

# PATIENT CARE GUIDE



**St. Petersburg General Hospital**

TOGETHER, PERFORMING AT A HIGHER STANDARD<sup>SM</sup>



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## **Welcome**

The staff of St. Petersburg General Hospital welcomes you as our patient and guest. We sincerely hope your visit with us will be as comfortable as possible with a successful recovery and an early return to your home and loved ones.

The information in this booklet will help you to understand the hospital and its services. We hope it will help you relax and feel at ease in the hospital environment. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions about your stay.

We are committed to providing quality healthcare in a warm, personalized environment. When you go home, we hope you will feel you are leaving professionals who are vitally interested in your health and happiness.

## **Our Mission**

The mission of St. Petersburg General Hospital is to provide optimal healthcare services to the population and visitors of St. Petersburg General Hospital, and the surrounding area. We will treat patients, families, physicians, and other healthcare providers with respect, dignity, and loyalty. As a leader in healthcare within the business community, we will act with absolute integrity and fairness as we conduct our business and personal lives.

Above all else, we are committed to the care and improvement of human life. In recognition of this commitment, we will strive to deliver high quality, cost-effective healthcare in our community.

## **Our Values**

- We recognize and affirm the unique and intrinsic worth of each individual.
- We treat all those we serve with compassion and kindness.
- We act with absolute honesty, integrity and fairness in the way we conduct our business and the way we live our lives.
- We trust our colleagues as valuable members of our healthcare team and pledge to treat one another with loyalty, respect and dignity.

We welcome any suggestions that you believe will improve our services to you, and we want you to be very satisfied with the care you receive here. Thank you for choosing St. Petersburg General Hospital.

For more information on the hospital and our services, you may visit our website at [www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com).

Sincerely,  
The Staff of St. Petersburg General Hospital



**St. Petersburg General Hospital**  
**NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

**Effective Date: 2/2010**

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU  
MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO  
THIS INFORMATION.**

**PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.**

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Facility Privacy Official by dialing the main facility number.

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, a plan for future care or treatment, and billing-related information. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by the facility, whether made by facility personnel, agents of the facility, or your personal doctor. Your personal doctor may have different policies or notices regarding the doctor's use and disclosure of your health information created in the doctor's office or clinic.

**Our Responsibilities**

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information and provide you a description of our privacy practices. We will abide by the terms of this notice.

**Uses and Disclosures**

**How we may use and disclose Health Information about you.**

The following categories describe examples of the way we use and disclose health information:

**For Treatment:** We may use health information about you to provide you treatment or services. We may disclose health information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical students, or other facility personnel who are involved in taking care of you at the facility. For example: a doctor treating you for a broken leg may need to know if you have diabetes because diabetes may slow the healing process. Different departments of the facility also may share health information about you in order to coordinate the different things you may need, such as prescriptions, lab work, meals, and x-rays.

We may also provide your physician or a subsequent healthcare provider with



copies of various reports that should assist him or her in treating you once you're discharged from this facility.

**For Payment:** We may use and disclose health information about your treatment and services to bill and collect payment from you, your insurance company or a third party payer. For example, we may need to give your insurance company information about your surgery so they will pay us or reimburse you for the treatment. We may also tell your health plan about treatment you are going to receive to determine whether your plan will cover it.

**For Health Care Operations:** Members of the medical staff and/or quality improvement team may use information in your health record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. The results will then be used to continually improve the quality of care for all patients we serve. For example, we may combine health information about many patients to evaluate the need for new services or treatment. We may disclose information to doctors, nurses, and other students for educational purposes. And we may combine health information we have with that of other facilities to see where we can make improvements. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of health information to protect your privacy.

We may also use and disclose health information:

- To business associates we have contracted with to perform the agreed upon service and billing for it;
- To remind you that you have an appointment for medical care;
- To assess your satisfaction with our services;
- To tell you about possible treatment alternatives;
- To tell you about health-related benefits or services;
- To contact you as part of fundraising efforts, unless you elect not to receive any such communications;
- To inform Funeral Directors consistent with applicable law;
- For population based activities relating to improving health or reducing health care costs; and
- For conducting training programs or reviewing competence of health care professionals.

When disclosing information, primarily appointment reminders and billing/collections efforts, we may leave messages on your answering machine/voice mail.

**Business Associates:** There are some services provided in our organization through contracts with business associates. Examples include physician services in the emergency department and radiology, certain laboratory tests, and a copy service we use when making copies of your health record. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. To protect your health information, however, business associates are required by federal law to appropriately safeguard your information.

**Directory:** We may include certain limited information about you in the facility directory while you are a patient at the facility. The information may include your name, location in the facility, your general condition (e.g., good, fair) and your religious affiliation. This information may be provided to members of the clergy and, except for religious affiliation, to other people who ask for you by name. If you would like to opt out of being in the facility directory please request the Opt Out Form from the admission staff or Facility Privacy Official.

**Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care:** We may release health information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care or who helps pay for your care. In addition, we may disclose health information about you to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort so that your family can be notified about your condition, status and location.

**Research:** We may disclose information to researchers when an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your health information has approved their research and granted a waiver of the authorization requirement.

**Future Communications:** We may communicate to you via newsletters, mail outs or other means regarding treatment options, health related information, disease-management programs, wellness programs, or other community based initiatives or activities our facility is participating in.

**Organized Health Care Arrangement:** This facility and its medical staff members have organized and are presenting you this document as a joint notice. Information will be shared as necessary to carry out treatment, payment and health care operations. Physicians and caregivers may have access to protected health information in their offices to assist in reviewing past treatment as it may affect treatment at the time.

**Affiliated Covered Entity:** Protected health information will be made available to facility personnel at local affiliated facilities as necessary to carry out treatment, payment and health care operations. Caregivers at other facilities may have access to protected health information at their locations to assist in reviewing past

treatment information as it may affect treatment at this time. Please contact the Facility Privacy Official for further information on the specific sites included in this affiliated covered entity.

**As required by law**, we may also use and disclose health information for the following types of entities, including but not limited to:

- Food and Drug Administration
- Public Health or Legal Authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury or disability
- Correctional Institutions
- Workers Compensation Agents
- Organ and Tissue Donation Organizations
- Military Command Authorities
- Health Oversight Agencies
- Funeral Directors, Coroners and Medical Directors
- National Security and Intelligence Agencies
- Protective Services for the President and Others

**Law Enforcement/Legal Proceedings:** We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena.

**State-Specific Requirements:** Many states have requirements for reporting including population-based activities relating to improving health or reducing health care costs. Some states have separate privacy laws that may apply additional legal requirements. If the state privacy laws are more stringent than federal privacy laws, the state law preempts the federal law.

## Your Health Information Rights

Although your health record is the physical property of the healthcare practitioner or facility that compiled it, you have the Right to:

- **Inspect and Copy:** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the health information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes. We may deny your request to inspect and copy in certain very limited circumstances. If you are denied access to health information, you may request that the denial be reviewed. Another licensed health care professional chosen by the facility will review your request and the denial. The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of the review.
- **Amend:** If you feel that health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the facility. Any request for an amendment must be sent in writing to the Facility Privacy Official. We may deny your request for an amendment and if this occurs, you will be notified of the reason for the denial.
- **An Accounting of Disclosures:** You have the right to request an accounting of disclosures. This is a list of certain disclosures we make of your health information for purposes other than treatment, payment or health care operations where an authorization was not required.
- **Request Restrictions:** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery you had. Any request for a restriction must be sent in writing to the Facility Privacy Official.
- **We are required to agree to your request only** if 1) except as otherwise required by law, the disclosure is to your health plan and the purpose is related to payment or health care operations (and not treatment purposes), and 2) your information pertains solely to health care services for which you have paid in full. For other requests, we are not required to agree. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment.
- **Request Confidential Communications:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you may ask that we contact you at work instead of your home. The facility will grant reasonable requests for confidential communications at alternative locations and/or via alternative means only if the request is submitted

in writing and the written request includes a mailing address where the individual will receive bills for services rendered by the facility and related correspondence regarding payment for services. Please realize, we reserve the right to contact you by other means and at other locations if you fail to respond to any communication from us that requires a response. We will notify you in accordance with your original request prior to attempting to contact you by other means or at another location.

- **A Paper Copy of This Notice:** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice.

If the facility has a website you may print or view a copy of the notice by clicking on the Notice of Privacy Practices link.

To exercise any of your rights, please obtain the required forms from the Privacy Official and submit your request in writing.

## **CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE**

We reserve the right to change this notice and the revised or changed notice will be effective for information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. The current notice will be posted in the facility and on our website and include the effective date. In addition, each time you register at or are admitted to the facility for treatment or health care services as an inpatient or outpatient, we will offer you a copy of the current notice in effect.

## **COMPLAINTS**

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the facility by following the process outlined in the facility's Patient Rights documentation. You may also file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be submitted in writing.

**You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.**

## **OTHER USES OF HEALTH INFORMATION**

Other uses and disclosures of health information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provide us permission to use or disclose health information about you, you may revoke that permission, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose health information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.

## **FACILITY PRIVACY OFFICIAL**

Telephone Number: (727)341-4081

# **Your Hospital Stay**

## **Introduction**

St. Petersburg General Hospital opened as a 219-bed facility in 1969. Since then, the hospital has continuously expanded its services and facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Today, the hospital offers such specialized services as 24-hour emergency care, critical care, women's services, obstetrics, PET/CT, orthopedic surgery, urological care, sleep disorders and wound care.

We also offer diagnostic imaging (radiology), laboratory, rehabilitative and a wide range of other ancillary services.

## **Accreditation**

St. Petersburg General Hospital is a fully licensed and accredited hospital and Primary Stroke Center that meets all of the requirements of the State of Florida and The Joint Commission.

The hospital is licensed by the State of Florida and is approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for participation in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

## **About Your Admission**

Your physician has arranged for your admission to St. Petersburg General Hospital. Except in emergency situations, we have been advised that you are coming, so we are usually able to take care of many of the details of admission prior to your arrival. The admitting staff will make sure that the hospital has the information necessary to provide you with appropriate care.

All hospital records are confidential. Generally, we will assign a specific time for your arrival. Please try to be prompt. This is especially important if you are scheduled for surgery.

## **Medical Care**

Your complete medical care is under the direction and supervision of your physician who is a member of the hospital medical staff. It is your physician who determines what diagnostic tests you will take, whether or not you require x-rays, therapies or medication, and what food you can eat. Hospital nurses, technicians, and other specialists will follow your physician's directions in providing your program of care.

## **Nondiscrimination**

St. Petersburg General Hospital provides inpatient and outpatient care without regard to race, color, religion, national origin or disabilities.

## What to Bring

We would suggest you bring a list of medications and doses you are now taking, a robe, slippers, toothbrush, shaving equipment and other personal items. You may also wish to bring a book or magazines.

When not in use, dentures, contact lenses and eyeglasses should be placed in protective containers. **The hospital is not responsible for loss or damage to these items.**

St. Petersburg General Hospital offers complimentary wireless high-speed internet access throughout the hospital. Patients and their guests may bring laptops; however, **the hospital is not responsible for damage or loss of such items.**

## What Not to Bring

Please do not bring jewelry, credit or debit cards and more than a few dollars in cash or other valuables. When absolutely necessary, valuables may be deposited for safekeeping in the hospital safe. **The hospital is not responsible for any personal property.**

Personal appliances are not permitted for safety reasons. Battery operated radios may be used, but **the hospital is not responsible for damage or loss of such items.**

## Medications From Home

**Please do not bring medications from home to the hospital unless your physician instructs you to do so.** Please bring a list of all medications and doses including over the counter and herbal medications.

## Consent Forms

We will ask you to sign appropriate consent and release forms that authorize hospital personnel to provide the services your physician has ordered for you.

## Identification Bands

You will be required to wear an identification (ID) band during your stay. This helps ensure that you will receive the proper tests and medications. Your ID band will be checked prior to any tests, treatments or medications being given.

## Your Accommodations

St. Petersburg General Hospital offers semi-private and private rooms. Private rooms are scheduled and assigned on a medical necessity, then a first-come, first-served basis.

Patient rooms include bathrooms. Many are equipped with showers for your use, subject to your physician's orders. Each room has individual room temperature controls for your comfort.

Your bed is designed for your comfort and safety. You can electronically raise or lower the height of the entire bed or elevate the head or foot. Your nurse will show you how to operate the bedside controls.

## **Nurse Call System**

To call your nurse, use the call button on your TV control. Simply push down the nurse-call button. This will turn on the light at the nurses' station and above your door.

There is an emergency nurse-call button or pull cord on your bathroom wall. If you need help, use it and wait for your nurse.

## **Telephones**

For local calls, press "9" and wait for the dial tone, then dial the number. Long distance calls may be made by calling the hospital operator "0". The hospital operator will connect you to the outside operator for you to complete your long distance call.

Patients (except those in Critical Care Units and Labor & Delivery) may receive calls between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Family members and friends may reach you by calling the hospital's main number, 384-1414, and when the line is answered, our staff will provide you with your four digit extension.

For patients with partial or total hearing impairment, a phone hand set amplifier or TDD phone and a television closed caption decoder are available upon request.

## **Food and Nutritional Services**

The Food and Nutritional Services (FANS) staff is part of the healthcare team at St. Petersburg General Hospital. Nutrition can play an important role in optimizing health. The FANS staff works to ensure that diet modifications or restrictions ordered by your physician are appropriately carried out. If your physician prescribes a special diet for you, a Registered Dietitian is available to provide diet instructions.

You should have a St. Petersburg General Hospital menu in your room. You may call extension 4259 to order, change or request dietary preferences. Physician ordered diet plans must be adhered to. Should your physician change your diet during your hospital stay, it may alter your diet selections.

If you have any questions or comments about our menu, diet or nutritional services, please do not hesitate to request a visit by a member of the nutritional services staff by calling extension 4259.



## **Inquiries About You**

We believe your health is a personal matter, so diagnostic and other confidential information about you will not be released to others. We urge you to tell your friends and relatives that they should contact a member of your immediate family to inquire about your progress.

If you would like to designate an individual to access more specific information about you during your hospital stay, please talk with your nurses.

As it is very important that you feel safe and secure and that your confidential information and privacy is maintained, your family, friends, and significant others will need to know your privacy code to get updates on your condition. Your personal privacy code will be given to you or your representative upon admission. Anyone calling to request information on a patient will need to provide this code number to the nursing staff. This verifies that the release of information has been approved by the patient.

## **Mail and Flowers**

Mail will be delivered to your room by volunteers every day except Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays. Your nurse or a member of the volunteer staff will be happy to mail letters for you. Flowers will be delivered directly to your room by the volunteers; however, plants and flowers are not permitted in critical care units or isolation rooms.

## **Private Duty Nurses**

The hospital nursing service department will provide you with a list of resources to assist in obtaining a private duty nurse if your physician recommends one. All private duty nurses must be approved by the hospital nursing department. Since private duty nurses are not hospital employees, they or the nurse registry will submit their charges for services directly to you, and their duties will be limited.

## **Ambulance Services**

Your nurse can arrange ambulance service if it is authorized by you or your family. Charges are billed to you by the ambulance service.

## **Patients with Disabilities, Impairments or Language Barriers**

Access to hospital facilities and services is available to patients with disabilities at all times. Special equipment and communication devices are available upon request for our patients with visual, hearing, speech and physical impairment.

In addition, arrangements can be made for verbal or sign language interpreters if needed to communicate between health care providers and the patient and family. The hospital provides interpretation services through a contracted service free of charge. If you choose to use an interpreter not associated with this service, you will be responsible for the cost.

Please notify your nurse or physician if any additional accommodations related to your disability or impairment are necessary to make your stay more comfortable.

## **Patients with Special Cultural, Religious or Dietary Practices**

The hospital staff respects the different beliefs, attitudes and cultural lifestyles of our patients. We request that you let us know any special needs you might have or practices that you follow. The staff will make every effort to accommodate your requests to the extent possible as long as it does not interfere with your treatment.

## **Care to be Green!**

St. Petersburg General Hospital is sensitive to our environment and the importance of conserving our resources. Each day millions of gallons of water and tons of detergent are used laundering linen throughout the world. As a part of our Green Initiative, we are working to reduce our adverse impact on the environment.

Unless you request otherwise, your linen will be changed as needed during your stay. We want you to always be satisfied with your linen supply. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you would like a portion or all of your linen freshened more often as we would be happy to do so



# **PATIENT SAFETY**

## **Complaint/Ethical Issues Resolution**

If you have questions or concerns regarding your hospital stay, please talk with your nurse, physician or discharge planner. If you are concerned about your care or treatment you and/or family member can request a Clinical Ethics Committee Consult when there are concerns about ethical issues. If you are still unable to resolve the issue through discussion with your nurse and/or physician, please ask to speak to the Charge Nurse and/or Manager of the area to which you have been admitted. If your issue remains unresolved, you may call extension 4801 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or the House Supervisor after hours and weekends at extension 4989 for assistance in forwarding your complaints and grievances to the appropriate staff to facilitate resolution of your concerns. To contact the Agency for Healthcare Administration write to or call:

Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA)  
Consumer Assistance Unit  
2727 Mahan Drive  
Tallahassee, Florida 32308  
1-888-419-3455 (press 1)

If you have a complaint against a healthcare professional and want to submit the required complaint form, call the Consumer Services Unit 1-888-419-3456 (press 2) to request a form or write to the following address:

Consumer Services Unit  
PO Box 14000  
Tallahassee, FL 32317-4000

To file a complaint with The Joint Commission, you may call 1-800-994-6610 or you may email at [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org).

## **Safety Overview**

We are committed to patient safety by involving patients and their family members in our patient safety program. We are improving safety through the use of best practices, improved technology and increased patient involvement in their healthcare.

Our goal is to make you feel safe and secure while you are in the hospital. Every member of our staff is dedicated to:

- Providing you with a safe, healthy and secure environment.
- Performing their jobs carefully and competently.
- Using safe and effective practices and technologies.
- Responding to your needs and wants in a timely manner.
- Ensuring timely communication between caregivers and patients by answering questions about your treatment and your health, providing you with specific information about your care and explaining changes in your treatment.

As part of our efforts to provide you with a clean, safe and healthy environment, St. Petersburg General Hospital is a smoke-free campus. There is no smoking inside or outside of the facility as of July 1, 2010.

Patient falls are also an important safety concern. Unless you have been told that you can get out of bed by yourself, please do not. Ask your nurse to assist you.

Please do not lean on your bedside table or cabinet for support. They may move under your weight.

The hospital holds frequent fire drills to assure the readiness of the staff in the event of an actual fire. Please do not be alarmed by activity and the sound of doors closing on your floor when a fire drill is in progress and the fire alarm sounds. Your care will not be interrupted.

In the event of an emergency situation, the hospital staff will instruct you on how to respond.

Everyone has a role in making healthcare safe - physicians, healthcare executives, nurses and technicians. Healthcare organizations across the country are working to make healthcare safety a priority. You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your healthcare team.

The “Speak UpSM” program, sponsored by The Joint Commission urges patients to get involved in their care. Such efforts to increase consumer awareness and involvement are supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience. After all, research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their healthcare are more likely to have better outcomes.

To help prevent healthcare errors, patients are urged to “Speak UpSM.” Please see the “Speak UpSM.” handout provided to you in this booklet.

For additional information, please see Patient Safety Information at the back of this book or visit our website at [www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com).

## Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the number one way to prevent the spread of infection. Perform hand hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water and rub your hands together for at least 10 seconds. As an alternative, if your hands are not visibly soiled you may use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. These products are rubbed onto your hands and not rinsed off. Expect all hospital staff to perform hand hygiene before and after they provide any services that require touching you or articles in your room. If you don't see them perform hand hygiene to clean their hands, please feel free to ask if they did.

When should you wash your hands?

- After using the restroom, coughing, blowing your nose or sneezing.
- Before and after eating, drinking or handling food.
- After handling dirty items.
- When your hands look or feel dirty.
- After touching or coming into contact with a person who is sick with an infection.
- When in doubt, wash your hands.

Stopping Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) and other resistant organisms is part of a St. Petersburg General Hospital initiative. We are asking all patients and visitors to perform hand hygiene with either soap and water or the alcohol based sanitizer before and after contact with patients and their surroundings. This simple act can provide a safe environment for all. We want you to be an active partner in our ABCD campaign.

- **Active Surveillance** - As a patient you may be asked to undergo a simple culture test from your nostrils. This is not painful and is like having a Q tip swab the inside of both nostrils. This is then sent to the laboratory to see if you have MRSA. This does not mean you have an infection, but that you may harbor this resistant organism in your nose.
- **Barrier Precautions** – If they are required, it means that staff and visitors should use gowns, gloves and sometimes masks. Through use of these items, the spread of resistant organisms and other infections can help be prevented by washing your hands.
- **Compulsive Hand Hygiene** – Washing your hands is the easiest and most effective way to stop MRSA and other infections from spreading.
- **Disinfection of Environments** – Thorough cleaning and appropriate use of products are absolutely necessary to reduce the spread of MRSA and other infections.

We believe these precautions will help reduce rates of other highly resistant infections, such as Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus and Clostridium Difficile Colitis. Through this program we will ensure the delivery of safe, effective, efficient and compassionate healthcare.

## **Medication Safety**

St. Petersburg General Hospital implemented patient medication safety technology, in 2005. The Electronic Medication Administration Record, or EMAR, has a strong record of effectively reducing patient medication errors. It works as follows:

- Each patient admitted to St. Petersburg General Hospital receives an armband with a bar code. The bar code corresponds to the patient's current medical record, including drug history, allergies and lab results. Bar code identifiers also appear on shrink-wrapped doses of medication.
- Before a medication is administered, bar codes on the patient armband and the medication are scanned allowing the nurse or therapist to verify the right patient is receiving the right drug in the right dose at the right time.
- EMAR checks each medication against a patient's drug history and lab results. If conflicts or potential drug interactions are identified, warnings alert the nurse to double check, verify and/or call the doctor before administering the medication.

For more information on patient safety and to download a Personal Medication Record, please visit our website at [www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com), click on Patients and Visitors and then click on the Quality & Patient Safety button.

## **Restraints**

The use of restraints is limited to those situations with appropriate clinical justification. All patients have basic human rights that must be respected within the limits of safety. The long-term goals are to maintain the patient's dignity and reinforce their self-esteem.

## **Suicide Prevention**

Suicide Can Happen to anyone. Suicide threats and behaviors are brought on by complex influences unique to each person. Most suicidal behaviors are acts to end intolerable feelings, and what defines “intolerable” varies over time for each individual. Often the person feels he/she is not being heard, understood or responded to by significant people in his/ her environment. During the crisis, the person’s coping mechanisms are suspended. Motivation for suicide may not be attaining death but escaping emotional pain, making a change in life, making a change in relationship, or attempting to be heard. People considering suicide in response to unhappy life situations typically invite intervention by talking about their intentions. Reaching out in this manner is their way of saying they need help with living. It is the policy of St. Petersburg General Hospital that patients with mental, emotional or behavioral problems will be assessed for suicide risk and maintained in a safe environment. If a patient is found to be at risk of self harm, they may be Baker Acted for an involuntary exam. Once the patient is medically cleared, the patient will be transferred to a mental health facility under the Baker Act (Chapter 394, Mental Health, and Part I Florida Mental Health Act). If the patient has been determined to be a suicide risk, belongings and medication will be removed from the patient’s possession and sent home with a family member. Medications will be inventoried and sent to Pharmacy for storage in the vault if unable to be sent home. Removal of the belongings will be done and documented. Patients at high risk for suicide will be continuously observed to keep them safe. Family members may be asked to stay with the patient to help reduce the patient’s anxiety.

If you are aware of someone that is in distress and talking about self harm please contact the Crisis Hotline: 211 Tampa Bay Crisis Center

For future reference in the event that you, a family member, or a friend need information about suicide prevention, support, or crisis assistance, additional resources are:

- <http://www.suicide.org/hotlines/florida-suicide-hotlines.html>
- 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or go to their website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> This is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in suicidal crisis. You will be routed to the closest possible crisis center in your area. With more than 130 crisis centers across the country, their mission is to provide immediate assistance to anyone seeking mental health services. Call for yourself, or someone you care about. Your call is free and confidential.
- [http://www.agingcarefl.org/aging/suicide\\_prev/Resources](http://www.agingcarefl.org/aging/suicide_prev/Resources)





# **PATIENT RIGHTS**

## **Patient Rights and Responsibilities**

Florida law requires that your healthcare provider or healthcare facility recognize your rights while you are receiving medical care and that you respect the healthcare provider's or healthcare facility's right to expect certain behavior on the part of patients. You may request a copy of the full text of this law from your healthcare provider or healthcare facility. Each patient has the right and responsibility to:

- Have his/her family or representative and physician notified promptly of his/her admission.
- Expect quick response to reports of pain.
- Be treated with courtesy and respect, with appreciation of his/her individual dignity, and with protection of his/her need for privacy.
- A prompt and reasonable response to questions and requests.
- Know who is providing medical services and who is responsible for his/her care.
- Know what patient support services are available, including whether an interpreter is available if he/she does not speak English.
- Know what rules and regulations apply to his/her conduct.
- Be given, by his/her healthcare provider, information concerning diagnosis, planned course of treatment, alternatives, risks, and prognosis.
- Refuse treatment, except as otherwise provided by law.
- Be given, upon request, full information and necessary counseling on the availability of known financial resources for his/her care.
- To know that if eligible for Medicare, upon request and in advance of treatment, whether the healthcare provider or healthcare facility accepts the Medicare assignment rate.
- Receive, upon request, prior to treatment, a reasonable estimate of charges for medical care.
- Receive a copy of a reasonably clear and understandable, itemized bill and, upon request, to have charges explained.
- Medical treatment or accommodations, regardless of race, national origin, religion, physical disability, or source of payment.
- Treatment for any emergency medical condition that will deteriorate from failure to provide treatment.
- Know if medical treatment is for purposes of experimental research and to give his/her consent or refusal to participate in such experimental research.
- Express grievances regarding any violation of his/her rights, as stated in Florida law, through the grievance procedure of the hospital and to the appropriate state licensing agency, AHCA.

- Retain and wear personal clothing and possessions, unless it is medically inadvisable.
- Receive care in a safe setting.
- Be free from restraints or seclusion that are not medically necessary or used as a means of coercion, discipline, staff convenience, or retaliation.
- Access information contained in his/her medical record within a reasonable time frame, to request an amendment to the medical records and to receive an accounting of disclosures of the information contained in the medical record.

### **Every patient is responsible for:**

- Providing to his/her healthcare provider, to the best of his/her knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters relating to his/her health.
- Reporting unexpected changes in his/her condition to his/her healthcare provider.
- Reporting to his/her healthcare provider whether he/she comprehends a contemplated course of action and what is expected of him/her.
- Following the treatment plan recommended by his/her healthcare provider.
- Keeping appointments and, for notifying the healthcare provider or healthcare facility when he/she is not able to do so.
- His/her actions if he/she refuses treatment or does not follow the healthcare provider's instructions.
- Assuring that the financial obligations of his/her healthcare are fulfilled as promptly as possible.
- Following healthcare facility rules and regulations affecting patient care, conduct and safety.

### **Advance Directives/Healthcare Surrogate/Living Wills**

In the State of Florida every competent adult has, in most cases, the freedom to accept or refuse medical treatment. When you are mentally competent and able to speak, you can exercise these rights by talking to your physician and family members to make them aware of your wishes. However, severe illness or accident could cause you to be unable to communicate your choice. During that time, important decisions about your medical care may have to be made. Unless you leave written instructions, your family and physicians may have to guess about what kind of treatment you would want. In some cases, they may be forced to proceed with treatment that they know you would not desire simply because your preference has not been expressed in writing. You can help your family and physicians by telling them in advance what you want done under certain circumstances. This planning ahead for future decisions is known as "Advance Directives." Your directive goes into effect only if you become mentally incapacitated and therefore are unable to express your wishes. It is also important

that you know that you can change these directives until that point.

You may also choose a person to act as your Healthcare Surrogate. This person can make decisions concerning withdrawal or withholding of life prolonging procedures if you become unable to make these yourself.

You are encouraged to complete both the Living Will, as well as the appointment of a Healthcare Surrogate since not every possible situation may be addressed by your Living Will. Your Living Will can assist your Healthcare Surrogate Proxy in determining what your wishes would be. A further explanation and sample of a Living Will and a Healthcare Surrogate forms are located at the back of this handbook.



# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **Cafeteria and Vending Area**

The hospital cafeteria is located on the first floor in the back of the hospital just off the main corridor. It is open to visitors at specified times as follows: Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Lunch 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Hospital inpatients are restricted from dining in the cafeteria.

Vending machines, provided for the convenience of visitors, are accessible 24 hours a day. They are also located on the first floor just off the east corridor in the “Snack Shack” and in the emergency department waiting room.

## **Clergy**

St. Petersburg General Hospital is non-sectarian and cooperates with the clergy of all faiths. During the admitting process, you can request to be placed on our clergy visitation list or you may ask your nurse to request a visit from the clergy of your choice.

## **Lost and Found**

Lost and found articles will be turned in to our Plant Operations Department where they may be identified and claimed. To inquire about lost items, call extension 4882.

## **Newspapers**

Local newspapers can be purchased in the front entrance at St. Petersburg General Hospital.

## **Pets**

Pets are generally not permitted in the hospital. Service animals are the exception. For more specific information on policies related to pets, please talk with your nurse.

## **Public Phones and Restrooms**

For your visitors’ convenience, public restrooms are located throughout the hospital. Please ask your nurse for the location of the facilities nearest to your room. A courtesy telephone is available in our lobby.

## **Visitors**

Your visitors are welcome guests in our hospital. We ask that they observe hospital visiting hours. We generally suggest only two visitors be allowed in your room at one time. We ask that visitors leave when a treatment is given and when the doctor or nurse needs to see the patient.

Visitors should never come to see patients if they have a cold, sore throat, or any contagious disease or illness.

## **Visiting Hours**

Medical, Surgical and GYN Units: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. (EST)

ICU: No restrictions except during change of shift.

PCU: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. (EST)

OB/Post Partum: 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. (EST)

After 11:00 p.m. (EST), call the Nurse Supervisor at extension 4989 or the OB Charge Nurse at extension 4903 prior to allowing visitors. Patients are permitted to have family support rooming in during their stay.

Emergency Room (ER): Visitors are permitted 24 hours, 7 days a week. The maximum number of visitors is 2 per room. All additional visitors will be asked to wait in the Emergency Room lobby.

All exterior doors, with the exception of the ER, will be locked at 9:00 p.m. (EST). They will be unlocked at 6:00 a.m. (EST).

Members of the clergy may visit at any time.

**Nursing staff reserves the ability to limit visitation based on circumstances in the unit or with patient condition. Appropriate management of age and number of visitors is permissible, and the Charge Nurse and/or Nursing Supervisors may determine this based upon their discretion. When problems arise, situations should be escalated to the Charge Nurse and/or Nursing Supervisors. In certain cases Administration may be asked to intervene.**

# **HOSPITAL SERVICES**

## **Anesthesia**

Anesthesia services are under the direction of an independent physician who has specialized training in anesthesiology. If you are scheduled for surgery, the anesthesiologist or a member of the staff will talk with you prior to surgery.

## **Blood Bank**

Blood products transfused at St. Petersburg General Hospital are obtained from volunteer donors. Friends or relatives who would like to donate blood for a patient in the hospital should contact donor services. Ask your nurse for assistance.

## **Case Management**

Case Managers are an important part of your healthcare team. They are responsible for your preadmission review, utilization management, social service referrals and discharge planning. They also coordinate all concurrent clinical reviews required by insurance and managed care companies. Case Managers also work closely with representatives from home health, medical equipment and supplies companies and extended care facilities to ensure a smooth transition from the hospital to the designated discharged destination. They also order any necessary durable medical equipment as directed by the physician.

## **Critical Care Units**

The Critical Care units at St. Petersburg General Hospital provide optimum and individualized care for patients whose treatment requires intensive, highly sophisticated observation and treatment. The nursing staff and support personnel have been trained to provide the highest levels of care available. The visitation policy for immediate family has been established with specific requirements outlined in the General Information section of this handbook, in the Visiting Hours section.

## **Diagnostic Imaging (X-rays)**

St. Petersburg General Hospital offers a full range of diagnostic imaging services from traditional x-rays to ultrasound, nuclear medicine, PET and CT scans, bone mineral density testing and other special procedures.

All diagnostic imaging tests are read by an independent radiologist, a physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of disease by means of radiology. The radiologist prepares a report of findings and diagnosis that is given to your physician. Radiologist fees are billed separately.



## **Emergency Department**

The Emergency Department is equipped with modern, life supporting equipment and is staffed 24 hours a day – every day of the year – by qualified nursing personnel and independent emergency physicians. Every effort is made to give patients prompt treatment. Our triage system allows each patient to have his or her condition assessed upon arrival. Our primary responsibility is to administer treatment according to the urgency of the situation; therefore, the seriously ill or injured receive immediate attention.

There is a hospital charge based on the level of care given. Charges are made for use of equipment, supplies and medications ordered by the physician. The independent Emergency Department physicians bill separately from the hospital for their services.

## **Environmental Services (Housekeeping)**

Your comfort is enhanced by a clean, neat room. Our Environmental Services staff is especially eager to do their daily tasks as quietly as possible, without disturbing you. Environmental Services personnel are involved in the hospital's infection control program, isolation techniques and soiled linen procedures. If you have any problems concerning the cleanliness of your room, call the Environmental Services Department at extension 4053.

## **Human Resources**

Many exciting career opportunities are available at St. Petersburg General Hospital for medical professionals, technical staff and clerical personnel. We are an equal opportunity employer with an excellent benefits package. For more information on available opportunities, call our Human Resources Department at extension 341-4814.

## **Laboratory**

The laboratory is staffed by licensed laboratory technicians and technologists under the direction of an independent pathologist. This department is responsible for performing various blood and body fluid tests ordered by patients' physicians for continued care and diagnosis. If surgery is conducted, the pathologist will examine the tissue removed to determine the nature of the illness.

## **Maternity Care**

St. Petersburg General Hospital offers a family centered approach to maternity care. Fathers are encouraged to participate in the birthing process while the baby's siblings are given liberal visiting privileges. Our Labor and Delivery services offer traditional labor rooms and birthing rooms. After delivery, private rooms are usually available on the maternity floor.

## **Health Information Management/Medical Records**

To obtain copies of your medical record after your discharge, call 341-4897. Medical Records can be picked up in our Medical Records Office located in the hospital's south hallway – Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EST). Please note that there may be a charge for these copies.

The Health Information Management Department, staffed by specially trained professionals, maintains a complete record detailing the course of hospitalization for each patient. All diagnoses and procedures incurred during the patient's hospitalization are compiled by our coding specialists to determine the appropriate reimbursement to the hospital. The medical record, which remains the property of the hospital, serves as written communication between your physician and other professionals participating in your care while you are a patient in the hospital. Your medical record will be used for reference should you have any subsequent hospital visits. The contents of this record will not be disclosed to any third party except by your written authorization, subpoena, or by court order.

## **Nursery**

The nursery staff provides well-baby care and skilled intervention for sick newborns and is always supervised by specially trained registered nurses. Our staff will provide patients with instruction on self-care and newborn care as well as answer questions.

## **Nursing Services**

The Nursing Services Department coordinates nursing care to provide for quality, individualized care through a staff of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nurse technicians and nursing assistants.

Nursing Services is under the direction of the Chief Nursing Officer, a registered nurse. Each area of the hospital has a nurse director who is available to patients and their families to discuss any questions or concerns regarding their nursing care.

## **Organ/Tissue Donation**

More than 80,000 Americans are waiting for life-saving organ transplants and hundreds of thousands more could benefit from tissue transplants. If you have signed an organ donor card or indicated your wish to donate on your driver's license, please tell your family since they would be consulted before a donation can take place. If you would like more information about organ/tissue donation, please talk with your nurse.

## **Pain Management**

Effective pain relief is an important part of your treatment. Our staff is committed to regularly assessing the presence of and level of your pain and decreasing it to a tolerable level. To assess your pain level, a scale of 0-10 may be used: 0 = no pain, 1-3 = mild pain; 4-6 = moderate pain; and 7-10 = severe pain.

You, your doctor and/or your nurse should discuss your level of pain and your plan for pain management. Being in pain may affect your recovery and therefore any pain you experience should be reported to your nurse or doctor. Before discharge, discuss your pain management for after discharge and be sure you understand all of the instructions.

## **MEDICATIONS MAY HAVE SIDE EFFECTS**

### **Such as:**

- Dizziness
- Changes in Blood Pressure
- Confusion
- Gastrointestinal (GI) Upset
- Rash

### **For Your Safety:**

- Ask for help when you get up
- Get up slowly
- Sit on edge of bed before standing
- Use the call light

If you have specific questions about your medication, please ask your nurse or doctor. Printed information is available on request.

## **Pharmacy**

A pharmacist is available 24 hours a day to provide prompt service to our patients and to provide drug information to the medical and nursing staffs. The pharmacists work closely with the medical staff to monitor your drug therapy throughout your hospital stay. The pharmacy utilizes up-to-date computer technology to assist in the review of your medication for potential drug interactions and drug allergies.

## **Plant Operations**

A well organized engineering and maintenance department keeps the hospital's physical plant and equipment in good repair. Fire, disaster and emergency power drills are conducted frequently by plant operations personnel to evaluate response readiness in all hospital areas.

## **Progressive Care Units**

Our Progressive Care Units (PCU's) provide an excellent transition between the Intensive Care Unit and routine service. The PCU's offer telemetry monitoring which enables the patient to be ambulatory while still being monitored by our specially trained staff.

## **Rehabilitation Services**

The Rehabilitation Services department consists of physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. The department is staffed with skilled physical, occupational and speech therapists. It is equipped with modern equipment for each modality offered. Treatments are administered by the attending physician to inpatients.

## **Respiratory Therapy**

Various techniques are employed by trained therapists to treat existing respiratory conditions and to help prevent respiratory complications following surgery.

Pulmonary function studies also may be performed to aid in the diagnosis of respiratory conditions. All pulmonary functions are interpreted by physicians specializing in pulmonary medicine. Your attending physician determines the need and orders these treatments or tests.

## **Sleep Disorders Center**

The Sleep Disorders Center at St. Petersburg General Hospital is staffed with physicians credentialed in sleep medicine by the American Board of Sleep Medicine, in addition to their primary specialty board certifications. Credentialed sleep physicians are Diplomats of the American Board of Sleep Medicine and have primary specializations in Neurology, Pulmonary Medicine or Psychiatry.

## **Surgery**

This area consists of well-equipped operating rooms staffed with professionally trained specialists to assist your physicians. Since procedures and preparations vary with different operations, your physician, anesthesiologist and the members of the surgery nursing staff will explain what you may expect.

Our Day Surgery service is an innovative department with specifically trained staff to assist your physician during surgical procedures on an outpatient basis.

All surgical patients receiving anesthesia will be placed in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) following surgery. This unit, with its concentration of special equipment and skilled personnel, is designed for the care of surgical patients during the immediate post anesthesia period. The length of time each patient remains in recovery is decided by the physician.

Visitors are usually not allowed in surgical areas or the PACU. Family members and visitors of patients who are in surgery may elect to wait in surgical waiting rooms.

## **Volunteers**

Many thoughtful volunteers give their time and effort to assist patients and visitors. They also contribute to making your stay as comfortable as possible. Some of their daily duties include delivering mail, staffing the information desk and the surgery waiting room, helping in patient areas.

In addition, the Volunteer Auxiliary runs the gift shop located in the front lobby of the hospital. The proceeds from the Gift Shop are donated back to the community through various scholarship programs. If you would like more information on the Auxiliary or are interested in joining, please call extension 4848.

## **Wound Care Center**

We specialize in healing chronic wounds. Our experienced team of physicians and nurses are dedicated to treating wounds, many of which have resisted healing with traditional treatment.

# **RAPID RESPONSE TEAM**

## **Saving Lives Through Better Communication and Understanding**

### **What is the Rapid Response Team?**

Critical Care trained Nurses and Respiratory Therapists who respond to calls whenever additional expert attention is needed to avoid a potential emergency. Rapid Response Teams save lives and bring about positive outcomes for our patients here at St. Petersburg General Hospital.

### **Who can Call:**

St. Petersburg General Staff  
Physicians  
Patient's Family

### **When to Call and Discuss your Concern:**

If you are concerned about a change in your family member's condition, call the nurse. If, after speaking with the nurse you are still concerned, you can call a Rapid Response.

Rapid Response is not intended for complaints. These life saving resources should only be called when necessary.

### **How to Call:**

Pick up the phone  
Dial 1999  
Ask the operator to call a  
Rapid Response for your floor

### **Some Reasons to Call:**

Serious change in physical condition  
Change in mental status  
Signs of seizures  
Blurred vision



# **ABOUT YOUR BILL**

## **Your Hospital Statement**

Your bill includes two types of charges: A basic daily room rate and special or miscellaneous charges. Both the basic daily room rate and the special or miscellaneous charges are necessary to cover the hospital's direct costs and overhead. Special or miscellaneous charges are generally not based on individual item acquisition costs, but are designed to cover overall expenses and produce sufficient revenue for the hospital to be able to operate and provide healthcare.

Special and miscellaneous charges may include:

- The operating and recovery room
- Anesthesia services
- Laboratory and radiology tests
- Respiratory and physical therapy
- Medications
- Treatments involving special equipment
- Special supplies

All charges for services provided by the hospital are payable at the cashier's office at the time of discharge unless previous arrangements have been made or your expenses are covered by accepted insurance or government assistance programs. The departments of anesthesia, emergency services, radiology and pathology make separate charges for professional services and will render separate bills.

## **Delayed Charges**

It sometimes requires as much as 48 hours for a charge from a hospital department to be posted in the accounting offices, so charges for treatment or medicines which are ordered during the time period preceding your discharge may not appear on your statement when you leave the hospital. However, these charges will be reflected on the hospital bill that is mailed to you after you are discharged. Please note, that the date on the itemized bill mailed to your home may not correspond with the date of service. This date is the date the charge is posted to your account.

Should you anticipate any difficulty concerning the financing of your hospital stay, we urge you to raise such questions as early as possible so that we can assist you in planning for payment. Discharge planning and financial counselors are sources of assistance. Prompt settlement of patient accounts assures continuation of the high level of service rendered by St. Petersburg General Hospital.



## Physician Fees

Your hospital bill does not include charges from the independent physicians who provide you services in the emergency room, your attending physician, your surgeon, consultants such as radiologists, pathologists, anesthesiologists or other professional services rendered to you by physicians. These physicians will bill you directly for any charges.

While you are a patient (outpatient, emergency room, inpatient, surgery) in the hospital, you may receive services from physicians who will bill separately. These physicians may include but are not limited to:

## Professional Fees

**Attending Physician:** The physician who admitted you into the hospital

**Consulting Physician(s):** When your attending physician orders a consultation with a specialist or another person during your stay in the hospital

**Anesthesiologist:** A specially trained physician who administers anesthesia during a surgical procedure. The anesthesiologist bill will be sent to you from:  
Gulf to Bay Anesthesia Group  
809 South Albany Ave  
Tampa, FL 33606  
(813) 258-3444 866-895-3444 (out of local area number)

**Radiologist:** A specially trained physician who directs and supervises your x-ray examination(s) and interprets the results. The radiologists bill will be sent to you from:

Babat, Katz & Samuelson MD's PA  
6449 38th Ave N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710  
(727) 381-0275

**Pathologist:** A specially trained physician who is responsible for supervising the laboratory to assure that the results of all your tests are clinically reliable and are reported to your doctor in a timely manner. When laboratory tests are performed during your hospital visit, a pathologist bill will be sent to you from:

Pathology Associates  
4563 Central Ave N  
St. Petersburg, FL 33713  
(727) 328-7800

**Emergency Room Physicians:** A specially trained physician who is trained in the emergency medical field, ER physician's bills will be sent to you from:

Maritime ER Services Partners  
PO Box 8677  
Philadelphia PA 19101-3899  
(800) 355-2470

This document serves as a notice that you are financially responsible for any professional fees incurred during your hospital visit to the extent that those charges are not paid for by your insurer or managed care plan. If you have any questions about professional fees or the bill for such services, please call the appropriate number listed above.

## **Those With Insurance**

If you have hospitalization insurance at the time of your admission, a cash deposit may be necessary to cover your co-payments and deductibles. The amount of the deposit will vary according to your diagnosis and expected length of stay. The hospital will attempt to inform you of all this information prior to your admission to the hospital.

Please bring your insurance card and any other pertinent insurance identification with you. Often, hospital insurance plans do not provide full coverage for your hospital bill. Your hospitalization coverage is a contract between you and your insurance company and, while we will cooperate to the fullest in expediting your claim, you are ultimately responsible for your account. Payment will be due upon discharge for unassigned or insufficient insurance benefits.

## **Medicare Patients**

Medicare patients should bring their identification card with them for hospital admission. Medicare normally covers most of your hospital bill; however, an initial payment may be required for the deductible, co-insurance and/or services not covered by Medicare.

## **Medicaid Patients**

Medicaid patients should bring their current identification card and referral form from their primary care physician with them. Patients must assume responsibility for any services received that are disallowed by Medicaid.

## **Liability Insurance**

In some cases involving liability insurance, the hospital must ask the patient for payment regardless of circumstances involved. The insurance company's payment will normally be made to the patient.

## **Workers' Compensation**

If you are injured at work, we must have certification of insurance by your employer or the insurance carrier. Please make certain that we have received accurate information upon admission to speed up the settlement of your hospital bill when workers' compensation is involved.

## **Financial Counseling Service**

If none of the previous situations apply to you, you should make arrangements with your financial counselor on or before admission. Questions regarding your hospital account should be directed to the financial counselor in the business office. The business office has all the information pertaining to your account and can answer any questions that you may have.

## **On-line Payment**

For your convenience, you may make payments on-line at:  
[www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com).

# CHECKOUT

## Going Home

Your physician will decide when it is appropriate for you to be discharged from hospital care. When you are advised of your discharge, please notify your family promptly so they can arrange for your transportation. Your physician will have ordered your discharge from the hospital.

***It is hospital policy that all patients be escorted to the hospital exit door at the time of discharge.***

**Checklist** – since going home is a happy time for you, you may overlook some items:

- Have you gathered all clothing and personal items from the closet, bedside table, and the bathroom area?
- Have you withdrawn valuables that you may have deposited in the hospital safe?
- Have you received prescriptions from your doctor, and do you understand the instructions concerning medication, diet to be followed at home, and follow-up appointments with your physician?
- Medications secured in the pharmacy.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **NOTICE TO PATIENTS REGARDING YOUR RIGHT TO MAKE ADVANCE HEALTHCARE DECISIONS**

Federal law requires that we give you information about your right to make advance healthcare decisions. Attached is a copy of the Living Will and Designation of Healthcare Surrogate forms. You may complete and sign the documents as written or you may use them as a reference for writing your own advance directive.

Documents do not have to be notarized, but they must be witnessed.

Please note:

- Hospital employees cannot act as witnesses.
- The person designated as the healthcare surrogate cannot act as a witness to the designation document.
- Only one family member can serve as a witness.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Case Management department of St. Petersburg General Hospital at extension 4028. Please be assured that it is your decision to have advance directives. The hospital does not require you to have advance directives and will provide care regardless of whether or not you have executed a Living Will or appointed a Healthcare Surrogate.

For more information, you may visit the state of Florida's website: <http://www.fdhc.state.fl.us/>.

# LIVING WILL

Declaration made this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month),  
\_\_\_\_\_ (year).

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
willfully and voluntarily make known my desire that my dying not be artificially  
prolonged under the circumstances set forth below, and I do hereby declare that,  
if at any time I am incapacitated and

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have a terminal condition, or

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have an end-stage condition, or

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I am in a persistent vegetative state

and if my attending or treating physician and another consulting physician have  
determined that there is no reasonable medical probability of my recovery  
from such condition, I direct that life-prolonging procedures be withheld or  
withdrawn when the application of such procedures would serve only to prolong  
artificially the process of dying, and that I be permitted to die naturally with only  
the administration of medication or the performance of any medical procedure  
deemed necessary to provide me with comfort care or to alleviate pain.

It is my intention that this declaration be honored by my family and physician as  
the final expression of my legal right to refuse medical or surgical treatment and  
to accept the consequences for such refusal.

In the event that I have been determined to be unable to provide express and  
informed consent regarding the withholding, withdrawal, or continuation of life-  
prolonging procedures, I wish to designate, as my surrogate to carry out the  
provisions of this declaration:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand the full import of this declaration, and I am emotionally and mentally  
competent to make this declaration.

Additional instructions (optional):

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Witnesses (2 required):**

Signature/Print Name:

---

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature/Print Name:

---

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



# DESIGNATION OF HEALTHCARE SURROGATE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Last, first, middle initial)

In the event that I have been determined to be incapacitated to provide informed consent for medical treatment and surgical and diagnostic procedures, I wish to designate as my surrogate for health care decisions:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If my surrogate is unwilling or unable to perform his or her duties, I wish to designate as my alternate surrogate:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I fully understand that this designation will permit my designee to make healthcare decisions, except for anatomical gifts, unless I have executed an anatomical gift declaration pursuant to law, and to provide, withhold, or withdraw consent on my behalf; to apply for public benefits to defray the cost of healthcare; and to authorized my admission to or transfer from a healthcare facility.

Additional instructions (optional):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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I further affirm that this designation is not being made as a condition of treatment or admission to a healthcare facility. I will notify and send a copy of this document to the following persons other than my surrogate, so they may know who my surrogate is.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Witnesses (2 required):**

Signature/Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature/Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# PATIENT SAFETY INFORMATION

At St. Petersburg General Hospital, patient safety is our priority. Recently our nation has experienced an increased awareness and focus on patient safety. We want you to know that we share the concern. We are improving patient safety through use of best practices, improved technology and increased patient involvement in healthcare.

Whether you are a patient in our hospital or at home, your safety is important to us. Your healthcare team – your doctors, nurses and pharmacists – work hard to keep you healthy, but you are also responsible. Learn how you can help – it's your life and your health!

**Be informed.** Know about any medical conditions or illness you may have. Good sources of information are brochures which are available from your physician's office, the hospital, the public library or the internet.

**Keep track of your history.** Write down your medical history including any medical conditions you have, illnesses, surgeries, hospitalizations and immunizations. Give this information to your doctors and bring a copy if you come to the hospital.

Keep a list of the names and phone numbers of your doctors, clinics and pharmacy for quick and easy reference.

**Know your medications.** Make a list of the medications and dosages you are taking. Be sure to include over the counter medications and vitamins and herbals. Update your list any time your medications change. Share this information with your doctors. Bring a copy of this if you come to the hospital.

## **Things you need to know about your medications.**

- Make sure you understand directions.
- What are the brand and generic names?
- What is the purpose of the medication?
- What does the medication look like (color, etc.)?
- What is the dosage?
- How often should I take this medication?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Does this medication interact with any other medication? With foods? What should I do if I have an interaction?
- Does this medication have any side effects? What are they? What should I do if they occur?
- Does this medication replace another medication I am taking now?

**Make a list of any allergies you have to medications and food. Describe the reactions you have had.**

**List any special diet you are on. List any foods you do not tolerate.**

**Work with your doctor and healthcare professionals as a team.**

- Share your history with them.
- Share up-to-date information with everyone who's treating you.
- Make sure you understand the care and treatment you'll be receiving. Ask questions if you're not clear on your care.
- Pay attention. If something doesn't seem right, call it to the attention of your doctor or a member of your healthcare team.
- If you have tests of procedures, make sure you get the results. Discuss them with your doctor and ask what the results mean for your care.

**Involve a family member or friend in your care.** If you are not able to observe or participate fully in your care, ask a family member or friend to assist. They can go with you to appointments, help you ask questions, understand care directions and suggest your preferences.

**Follow the treatment plan agreed upon by you and your doctor.** Be sure you receive all instructions verbally and in writing that you can understand. Ask questions about any instructions that are confusing or unclear.

- Take medications exactly as prescribed.
- Use home medical equipment and supplies only as directed.
- Report anything unusual to your doctor.

While you are in the hospital, you will have an identification armband. ***Be sure it contains your correct name and information.*** Hospital staff and physicians will check your armband before giving you medications, drawing blood or doing procedures. If your armband has to be removed for any reason, it should be replaced before any further treatment is given.

**BE A PARTNER IN YOUR CARE – HELP US TO KEEP YOU HEALTHY!**

For more information on patient safety, visit our website at  
[www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com)



## The Joint Commission's **SPEAK UP PROGRAM**

Speak Up: Help Prevent Errors in Your Care

**Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.**

- Your health is too important to worry about being embarrassed. If you don't understand something that your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professional tells you, ask again.
- Don't be afraid to ask about safety. If you're having surgery, for example, ask the doctor to mark the area that is to be operated upon, so that there's no confusion in the operating room.
- Don't be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication.
- Don't hesitate to tell the healthcare professional if you think he or she has confused you with another patient.

**Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right healthcare professionals. Don't assume anything.**

- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn't seem quite right.
- Expect healthcare workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room and look for their identification badges. A new mother, for example, should know the person to whom she is handing her baby. If you are unsure, ask.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. Don't be afraid to gently remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of day you normally receive a medication. If it doesn't happen, bring this to the attention of your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor confirms your identity, that is, checks your wristband or asks your name, before he or she administers any medication or treatment.

**Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.**

- Ask your doctor about the specialized training and experience that qualifies him or her to treat your illness (and be sure to ask the same questions of those physicians to whom he or she refers you).
- Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor,

your library, respected websites and support groups.

- Write down important facts your doctor tells you, so that you can look for additional information later. And ask your doctor if he or she has any written information you can keep.
- Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of any 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.

### **Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.**

- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.
- Ask this person to stay with you, even overnight, when you are hospitalized. You will be able to rest more comfortably and your advocate can help to make sure you get the right medications and treatments.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked, and speak up for you if you cannot.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Review consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them and make sure you both understand exactly what you are agreeing to.
- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. Your advocate should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse and whom to call for help.

### **Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common healthcare mistakes.**

- Ask about the purpose of the medication and ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also inquire about the side effects of the medication.
- If you do not recognize a medication, verify that it is for you. Ask about oral medications before swallowing, and read the contents of bags of intravenous (IV) fluids. If you're not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do this.
- If you are given an IV, ask the nurse how long it should take for the liquid to "run out." Tell the nurse if it doesn't seem to be dripping properly (that it is too fast or too slow).
- Whenever you are going to receive a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have, or negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.

- If you are taking multiple medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medications together. This holds true for vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs, too.
- Make sure you can read the handwriting on any prescriptions written by your doctor. If you can't read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either.

**Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of healthcare organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by the Joint Commission.**

- Ask about the healthcare organization's experience in treating your type of illness. How frequently do they perform the procedure you need and what specialized care do they provide in helping patients get well?
- If you have more than one hospital or other facility to choose from, ask your doctor which one offers the best care for your condition.
- Before you leave the hospital or other facility, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all of the instructions.
- Go to [Quality Check](#) to find out whether your hospital or other healthcare organization is accredited.

**Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the healthcare team.**

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.
- Know who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment will last, and how you should feel.
- Understand that more tests or medications may not always be better. Ask your doctor what a new test or medication is likely to achieve.
- Keep copies of your medical records from previous hospitalizations and share them with your healthcare team. This will give them a more complete picture of your health history.
- Don't be afraid to seek a second opinion. If you are unsure about the nature of your illness and the best treatment, consult with one or two additional specialists. The more information you have about the options available to you, the more confident you will be in the decisions made.
- Ask to speak with others who have undergone the procedure you are considering. These individuals can help you prepare for the days and weeks ahead. They also can tell you what to expect and what worked best for them as they recovered.







**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

### From South St. Petersburg

Take I-275 North to 38th Ave North exit, turn left on 38th Ave North, head west past 49th Street North. The hospital is on your left just east of 66th Street North.

### From North St. Petersburg/Tampa

Take I-275 South to 38th Ave North exit, turn right on 38th Ave North, head west past 49th Street North. The hospital is on your left just east of 66th Street North.

### From Madeira Beach

Head east from Gulf Blvd on Rte 666E. Stay on the right until it turns into SR-595S Tyrone Blvd. Take Tyrone Blvd to 38th Ave North and turn left heading east just past 66th Street North. The hospital is on your right.

### From Largo/Seminole/Clearwater

Take U.S. 19 South. Get off on the 66th Street exit going south. Turn left on 38th Avenue.



6500 38th Avenue North | St. Petersburg, Florida 33710  
Telephone: 727.384.1414 | [www.StPeteGeneral.com](http://www.StPeteGeneral.com)