schedule of **follow-up appointments**



List of **health conditions** and **allergies**



Names of **doctors, hospitals, and pharmacies** and their phone numbers



**New equipment** needed such as a cane, wheelchair, or grab bar



Get a **medication list** and bring it to all follow-up appointments. It should include:

**All medications**, including vitamins and over-the-counter medicines



**When** to take each medicine, **how much**, and for **how long**



Possible **side effects**



If any new medicines are **replacing old medicines**



**Ask questions** about unclear instructions.



**Repeat instructions** back to your doctors and nurses in your own words.



Have a **family member or caregiver in the room** when getting instructions and at follow-up appointments.



Know **danger signs** and what to do if your symptoms get worse.



Ask your doctors for information on your health conditions so you can **learn how to continue staying healthy**.



**Visit your primary care doctor or specialist** within two weeks of leaving the hospital.

