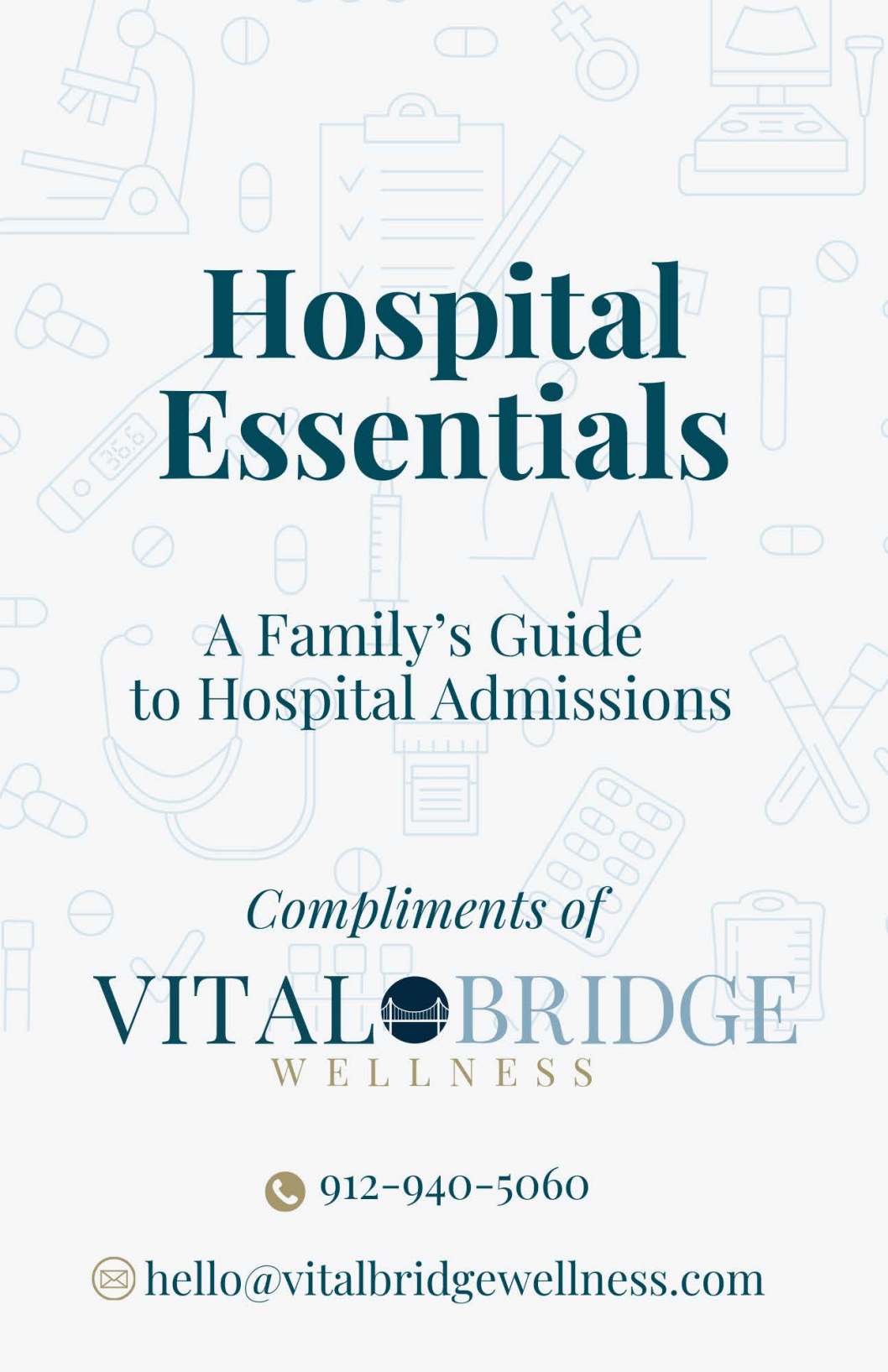




Hospital Essentials

A Family's Guide
to Hospital Admissions

Compliments of

VITAL**BRIDGE**
WELLNESS

 912-940-5060

 hello@vitalbridgewellness.com

A Note From The Founder

This is a stressful time for you and your family. It's filled with uncertainty in an unfamiliar environment with people speaking an unfamiliar language.

I know because I've spent my career in hospitals as an Intensive Care Unit nurse and as a long-time caregiver. I've helped thousands of families navigate our overstressed healthcare system.

My hope is that this booklet will help relieve some of the uncertainty. This booklet provides practical tips for ensuring your loved one gets the appropriate, personalized care they need while helping you understand the language of the hospital to best advocate for your loved one.*

When families need more personalized help they hire Vital Bridge Wellness. Concierge Nurses from Vital Bridge Wellness can help provide 1:1 care for your loved one along with hospital staff, translate hospital medical terminology, answer your questions, and establish a care plan for the discharge process.

If Vital Bridge Wellness can help you, text or call 912-940-5060 or email at hello@vitalbridgewellness.com.

We are happy to answer any of your questions.

Sending you best wishes for a speedy recovery,

Cathy Lunsford, BSN, RN

License# RN316566

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What to Bring to the Hospital

- Copy of identification/insurance cards
- Pictures of medications you take
- Cell phone and phone charger
- List of doctors who care for you
- Copy of Advanced Directive
- Copy of Power of Attorney
- A change of clothes for discharge
- Hearing Aids with case and charger
- Eye glasses
- Snacks or drinks you prefer (ask your nurse if you can eat and drink before hand)
- Books, magazines, word puzzles if you're feeling up to reading

What to Leave At Home

- Wallet
- Jewelry
- Anything of important value to you

It is a good idea to have a hospital bag packed for caregivers to grab with these things in the event of an emergency.

How to Help Us Take Care of the Person You Love

Most of your loved one's hands-on care will be provided by a team of nurses at the hospital. They are responsible for monitoring vital signs like heart rate and breathing, drawing blood for tests, assessing their condition, performing infection control, administering medications, and helping with daily activities like bathing and feeding.

I know from experience that they are pushed to their limits every day. They want to provide the best possible care for their patients. They are highly skilled and capable. But, if we're honest, there aren't enough of them. They're under a load of stress every day.

Here are a few things you can do to help them care for your family member:

1. Realize their number one priority is critical patient care. So, often they'll be slow to respond to routine, non-emergency requests.
2. If your family member regularly takes medications at home and you have access, take pictures of the labels, so the nursing staff can be sure they get what they need. Also note timed medications at home and be sure to tell the nursing staff.

Who's Who in the Hospital

Here's what the titles mean to you

Attending Physician: The primary doctor responsible for a patient's care during a hospital stay. They lead the medical team and make the final decisions about treatment.

Hospitalist: A doctor who specializes in the care of hospitalized patients. They manage and coordinate all aspects of a patient's hospital stay.

Internist: A doctor who specializes in internal medicine, focusing on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of adult diseases. Also may be referred to as primary care physicians for adults.

Resident: A doctor who has completed medical school and is undergoing specialized training in a particular field of medicine under the supervision of attending physicians.

Intern: A doctor in the first year of post-medical school training. Interns are supervised by residents and attending physicians.

Physician Assistant (PA): A licensed medical professional who works under the supervision of a doctor, providing many of the same services, including diagnosis and treatment.

Who's Who in the Hospital

Here's what the titles mean to you

Nurse Practitioner (NP): A registered nurse with advanced training and education who can diagnose and treat medical conditions, prescribe medications, and perform certain procedures.

Head Nurse (Charge Nurse): A nurse responsible for managing a department or a shift. They oversee other nurses, handle administrative tasks, and ensure patient care standards are met.

Registered Nurse (RN): A healthcare professional who has completed the necessary education and training and has passed a national licensing exam to obtain a nursing license.

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) or Patient Care Tech (PCT): A healthcare worker who provides basic patient care under the supervision of a nurse, including bathing, feeding, and monitoring vital signs.

Phlebotomist: A healthcare worker trained to draw blood from patients for laboratory tests or blood donations.

One of the services a Concierge Nurse can provide is ensuring communication and collaboration between the healthcare team.

Preventing Bedsores*

Bedsores are wounds that happen when bedridden patients are unable to move and aren't moved often enough by caregivers. The hours-long pressure of their body against the bed causes the skin to break down creating painful sores and an avenue for infection.

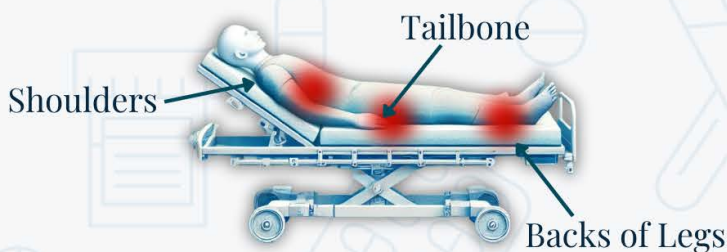
Here's what you can do to prevent them:

Regular Repositioning

- Frequency: Move the patient at least every two hours to relieve pressure on vulnerable areas.
- Technique: Ensure that the repositioning is done carefully to avoid causing friction or shear injuries. Pillows or foam wedges can help maintain proper positioning.

Skin Inspection

- Daily Checks: Perform regular skin inspections, focusing on areas prone to pressure sores such as heels, ankles, hips, and tailbone.
- Signs to Watch For: Look for redness, swelling, or any changes in skin color or texture. Early detection can prevent sores from developing.



Areas to Check

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Wound Care*

What you need to know

Proper wound care is crucial for healing and recovery. Without proper care, wounds are not only painful but a breeding ground for dangerous infections. As a caregiver, you play a vital role in ensuring that your loved one's wounds are managed effectively.

Here's what you need to know and do:

Understanding Wound Care Orders

- Know the Frequency: Ask the nurse how often the wound dressing should be changed.
- Monitor Compliance: Ensure that the wound care is being performed as ordered. If the wound dressing should be changed daily, make sure it is happening every day.

Signs Of Proper Wound Healing

- Healing Progress: A healing wound should gradually decrease in size and look less inflamed over time.
- Watch for Infection: Be alert for signs of infection such as increased redness, swelling, heat, pus, or a foul odor coming from the wound. If any of these signs are present, notify the nursing staff immediately.

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Wound Care

What you need to know

What To Do If Wound Care Is Not Being Followed

- Documentation: Keep a record of when the wound dressings are changed. Write down the date and time of each dressing change.
- Communication: If you notice that the wound care is not being performed as ordered, or if the wound appears to be getting worse, inform the nurse promptly. Politely ask for an explanation and express your concerns.

Additional Tips

- Be Informed: Ask the nurse or doctor to describe the wound care plan. Understanding the specific needs and treatment steps can help you better monitor the care provided.
- Involve the Patient: If the patient is able, encourage them to speak up about their wound care. Their input is crucial for accurate pain assessment and overall care.

One of the services a Concierge Nurse can provide is ensuring wound care is completed as ordered by the physician.

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Hospital Delirium*

What to do about confusion

Confusion, disorientation, and fluctuating level of consciousness can be a side effect of simply being a patient in the hospital. The medical term for this is *hospital delirium*, and it can be scary when you don't expect it.

Causes:

- Hospital delirium can be caused by infections, certain medications, dehydration, surgery, or some underlying illness. Patients over age 65 or with pre-existing conditions like dementia, blindness, or hearing loss are especially at risk.

Signs:

- Sudden confusion, difficulty recognizing that they're in a hospital, seeing people or things that aren't there, unusual restlessness, or extreme tiredness.

Prevention:

- Maintaining a routine, keeping clocks and calendars visible, ensuring the patient drinks plenty of water (if allowed by physician order), and moving as soon as safely possible can reduce the risk. Remember to keep calm if the patient becomes agitated.

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How hiring Vital Bridge Wellness can work for you

Families hire a Vital Bridge Wellness Concierge Nurse to help fill the gaps of care and advocate for you and your family. When the “normal” way of doing things doesn’t seem like enough, a Vital Bridge Wellness Registered Nurse can step in to give you the help, information, and peace of mind you need in this stressful time.

A Vital Bridge Wellness Licensed Registered Nurse, can:

- Ensure proper wound care and infection prevention**
- Review your family member’s records to answer questions and decipher the medical-terminology for you
- Coordinate with the care team to make sure nothing is being missed
- Assist with feeding and bathing
- Ensure medications are being administered as directed by the patient’s physicians
- Create a post-hospital care plan
- Provide at-home care once the patient has been discharged at a skill-level beyond most home healthcare nurses
- Provide practical care and information about managing chronic conditions like diabetes

**Please review disclaimer on page 15 to learn more about the Georgia and South Carolina laws governing the standards of practice for registered nurses.

Medication / Procedure Journal

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Important Notes

Care Team's Names

Questions to Ask:

Things to Remember:

Disclaimer

This nursing practice is operated as a solo business by a licensed professional nurse in the State of Georgia. The practice adheres to the standards and regulations set forth by the Georgia Board of Nursing as outlined in the Georgia Nurse Practice Act, O.C.G.A. § 43-26 et seq. and the Georgia Administrative Code, Department 410 Rules of Georgia Board of Nursing, as well as the standards and regulations set forth by the South Carolina Board of Nursing as outlined in the South Carolina Nurse Practice Act, S.C. Code Ann. §§ 40-33-5 through 40-33-230 and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 91-1 et seq

Please note:

- The information provided by this practice is for general informational purposes only. All information on the services is provided in good faith, however, we make no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, validity, reliability, availability, or completeness of any information on the services.

- This practice is committed to upholding the highest standards of nursing care and professionalism. The practice is regulated by the Georgia Board of Nursing, as well as the South Carolina Board of Nursing and complies with all applicable laws and regulations regarding nursing practice in Georgia and South Carolina.

- The practice respects patient privacy and confidentiality in accordance with state and federal laws. A legitimate business address is used for the purposes of public information made available by the board regarding licensed registered professional nurses.

Any unauthorized practice or deviation from the standards of nursing care may result in disciplinary action by the Georgia and South Carolina Boards of Nursing, including but not limited to, reprimand, fines, or other penalties as deemed appropriate by either Board. This disclaimer is subject to changes and updates in accordance with the latest laws and regulations. It is the responsibility of the clients to ensure they are informed of such updates.



Vital Bridge Wellness

The modern healthcare system leaves most patients fending for themselves.

Vital Bridge Wellness is here to change that with personalized nursing care that prioritizes your comfort and wellbeing every step of the way.

We can't wait to be a part of your support system!

Contact Us Today



912-940-5060



hello@vitalbridgewellness.com



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