



PATIENTS HAVE RIGHTS

Question: My dad wanted to leave the hospital but was told he had to wait. He said he felt fine and wanted to get home. Didn't he have a right to leave if he felt ready?

Answer: The simple answer is “Yes.” If your dad wasn't hooked up to machines or awaiting treatment, was able to walk, and had the mental clarity to make medical decisions, then he had the right to leave.

The complex answer is: “Should he?” There may be a reason the doctor wanted him to stay. Perhaps the doctor was awaiting lab results or was waiting to see if a medication was effective. In order to leave the hospital, a patient needs to be discharged by the attending physician. Sometimes the patient must wait until the hospital contacts the attending physician to write post-discharge instructions and medication orders.

This does not mean that a patient needs to accept the delay without question. The patient has the right to ask questions, to receive timely answers, and to have his or her care explained in a language he or she comprehends. Other rights include the:

- Right to file a grievance or formal complaint and get a response;
- Right to be fully informed—and have a legal representative who is fully informed—about the

- patient's medical condition;
- Right to participate in care decisions; and the
- Right to informed consent before starting a medication or treatment.

Part of the hospital admission process involves advising patients of their rights. If you missed it on admission, ask to speak to a patient advocate or a social worker. You have a right to understand your rights!

With rights come responsibilities. For example, if a patient leaves the hospital without a doctor's order, it may jeopardize the patient's access to follow-up services, such as home health care.

The American Hospital Association provides a brochure titled “Patient Care Partnership,” which acknowledges that everyone involved has a role in achieving the best possible health outcome for the patient. Also the Affordable Care Act has a new patient's bill of rights that lists the rights and protections all patients are entitled to, and it can be seen at www.familiesusa.org.

Source: www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/communicatingpts/pt-care-partnership.shtml.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

**Why should you never fly with Peter Pan?
Because you'll never, never land.**

—A *Prairie Home Companion* Pretty
Good Joke Book

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

Go Green!

Receive Social Services Corner by email.
Call (888) 994-3863, ext. 2370,
or email info@wrmail.org.

Do you or does someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or visit www.wrpioneers.org to find out more about our assistance programs.

THE RISING COST OF GROCERIES



In 1963 a loaf of sandwich bread cost nine cents. Today, a typical sandwich loaf costs between two and three dollars. Mayonnaise used to come in 32-ounce jars, but now those jars hold 30 ounces with no price reduction. Across the board, American grocers are charging higher prices for smaller amounts and it's hitting us all in the food budget. Stretching food dollars is becoming not only commonplace but necessary. Grocery costs fluctuate according to a number of economic factors, including transportation and labor costs, as well as supply and demand. It's difficult to think about the global economy when you are trying to fill your supermarket basket.

Here are a few tips on how you can save money.

Cooking: Do you frequently have leftovers that go uneaten? Are you preparing too much or for too many? Recipes can be scaled up or down by using a website such as mykitchencalculator.com. Save money by eliminating waste.

Source: "How to Be a Smarter Supermarket Shopper," March 2014, ConsumerReports.org.

Eating: Processed, prepared and packaged foods may be convenient—even yummy—but they are pricey (and often unhealthy). Can you replace bagged salads with fresh lettuce? Roast your own tomatoes? Bake simple cookies from scratch?

Shopping: Buy local and in season. Summertime farmers markets and roadside stands offer fresh, local products that often last longer because they haven't been on a truck for a week before you buy them. Bulk bins let you buy only as much as you need, rather than a packaged amount that may not suit you. Stock up on staples you use regularly and use them up. Use coupons and store rewards, but only if it's easy and fun to do so.

Sharing: Take a friend to the warehouse store with you and split a case of something. Remember, it's only a "deal" if you use it all up. When you have extra, share or exchange with friends or neighbors.

If you are having trouble making ends meet at the grocery store, please contact the social workers at the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Assistance Fund at (888) 994-3863.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), www.HUD.gov, (800) 569-4287

HUD sponsors counseling agencies nationwide that provide home-buyer counseling and educational materials. Their website provides facts about buyers' rights and FHA loan programs; gives information on how to estimate housing costs, and provides information on how to shop for loans, make an offer, obtain a home inspection, buy homeowners insurance and more.

Medicare Rights Center, www.medicarerights.org, (800) 333-4114

The Medicare Rights Center provides consumers and professionals with the latest Medicare information. The center produces fact sheets, electronic newsletters and alerts. Through its national phone help line, trained volunteers and staff answer questions and help callers understand Medicare rights and benefits and how to navigate the Medicare system.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Popularity is the easiest thing in the world to gain, and it is the hardest thing to hold.”

—Will Rogers

To view our entire National Resource Directory, please visit www.wrpioneers.org.