

How To Pack for a Hospital Stay

A hospital stay can be overwhelming. Packing appropriately can help reduce wait times during initial ER assessment, improve safety during admission, support cognitive function, and empower you to take an active role in your care. Keep the items below packed in a ready-to-go hospital bag, and be sure someone you trust knows where it's stored in case of an emergency.

Medical information

- Contact info of Health Care Proxy
- List of medications and supplements
- List of allergies (medications, materials, food)
- Vaccination record
- List of medical issues, diagnoses, and surgeries
- Copy of Advanced Directives
- ID card (+copy)
- Insurance card (+copy)
- List of all current providers - PCP and specialists
- Preferred pharmacy - name, address, phone number

Personal items

- List of email addresses and phone numbers of loved ones you'd like to keep informed. Decide who will be the primary contact from that list.
- Phone
- Charger
- Earphones
- A good book
- Glasses
- Hearing aides + extra batteries / charger
- Dentures + Adhesive (even if you don't use an adhesive regularly)
- A notebook and pens
- Alcohol wipes for cleaning surfaces
- Bottle of antibacterial gel
- Large resealable bag (e.g., Ziplock) to keep above items
- A good picture of yourself - ideally with loved ones / pets - printed out in a picture frame. This fosters communication and connection with the staff and medical providers.