

## Partners in Your Health

Western Health is committed to patient safety but we need your help. You can help by taking an active role in your SAFETY.

- S** Speak up if things don't seem right or if you have concerns. You are the one who knows most about your health.
- A** Ask questions and keep asking until you have all of the information you need. Make sure your health care provider explains your care in a way you understand. Do not be afraid to ask if you do not understand.
- F** Family or friends, with your permission, can come with you for support, provide information or ask questions when you are not feeling well.
- E** Educate yourself. Find out about your condition and what you can do to improve your health.
- T** Tell others. Talk to others about patient safety and what they can do to stay safe.
- Y** You can help by being an active member of your health care team.

## Contact Us:

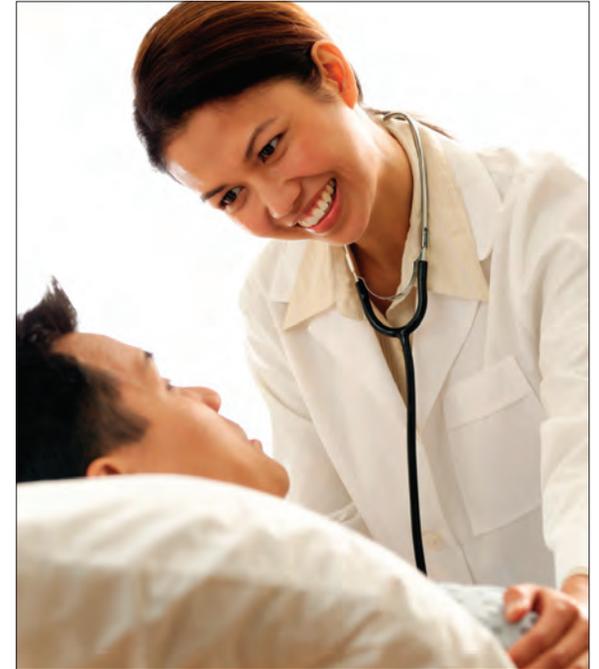
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# Your Safety in Health Care



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### OUR VISION

The vision of Western Health is that the people of Western Newfoundland have the highest level of health and well being possible.



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## Everyone has a Role to Play

Providing safe, quality health care is a priority for Western Health. We work together as a team and you are an important member of this team.

Western Health has a Patient Safety program in place to identify risks to our clients/patients/residents and to improve the quality of care that we provide.



## Risks to Safety

Studies have shown that three common risks to patients are medications, infections and falls. Here are some tips that you can follow to help lower your risk:

### Medications

- It is important for us to know what medications (name, strength and how often) you are on and why. Keeping a list of the medications you are taking can help health care providers manage your care better. Include any medications that are not prescribed such as Tylenol, vitamins or herbal remedies.
- Bring all your medications with you when you go to the hospital or to a medical appointment.

- Always keep your medications in the bottles they came in.
- Inform your health care provider if you are taking medications in a different way than prescribed.
- Make sure you tell your health care provider about any allergies or bad reactions to medications you have had.



- Ask questions if your medications look different than what you are use to taking.
- Ask for a list of all medications you are supposed to be on when you leave the hospital.
- Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns with your medications. Besides knowing what the medication is for and when to take it, you should know if there are any side effects from the medication, how long you will be on it and how you can tell if the medication is working.

### Falls

- Make sure you ask if you need help to use the bathroom or sit/stand up.
- Make sure you wear footwear that have nonskid soles and fit properly.

- Let your health care provider know if you need assistive devices (e.g., wheelchair, walker, cane) to help you move safely.
- If you feel dizzy or weak, do not try to move on your own. Ask for help.
- Make sure the area around you is not cluttered and that you can move around easily.



## Infections

- Washing your hands with soap and water is the single most important way to stop the spread of infection.
- If soap and water are not available, use the waterless hand washing solutions available at all facilities and clinics.
- Ask your health care providers if they have washed their hands before providing your care.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; then put the tissue in the garbage. Be sure to wash your hands afterwards.
- Make sure if you have a prescription for antibiotics (medicine to treat infections) you finish all of the medication as directed.