

ASK. LISTEN. TALK:

PARTNERING WITH PATIENTS



NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM
SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ DE NIAGARA

Tips for Patients and Families *Good healthcare starts with a question.* About Canadian Patient Safety Week

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute launched Canadian Patient Safety Week as a national annual campaign in 2005 to inspire extraordinary improvement in patient safety and quality. Working together, thousands of healthcare professionals, patients, and families help spread the message that good healthcare starts with good communication.

The theme – **Ask. Listen. Talk** – promotes the importance of communication between and among patients, clients, consumers and providers and applies to all healthcare settings and sectors. Visit www.asklistentalk.ca for more information.

As a patient or family member, it is important to understand the healthcare you receive. Ask questions, listen to the answers, and talk about any concerns you have.

ASK.

Before you meet with your doctor or healthcare provider, write down all of the questions you want to ask.

- Ask a friend or family member to go with you when you go to the doctor.
- If you are diagnosed with a condition or need to get a test or treatment, you should ask lots of questions so you fully understand what your problem is and how further tests or treatments will help you. Ask your healthcare provider questions such as:
 - Why do I need to do this?
 - What will it involve?
 - Is there anything else I can do to improve my condition?
- Ask questions about medications you are given, such as:
 - How will these medications help me?
 - What are the possible side effects?
 - How and when should I take this medicine?
- When you visit the doctor or any healthcare facility, make sure to wash your hands and don't be afraid to ask your healthcare professional to wash their hands too.
- If you are leaving the hospital, ask what you have to do when you get home. Ask to have a list of your medications to take with you and be sure your family doctor has this information as well.



PATIENT SAFETY WEEK

October 29 – November 2, 2012



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LISTEN.

Listen to everything your healthcare provider tells you. If you do not understand or if you miss anything, ask for it to be repeated or explained until you do understand.

- Your healthcare provider can give you a lot of information at once. Ask a friend or family member to come with you when you talk to your healthcare provider so they can help listen and write down any important information for you.

TALK.

- It's important to understand your health – discuss any symptoms you've had and make sure your healthcare provider knows the concerns you have.
- Ensure your doctor knows everything about your health history. If you have any health conditions, such as a heart condition or diabetes, let them know. If an illness or condition runs in your family, talk about this as well.
- Talk about your medications. Make sure you fully understand why you're taking a medication and how it will improve your health.
- If something doesn't seem right, don't just think it, say it.

NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM

The Niagara Health System strives to ensure that every patient and family in our care can be confident that they receive a great patient experience.

One of our four inter-related strategic goals is to have **QUALITY AND SAFE PATIENT CARE**. We promise to:

- Put patient safety first
- Achieve superior outcomes for our patients
- Lead and foster a culture of innovation and evidence informed best practice

Find out more: www.niagarahealth.on.ca/quality-and-performance

