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- Don't assume the results are fine if you do not get them when expected. Contact your healthcare provider and ask for your results.
- Ask what the results mean for your care.

4. Talk to your doctor about which hospital or clinic is best for your health needs.

- Ask your doctor about which hospital or clinic has the best care and results for your condition if you have more than one hospital or clinic to choose from to get the healthcare you need.
- Be sure you understand the instructions you get about follow-up care when you leave the hospital or clinic.

5. Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery.

- Make sure you, your doctor, and your surgeon all agree on exactly what will be done during the operation.
- Ask your doctor, "Who will manage my care when I am in the hospital?"
- Ask your surgeon:
 - "Exactly what will you be doing?"
 - "About how long will it take?"
 - "What will happen after surgery?"
 - "How can I expect to feel during recovery?"
- Tell the surgeon, anesthesiologist, and nurses about any allergies, bad reactions to anesthesia, and any medications or nutritional supplements you are taking.

Patient Safety Links

For more information on patient safety, please visit:

- www.jointcommission.org/speakup.aspx. The Joint Commission's Speak Up™ patient safety program.

- www.jointcommission.org/topics/patient_safety.aspx. The Joint Commission helps healthcare organizations to improve the quality and safety of the care they deliver.
- www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality makes available a wide-ranging list of topics not only to inform consumers about patient safety but to help choose quality healthcare providers and improve the quality of care you receive.
- <https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/national-patient-safety-foundation>. The National Patient Safety Foundation has information on how to ensure safer healthcare for you and your family.
- www.bemedwise.org. The National Council on Patient Information and Education is dedicated to improving communication about the safe, appropriate use of medications.
- www.leapfroggroup.org. The Leapfrog Group is active in promoting safe practices in hospital care.
- www.ahqa.org. The American Health Quality Association represents organizations and healthcare professionals working to improve patient safety.

Preventable Healthcare Acquired Conditions (“Never Events”)

When you enter the hospital for treatment of one medical problem, you do not expect to leave with additional injuries, infections, or other serious conditions that occur during the course of your stay. Although some of these complications may not be avoidable, patients do suffer from injuries or illnesses that could have been prevented if doctors or the hospital had taken proper precautions. Errors in medical care that are clearly identifiable, preventable and serious in their consequences for patients can indicate a significant problem in the safety and credibility of a healthcare facility. These conditions and errors are sometimes called “Never Events” or “Serious Reportable Events.”