
health hints



Six Safety Tips For Surgery Patients

(NAPSA)—The next time you have an outpatient procedure or major surgery, you may be glad to know there are options available that empower patients to prevent possible errors when receiving medical care. Communication is a key factor.

“Patients need to take an active role in their care,” said Peter J. Plantes, M.D., medical director of LaurusHealth. “Asking questions of your health care provider and becoming a partner in the process significantly reduces the risk of medical error in the course of treatment.”

LaurusHealth.com, a consumer health information Web site, offers these suggestions for being an informed patient and reducing your risk:

1. Choose carefully. Select a doctor and a hospital that have a great deal of experience performing the procedure or surgery for which you are scheduled.
2. Take a friend. When you’re hospitalized, it is always a good idea to have a friend or family member present to advocate on your behalf.
3. Mark the site with a marker where the surgery is to be performed. This provides a good check for the hospital staff.
4. Watch your caregivers. Every doctor, nurse or aide who comes into contact with you should wash



his or her hands first.

5. Check your medication. Make sure the medication being dispensed is yours, not the person’s down the hall.

6. Confirm any instructions. Before you leave the hospital, review any instructions for care or medication. Don’t let the doctor or nurse assume that you know what to do.

“Patients really do have a great deal of responsibility for their own care,” said Plantes. “Good communication with their health care provider can make the difference.”

More information on safety tips for patients can be found at www.LaurusHealth.com. An innovative health information resource, the Web site was created in association with leading hospitals and physicians to help consumers make more informed choices about their health.