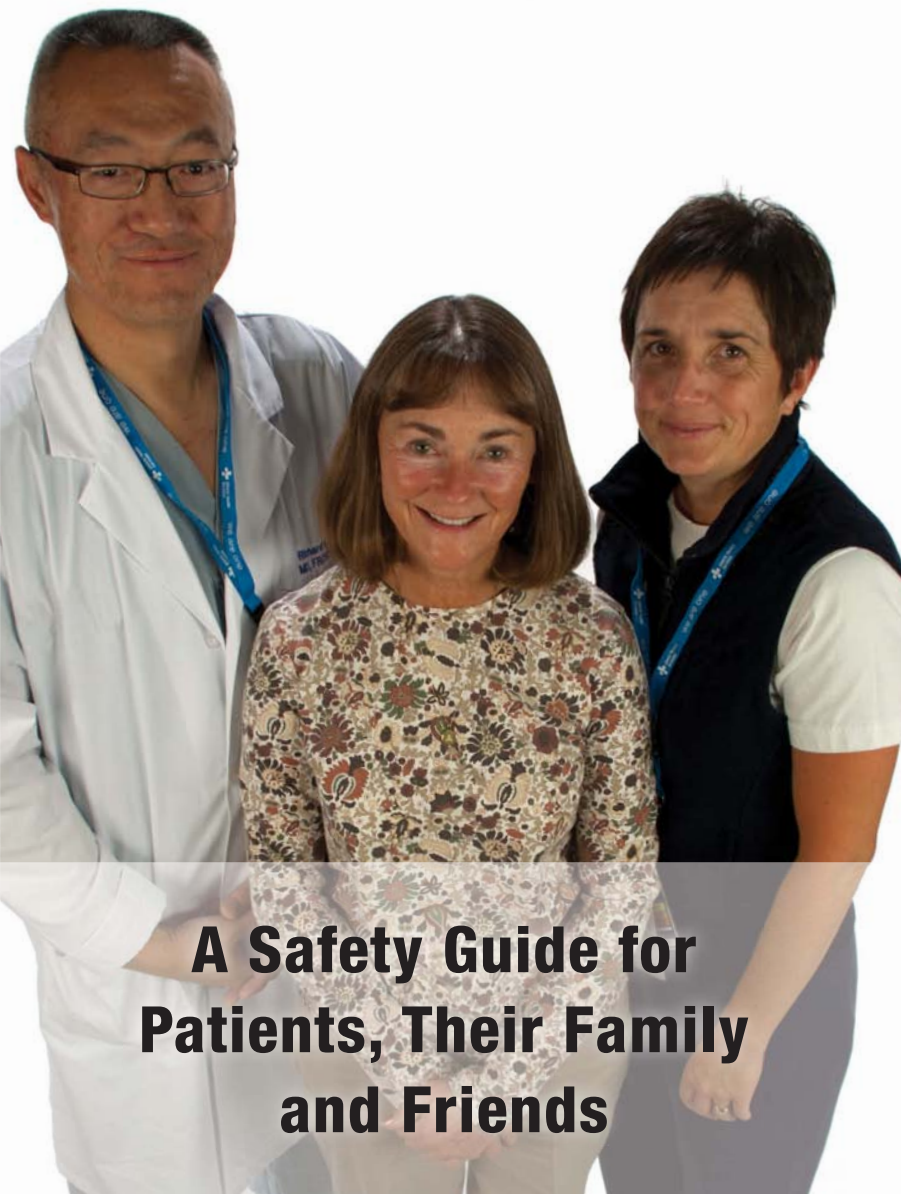


# Safer Together



## **A Safety Guide for Patients, Their Family and Friends**

Alberta Health Services is committed to partnering with you in providing safe, quality care throughout the health system.

Patients can play a vital role in making care safe by being aware, informed and actively involved as a member of their health care team.



## Ask. Listen. Talk.

Safety starts with good communication. Help us keep you safe by practicing good communication:

- **ASK** your health care providers about your health care plan. Find out what you can do to feel better and improve your health.
- **LISTEN** carefully and ask for more information especially if you don't understand. Take notes and bring a friend or family member with you for support.
- **TALK** about your concerns, needs and priorities with your health care providers. Talk about your plan of care, what it means, and what you can expect to occur.

If English is not your first language, and you have difficulty understanding your care team, a translator can be contacted to assist you.

## Verify Your Personal Identification

- Verifying patient identification is an important factor in the safe delivery of health care.
- As a safety precaution, we routinely check patient identification to make sure your information matches the medical record. For example, the Patient Registration area may ask for personal

identification including photo identification, your health care card or other identifying documents.

- Before you receive care or undergo a procedure, we routinely ask you to confirm your identity by stating your full name (first and last) and birth date. We might also ask for your personal identification card or health record to verify your identity. We haven't forgotten who you are. This is a safety precaution.
- Accurate information helps us confirm your identity. Please inform Patient Registration or your health care provider if there are any changes to your name, address, phone number or emergency notification.

## Clean Your Hands

- Keeping hands clean is the best thing you can do to prevent the spread of infections.
- Help stop germs by using the alcohol-based hand rubs located throughout the facility or washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water. If you need assistance, ask for help.
- If you aren't sure if your health care provider has cleaned their hands before coming into contact with you, it's okay to ask.
- Remind others to clean their hands, such as your family members, friends or health care providers.



## Know Your Own Medicine

- What medications are you taking? Your health care providers will need to know so they can prevent dangerous drug interactions.
- Bring a complete list of all the medications including any supplements, vitamins or herbal remedies you are taking. Include the product name, the dose and time you take the product.
- If a change is made to your medications, ask why. Know what your medications are for and how to take them (e.g. with food).
- Have you ever had a reaction to a medication or food product? If so, tell a member of your health care team.

**Health Link Alberta**

Call toll free:

**1-866-408-LINK (5465)**

**Edmonton: 780-408-LINK**

**Calgary: 403-943-LINK**

## Prevent Falls

Falling can result in serious injury, but most falls are preventable. You are at greater risk of falling when you are feeling unwell or are in unfamiliar surroundings. Reducing falls is everyone's responsibility: patients, family, friends and all health care staff.

### To Reduce Your Risks of Falling:

- Look around, slow down, hold onto something, ask for assistance, and be cautious.
- Tell staff if you are unsteady on your feet or if you have ever fallen.
- Use supports when getting up such as a cane, walker or crutches. If you need help, ask, don't take a chance.
- Take your time, especially when getting out of bed or a chair.
- If you are asked to wait for assistance before getting out of bed, or standing, please listen. Do ask for assistance; don't risk falling.
- Report spills right away. Wet floors can cause accidents. Tell a staff member if the floor in your area is wet, and use caution if you see a "wet floor" sign.
- Avoid wearing clothing that is too loose or too long.
- Wear footwear that fits well and has good traction. Indoor shoes with a low heel and rubber soles are best.



## Making Health Care Safer, Together

Everyone wants health care to be as safe as possible — patients, their families and friends, health care providers, staff and health care leaders.

We invite you to partner with us to help ensure that your care is safe. Be aware, be informed, and be involved.

## Health Advice Information

Health Link Alberta is a 24 hour a day, seven day a week telephone health advice and health information service answered by Registered Nurses.

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*Thank you to our patients and their families for assisting in the creation of this brochure.*

