

Be prepared to leave the hospital

Getting ready to leave the hospital is a big step. You may be excited to return home, yet nervous about staying healthy. After leaving the hospital it can be hard to manage your own care. This could lead to problems with your disease. But if you plan, you can lower the risk of problems after leaving the hospital. This can also lower your chance of returning to the hospital.

Your care team will play a big part in making this move easier. They will need to learn how to support your care outside the hospital. This can include learning how to give medicine and other treatments. Your health care providers should work with you and your care team to prepare for this change.

What to cover with your health care provider before you leave the hospital:

- Discuss problems that may come up during the move from the hospital.
- Learn more about your medicines and treatment options, including changes to your old care plan.
- Track signs and symptoms. Share any changes with your care team.
- Plan any follow-up visits and extra support you may need.

With proper planning, you can make a smooth move from the hospital to home. Need help getting started? Try using the discharge checklist on the next page during your next hospital stay.

You can also reach out to your program nurse. Your nurse can help you plan to stay on track once you get home from the hospital.

Your hospital discharge checklist

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Checklist for going home	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have talked with my doctor about my care. I know what should happen once I leave the hospital.	<input type="checkbox"/> I know what medicines to take and when to take them.
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<input type="checkbox"/> I know what problems to look for once I leave.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have a record of any/all changes to my treatment plan, including new prescriptions.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a phone number I can call if I have a problem once I leave.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have any new prescriptions needed and a plan to fill them once I leave.
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My Doctor's contact info: _____ _____	
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Tobacco and vaping: you can quit

Do you smoke? If so, you should know the facts. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable cancer death in the U.S. This is because there are many cancer-causing chemicals in cigarettes. In fact, tobacco products in any form can harm the brain, heart, lungs, skin, and teeth.

Vapes and e-cigarettes are not the safer choice. These products are more common than smoking with teens and young adults and can have harmful chemicals like tin and lead.

Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

- You will feel better.
- You may prevent health problems like heart disease.
- You will save money.
- Your body (skin, nails, teeth) will look healthier.
- You can feel proud of yourself for making a healthy choice.

Want to quit? Nicotine replacements can help with cravings. These come in the form of gum, a skin patch, nasal spray, or an inhaler. There are also oral medicines that may help with the mental aspects of quitting. No one method is right for everyone. Using more than one method may work best. Ask your doctor if any such products are right for you.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website offers tips for quitting tobacco. Go to [cdc.gov/tobacco](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) or another website below. You can also contact your program nurse.

- American Lung Association—[lung.org](https://www.lung.org)
- US Department of Health and Human Services—[smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)

When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how ALS affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you (or your caregiver) look for with ALS? Call your doctor right away if you:

- have an increase in your usual symptoms
- feel like your medicines are not helping
- fall
- have more problems breathing, or feel short of breath when you lie down
- choke, or feel it is getting harder to chew and swallow
- have new trouble talking
- feel it is getting harder to cough
- feel an urgent need to go to the bathroom or you go a lot
- are losing weight
- have new muscle discomfort
- have any sign of infection, such as fever or chills
- have trouble finding the right words, thinking clearly, or making plans

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

Still have questions about tracking symptoms or health changes? Ask your program nurse!

Your Symptom Tracker

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- Double check your Action Plan. Does it still fit your lifestyle? If not, that's ok! Call your program nurse to help you update your plan so it fits your needs right now.

When in doubt, you can also reach out to your program nurse. Your nurse can help you track symptoms and decide if you should go to the doctor.

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Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for Crohn's disease (CD). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how CD affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with CD? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- pain in your lower stomach (belly)
- frequent or urgent bathroom visits
- more diarrhea than before
- cramps after you eat
- blood when you wipe after a bowel or gut movement
- night-time bowel movement
- new onset fatigue
- poor sleep

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for cystic fibrosis (CF). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit? It is important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how CF affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking your symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatments are working. Even if they are working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with CF? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- any sign of lung infection, like fever, increased cough, or weakness
- trouble catching your breath and chest pain or tightness
- trouble clearing your lungs or more mucus than normal
- blood in your mucus or coughing up blood
- uncontrolled abdominal/belly, cramping or throwing up

Your doctor may have some questions about your symptoms. Your doctor may also want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice.

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You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for your chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how CIDP affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

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Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with CIDP? Call your doctor right away if you:

- have pain that is not helped at home
- have numbness that has changed or gotten worse
- have concerns with your medicines
- had recent hospital stays or ER/urgent care visits that your doctor is not aware of
- have changes in your ability to pay for medicines
- had a recent fall or falls with injury

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Do you smoke? If so, you should know the facts. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable cancer death in the U.S. This is because there are many cancer-causing chemicals in cigarettes. In fact, tobacco products in any form can harm the brain, heart, lungs, skin, and teeth.

Vapes and e-cigarettes are not the safer choice. These products are more common than smoking with teens and young adults and can have harmful chemicals like tin and lead.

Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

- You will feel better.
- You may prevent health problems like heart disease.
- You will save money.
- Your body (skin, nails, teeth) will look healthier.
- You can feel proud of yourself for making a healthy choice.

Want to quit? Nicotine replacements can help with cravings. These come in the form of gum, a skin patch, nasal spray, or an inhaler. There are also oral medicines that may help with the mental aspects of quitting. No one method is right for everyone. Using more than one method may work best. Ask your doctor if any such products are right for you.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website offers tips for quitting tobacco. Go to [cdc.gov/tobacco](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) or another website below. You can also contact your program nurse.

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- US Department of Health and Human Services—[smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)

When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for Gaucher disease. But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how Gaucher affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with Gaucher?

- Bone pain (talk to your Gaucher specialist to find out if your pain is related to Gaucher or some other cause)
- Pain or increased swelling in your belly (abdomen)
- Gaining or losing weight (more than a few pounds)
- Easy bruising
- Nose bleeds
- Unusual bleeding, such as gum bleeds or blood in stool
- Feeling extremely tired (fatigue)
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Fever or chills

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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MC1400_NALC

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for hereditary angioedema (HAE). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how HAE affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues. Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms.

So, what issues should you look for with HAE? You should call your doctor when:

- Attacks get worse or happen more often
- Attacks don't respond to treatment
- You are planning dental work/surgery
- You are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- You plan to travel
- You have any complications from HAE

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how HIV affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues. Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms.

So, what issues should you discuss with your doctor when you have HIV? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- problems taking your medicines regularly or with affording your medicines
- problems with keeping your follow up visits
- any new medical conditions or diseases
- any sign of infection, such as fever, chills, fatigue
- a bad reaction to a drug
- uncontrolled pain
- signs of depression, such as low mood, changes in sleep or appetite

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your providers (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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Next steps:

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for hemophilia. But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how hemophilia affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Your doctor may want to try other treatments, like gene therapy treatments. These treatments are newly approved by the FDA for adult males. You and your doctor can choose together which treatment is best for you.

Even if treatment is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with hemophilia?

- More frequent bleeds
- Bleeds that take longer to respond to treatment
- Pain or swelling in your joints
- Problems infusing at home
- Needing more factor than normal

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Do you smoke? If so, you should know the facts. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable cancer death in the U.S. This is because there are many cancer-causing chemicals in cigarettes. In fact, tobacco products in any form can harm the brain, heart, lungs, skin, and teeth.

Vapes and e-cigarettes are not the safer choice. These products are more common than smoking with teens and young adults and can have harmful chemicals like tin and lead.

Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

- You will feel better.
- You may prevent health problems like heart disease.
- You will save money.
- Your body (skin, nails, teeth) will look healthier.
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Want to quit? Nicotine replacements can help with cravings. These come in the form of gum, a skin patch, nasal spray, or an inhaler. There are also oral medicines that may help with the mental aspects of quitting. No one method is right for everyone. Using more than one method may work best. Ask your doctor if any such products are right for you.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for myasthenia gravis (MG). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how MG affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with MG? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- new or worsening blurry vision, double vision, or drooping eyelids
- trouble breathing
- problems holding your head up
- issues with chewing, swallowing, or speaking
- signs of pneumonia (chest pain, fever, shortness of breath, coughing up mucus)
- depression
- new muscle weakness in your face, arms, hands, fingers, eyelids, or legs

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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Example: nausea	Friday @ 6pm	2 hours	Pepto Bismol, 30 mL (1 dose)	Yes

Next steps:

Don't know what to do when your health changes? Here are some next steps:

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MC1400_NALC

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Your care team will play a big part in making this move easier. They will need to learn how to support your care outside the hospital. This can include learning how to give medicine and other treatments. Your health care providers should work with you and your care team to prepare for this change.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for multiple sclerosis (MS). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how MS affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with MS? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- a decline in thinking/memory
- increased fatigue
- problems with walking
- eye problems, such as blurry or double vision
- a recent fall or falls with injury
- depression or other mood changes, such as changes in sleep or appetite
- signs of infection, such as fever or chills
- bladder or bowel problems
- pain or spasms
- plans to become pregnant

Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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Next steps:

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for your myositis. But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how myositis affects you. Symptoms of myositis are not the same for every person. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with myositis? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- worsening muscle weakness
- new joint swelling
- worsening skin rash
- signs of infection
- depression
- recent hospital stays or ER/urgent care visits that your doctor is not aware of
- recent fall or falls with injury

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for Parkinson's disease (PD). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how PD affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms.

So, what issues should you look for with PD? Call your doctor right away to report things such as:

- a fall with injury
- new problems with sleeping
- new problems with speech or swallowing
- bothersome hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't really there)
- walking and rigidity that is getting worse
- a bad reaction to a medicine (talk to your doctor before starting any new meds)
- your medicine seems to stop working before it's time for your next dose
- pain that you can't fix at home
- signs of depression, such as low mood, changes in sleep or appetite

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website offers tips for quitting tobacco. Go to [cdc.gov/tobacco](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) or another website below. You can also contact your program nurse.

- American Lung Association—[lung.org](https://www.lung.org)
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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for rheumatoid arthritis (RA). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how RA affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with RA? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- an RA flare (new pain, new swelling, new warmth/redness, or pain in joints)
- new symptoms (low fever, tiredness)
- signs of infection
- trouble staying on your RA medicine
- depression

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

Still have questions about tracking symptoms or health changes? Ask your program nurse!

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Symptom:	When did it start?	How long did it last?	How did you treat it?	Did treatment work?
Example: nausea	Friday @ 6pm	2 hours	Pepto Bismol, 30 mL (1 dose)	Yes

Next steps:

Don't know what to do when your health changes? Here are some next steps:

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MC1400_NALC

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If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for sickle cell disease (SCD). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how SCD affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Your doctor may want to try other treatments, like gene therapy. These are newer treatments approved by the FDA for treatment of SCD. You and your doctor can choose together which treatment is best for you.

Even if treatment is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about an increase in your usual symptoms or any new symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with SCD?

- Any sign of infection, including a fever
- Shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, or chest pain
- A bad reaction to a drug
- Uncontrolled pain
- Abdominal pain, especially with vomiting
- Severe headache, weakness, numbness, or falling
- Signs of depression, such as low mood, changes in sleep or appetite

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for scleroderma. But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

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Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with scleroderma? Call your doctor right away to report:

- worsening skin changes (it becomes hard and tight or shiny)
- tingling feeling in fingers or toes, and/or they get numb and turn blue when you are cold
- a change in heartburn or burping up sour liquid in your throat
- new shortness of breath
- uncontrolled pain
- new or worsening depression

Talk with your doctor about what tests you should have on a regular basis. Your doctor may want you to track issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for lupus. But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

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Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with lupus? There are some key changes you should always talk about with your doctor. These include:

- signs of a flare (such as fever more than 100 degrees not due to an infection)
- feeling more tired or weak than usual
- new or worsening joint pain
- new breathing problems
- new or worsening skin rash
- worsening kidney problems (such as swelling, dizziness, dark or “foamy” urine)
- any plans for pregnancy

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So, what issues should you look for with epilepsy? Some reasons to call your doctor are:

- You start having more seizures. Or your seizures last longer or get more intense.
- You notice signs of depression, such as low mood or changes in sleep or appetite.
- You think you may be depressed.
- You have side effects from your medicine.
- You have an unplanned pregnancy.
- Migraine headaches are getting worse.

Talk with your doctors about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

Still have questions about tracking symptoms or health changes? Ask your program nurse!

Your Symptom Tracker

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Symptom:	When did it start?	How long did it last?	How did you treat it?	Did treatment work?
Example: nausea	Friday @ 6pm	2 hours	Pepto Bismol, 30 mL (1 dose)	Yes

Next steps:

Don't know what to do when your health changes? Here are some next steps:

- Call your doctor and report any changes in your health. Do they want you to come into the office for a visit?
- Double check your Action Plan. Does it still fit your lifestyle? If not, that's ok! Call your program nurse to help you update your plan so it fits your needs right now.

When in doubt, you can also reach out to your program nurse. Your nurse can help you track symptoms and decide if you should go to the doctor.

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♥ **CVS specialty** nurse care management

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Be prepared to leave the hospital

Getting ready to leave the hospital is a big step. You may be excited to return home, yet nervous about staying healthy. After leaving the hospital it can be hard to manage your own care. This could lead to problems with your disease. But if you plan, you can lower the risk of problems after leaving the hospital. This can also lower your chance of returning to the hospital.

Your care team will play a big part in making this move easier. They will need to learn how to support your care outside the hospital. This can include learning how to give medicine and other treatments. Your health care providers should work with you and your care team to prepare for this change.

What to cover with your health care provider before you leave the hospital:

- Discuss problems that may come up during the move from the hospital.
- Learn more about your medicines and treatment options, including changes to your old care plan.
- Track signs and symptoms. Share any changes with your care team.
- Plan any follow-up visits and extra support you may need.

With proper planning, you can make a smooth move from the hospital to home. Need help getting started? Try using the discharge checklist on the next page during your next hospital stay.

You can also reach out to your program nurse. Your nurse can help you plan to stay on track once you get home from the hospital.

Your hospital discharge checklist

Use the checklist below for your next hospital stay. If you think of something you need or want to ask, take a note so you won't forget. Your doctors and nurses can help answer all your questions.

Checklist for going home	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have talked with my doctor about my care. I know what should happen once I leave the hospital.	<input type="checkbox"/> I know what medicines to take and when to take them.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have written discharge instructions that have been explained to me.	<input type="checkbox"/> I know what problems (side-effects) my medicine could cause.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a plan to update my regular care team about any treatment changes.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have access to the medical equipment I need or know where I can get it.
<input type="checkbox"/> I know what problems to look for once I leave.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have a record of any/all changes to my treatment plan, including new prescriptions.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a phone number I can call if I have a problem once I leave.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have any new prescriptions needed and a plan to fill them once I leave.
<input type="checkbox"/> I know what to do if I need short-term care after going home.	<input type="checkbox"/> I feel like all of my questions have been answered.
<input type="checkbox"/> I planned a follow-up visit with my doctor on this date: _____	
My Doctor's contact info: _____ _____	
My Notes: _____ _____ _____ _____	

Tobacco and vaping: you can quit

Do you smoke? If so, you should know the facts. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable cancer death in the U.S. This is because there are many cancer-causing chemicals in cigarettes. In fact, tobacco products in any form can harm the brain, heart, lungs, skin, and teeth.

Vapes and e-cigarettes are not the safer choice. These products are more common than smoking with teens and young adults and can have harmful chemicals like tin and lead.

Despite the danger, many people have trouble quitting. Nicotine is what makes it hard to quit. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical found in tobacco. It makes your mind and body crave it. If you quit, it then causes painful withdrawal symptoms. This goes for all tobacco products, including dip/chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, hookah, e-cigarettes, and vapes.

If you or a loved one smokes or vapes, it is never too late to quit. There are many good reasons to stop:

- You will feel better.
- You may prevent health problems like heart disease.
- You will save money.
- Your body (skin, nails, teeth) will look healthier.
- You can feel proud of yourself for making a healthy choice.

Want to quit? Nicotine replacements can help with cravings. These come in the form of gum, a skin patch, nasal spray, or an inhaler. There are also oral medicines that may help with the mental aspects of quitting. No one method is right for everyone. Using more than one method may work best. Ask your doctor if any such products are right for you.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website offers tips for quitting tobacco. Go to [cdc.gov/tobacco](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) or another website below. You can also contact your program nurse.

- American Lung Association—[lung.org](https://www.lung.org)
- US Department of Health and Human Services—[smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov)

When to call your doctor

You likely see your doctor on a regular basis for ulcerative colitis (UC). But what if something happens in between visits? When should you reach out to your doctor, rather than wait for your next visit?

Staying healthy starts with knowing yourself. Learn how UC affects you. The better you understand your body, the better you can take care of yourself.

Tracking symptoms and health changes helps your doctor know how well your treatment is working. Even if it is working well, stay on top of how you feel. You may feel bad one day and good the next. But some changes can be signs of bigger issues.

Your doctor should be told about any new or worsening symptoms. So, what issues should you look for with UC? Call your doctor right away if you have:

- pain in your lower stomach (belly)
- going to the bathroom very quickly or often
- more diarrhea than before
- cramps after you eat
- blood when you wipe after a bowel or gut movement
- nighttime bowel movement
- new onset fatigue
- poor sleep

Talk with your doctor about what they want as well. Your doctor may want you to track or report issues or signs specific to you. Follow that advice. It is also important to ask about the best way to reach your doctors (primary care or specialist). Some offices use phone calls, others use e-mails or online portals.

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