



Patient Handbook

Accredited by The Joint Commission

Lincoln Medical Center is part of Lincoln Health System,
an affiliate of Huntsville Hospital Health System

Table of Contents

Welcome to Lincoln Medical Center	3
Mission	4
Vision	4
Values	4
History and Services.....	4
Medical Staff.....	4
Accreditation and Certifications.....	4
Tobacco Free Campus.....	5
Our Privacy Practices	5
Patient Rights and Responsibilities.....	5
Patient Rights	5
How to File a Compliment or Complaint.....	9
Compliment:.....	9
Complaint:	9
Lincoln Health System Is Committed to Your Safety	10
Our Partnership Pledge	10
Speak Up!.....	10
Your Health Care Team	11
Safety During Treatments, Surgery, and Procedures	11
Patient Identification.....	11
Staff Identification	12
Nutrition Safety	12
Medication Safety	13
Understanding and Managing Your Pain	14
Assessment of Your Pain	14
Rating your Pain.....	14
Alternatives to Medication for Pain Management	15
Prevention of Infections – You are Part of the Health Care Team.....	15
Hand Washing	15
Preventing spread of respiratory infections	15
Visitors/Companions.....	16
Vaccinations	16

Additional preventive measures	16
Code Rapid Response.....	16
Other services need after you leave the hospital.....	17
Advance Directives.....	17
Personal Items and Valuables	18
Personal Items.....	18
Organ and Tissue Donation.....	18
Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals.....	18
Cell Phones.....	18
Flowers and Balloons	18
Visiting Guidelines.....	18
Interpreter Services	19
Food Services to Visitors	19
ATM.....	19
Guest Network Wireless Access to the Internet.....	20
Gratuities, Gifts and Donations.....	20
Clergy.....	20
Understanding Your Insurance	20
Billing.....	20
Inpatient or Observation Hospital Bill.....	21
Outpatient Hospital Bill.....	21
Cashiers and Billing Coordinators	21
Billing Rights and Obligations.....	21
Financial Assistance.....	21

Welcome to Lincoln Medical Center

This patient handbook is designed to answer most common questions of patients and their families and outlines our Hospital's services, resources and policies.

Lincoln Medical Center is a hospital where the latest advances in medicine are practiced, yet is also a place filled with the timeless traditions of human caring and compassion. We hope that your stay here will be a pleasant one, and you will experience the competent care of our physicians, nurses, technicians, staff and volunteers.

We are extremely proud of our staff and facility and believe you will find both to be very accommodating. Should you have any concerns, please follow the procedures included in this booklet so any problems can be resolved to your satisfaction.

Please be aware we are personally committed to providing our services to you in a manner consistent with our Mission Statement and your needs. If you should know of a way we may better serve you, please let us know.

If there is any additional information you need, please ask any staff member.

Mission

The mission of Lincoln Health System is to provide a continuum of primary health care services to the people of Lincoln County, and the surrounding counties.

Vision

Lincoln Health System will exceed our community's expectations by providing quality health care which is progressive, accessible, and customer driven in an environment that is sensitive to people.

Values

People, Service, Communications, Continuous Improvement, Resource Use

History and Services

The Health System is owned and operated by Lincoln County, Tennessee. The hospital began operation on North Elk Avenue on April 25, 1917 with 20 patient beds. In the early 1930's, the county purchased the Bryson College Property where the hospital remained until September 10, 2001. On this date, a new facility was opened at the current location.

The Health System includes Lincoln Medical Center, Donalson Care Centers and Donalson Short Stay Rehabilitation, Patrick Rehab-Wellness Center, Lincoln Medical Home Health and Hospice, and LMC Ambulance Service.

Medical Staff

Medical staff representation includes internal medicine with specialties in cardiology and gastroenterology, general surgery, pathology, radiology, general/family practice, urology, pulmonology, OB/gynecology, orthopedics, pediatrics, and ENT.

Accreditation and Certifications

- The following facilities are accredited by The Joint Commission:
 - Lincoln Medical Center
 - Lincoln Medical Home Health and Hospice
 - Patrick Rehab and Wellness
- Lincoln Medical Ambulance Service is accredited by the State of Tennessee
- The Sleep Lab is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM)
- Lincoln Medical is a Certified Chest Pain Center by the Joint Commission

Tobacco Free Campus

To protect the health of our patients, visitors, and staff, smoking and tobacco use is prohibited at all LHS locations. If you are interested in smoking cessation, ask your health care provider about resources or call 1-800-QUIT NOW to be connected to the quit-line in your state.

Our Privacy Practices

Lincoln Health System is committed to protecting your health information. Our privacy practices are described in Lincoln Health System's Notice of Privacy Practices, a policy that explains how this obligation will be followed by all health care professionals, trainees, students, staff, volunteers and business associates of the organizations. To obtain a copy of the policy, call admitting at 931-438-7488.

If you have a patient privacy concern, please call hospital administration at 931-438-7455 and ask to speak with the compliance officer, Monday through Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm or anytime to leave a message.

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

We want to encourage you, as a patient at Lincoln Medical Center, to speak openly with your healthcare team, take part in your treatment choices, and promote your own safety by being well informed and involved in your care. Because we want you to think of yourself as a partner in your care, we want you to know your rights as well as your responsibilities during your stay at our hospital. We invite you and your family to join us as active members of your care team.

Patient Rights

Personal Privacy/Visitation - You have the right:

- To be treated in a dignified and respectful manner.
- To the confidentiality of your identifiable health information.
- To enjoy personal privacy and a safe, clean environment and to let us know if you would like to restrict your visitors or phone calls.
- To receive visitors of your choosing that you (or your support person, where appropriate) designate, including a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), or another family member or a friend, and the right to withdraw or deny your consent to receive such visitors at any time.
- To have a family member, friend, or other individual to be present with you for emotional support during the course of stay.
- To be informed (or your support person to be informed, where appropriate) of your visitation rights, including any clinically necessary restriction or limitation on such rights.
- To designate a support person (i.e. patient representative) who will designate visitors on your behalf, should you be unable to do so.

Security– You have the right:

- To be free from all forms of abuse or harassment.
- To a safe environment.
- To access protective and advocacy services.
- To know that restraints will be used only when necessary.

Access to Care – You have the right:

- To receive care regardless of your age, race, color, national origin, culture, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, religion, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, or manner of payment (LMC prohibits discrimination).
- To ask for a change of provider or a second opinion.
- To appeal premature discharge.
- To the notice of non-Coverage beneficiary discharge rights.

Cultural and Spiritual Values – You have the right:

- To have your cultural, psychosocial, spiritual, and personal values, beliefs and preferences respected.
- To have access to pastoral/religious and other spiritual services.

Communication – You have the right:

- To receive/need effective communication that you can understand.
- To have access to an interpreter and/or translation services at no charge.
- To be provided information in a manner that meets your needs (i.e. patients with vision, speech, hearing, or cognitive impairments).
- To know the reasons for any proposed change in the attending physicians/professional staff responsible for your care.
- To know the reasons for your transfer either within or outside the hospital.

Access to Information – You have the right:

- To make advance directives and have them followed.
- To review/revise advanced directives and receive assistance, if necessary, in doing so.
- To receive written information about advanced directives, forgoing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatments, and withholding resuscitative services.

- To receive additional information or explanations regarding advanced directives, forgoing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatments, or withholding resuscitative services (per your request).
- To have your family or a representative you choose and your own physician, if requested, to be informed of your hospital admission.
- To know the names and professional titles of your caregivers.
- To have your bill explained and receive information about charges that you may be responsible for, and any potential limitations your policy may place on your coverage.
- To be told what you need to know about your health condition after hospital discharge or office visit.
- To be informed and involved in decisions that affect your care, health status, services or treatment.
- To understand your diagnosis, condition and treatment and make informed decisions about your care after being advised of material risks, benefits and alternatives.
- To knowledgeably refuse any care, treatment, and services.
- To legally appoint someone else to make decisions for you if you should become unable to do so, and to have that person approve or refuse care, treatment and services (i.e. surrogate decision-maker or representative).
- To have your family or representative involved in care, treatment, and service decisions, as allowed by law.
- To be informed of unanticipated adverse outcomes.
- To have your wishes followed concerning organ donation, when you make such wishes known, in accordance with law and regulation.
- To request a review of your medical chart with your caregivers during your hospital stay. LMC allows you to access, request amendment to, and obtain information on disclosures of your health information via medical records, in accordance to law and regulation.

Pain Management – You have the right:

- To have pain assessed and managed appropriately.

Disclosures – You have the right:

- To request a listing of disclosures about your healthcare, and to be able to access and request to amend your medical record as allowed by law.
- To know the relationship(s) of the hospital to other persons or organizations participating in the provision of your care.

Recording and Filming – You have the right:

- To provide prior (or deny) consent before the making of recordings, films or other images that may be used externally/internally.

Concerns, Complaints or Grievances – You have the right:

- To receive a reasonably prompt response to your request for services.
- To be involved in resolving issues involving your own care, treatment, and services.
- To express concerns, complaints and/or a grievance to your providing healthcare personnel.

(Refer to the Section in this Handbook “Complaint or Compliment, How to File” for additional information).

Patient Responsibilities**Provision of Pertinent Information – You have the responsibility:**

- To give us complete and accurate information about your health, including your previous medical history and all the medications you are taking.
- To inform us of your advanced directive information and of any wishes to review/revise current advanced directives.
- To inform us of changes in your condition or symptoms, including pain.

Asking Questions and Following Instructions – You have the responsibility:

- To let us know if you do not understand the information we give you about your condition or treatment.
- To participate in Bedside Shift Reports
- To speak up. Communicate your concerns to any employee as soon as possible — including any member of the patient care team, manager, administrator or ombudsman.

Refusing Treatment and Accepting Consequences – You have the responsibility:

- To follow our instructions and advice, understanding that you must accept the consequences if you refuse.

Financial Responsibilities – You have the responsibility:

- To pay your bills or make arrangements to meet the financial obligations for your care.

Following Rules and Regulations – You have the responsibility:

- To respect the privacy of our staff and patients by refraining from recording or videoing our staff and any procedure performed at LHS.
- To follow our rules and regulations.

- To keep your scheduled appointments, or let us know if you are unable to keep them.

Valuables – You have the responsibility:

- To please leave valuables at home and bring only necessary items for your hospital stay.

Respect and Consideration – You have the responsibility:

- To be considerate and cooperative to other patients and staff.
- To respect the rights and property of others.

How to File a Compliment or Complaint

Compliment:

If you are especially pleased with a staff member's attention and concern for your needs, feel free to compliment them directly. Health care workers get their greatest job satisfaction from your kind words. Additionally, our leaders make rounds to ensure high quality care during your stay. Sharing your feedback with LHS leaders is a great way to make sure the staff member is recognized for their great work.

Complaint:

Lincoln Medical Center makes every effort to make your stay comfortable and pleasant. Issues may arise, needing our close attention. Please follow these guidelines if you experience anything that causes you concern.

Step 1. Ask for the Department Manager or Supervisor

Ask to speak to the shift supervisor, department manager, charge nurse, house supervisor or director of nursing. Any of these people will work with you to investigate your concerns. Most concerns can be resolved in this way.

Step 2. Speak with Facility Leaders During Daily Rounding

If you are still dissatisfied, speak to the facility leaders during their daily rounding. These leaders will discuss your concerns with you and take appropriate action to resolve the problem. Most issues can be resolved with a clear understanding on both sides of what can and cannot be done in a given situation. During Step 2 if appropriate, the hospital CEO will be informed of all complaints, and he/she will be involved in the problem-solving process to the extent he/she feels necessary.

Step 4. Contact Administration

Hospital Administration will make every attempt to resolve any difficulties that may arise. You may contact Administration at 931-438-7455.

To file a complaint with:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service
KEPRO, the Quality Improvement Organization

5700 Lombardo Center Drive, Suite 100
Seven Hills, OH 44131
(888) 317-0751

State of Tennessee

877-287-0010
425 Fifth Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

The Joint Commission · Report concerns in any of the following ways:

At *jointcommission.org* Using the “Report a Patient Safety Event” link in the “Action Center” on the home page of the website.

By fax (630) 792-5636

By mail to The Office of Quality and Patient Safety, The Joint Commission
One Renaissance Boulevard · Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181

Medicare beneficiaries have the right to file a complaint with the State Quality Improvement Organization if they want to appeal their discharge from the hospital because they feel it is premature or appeal decision coverage.

Beneficiary Hotline Kepro Area 2 State of Tennessee: Call 844-455-8708

Lincoln Health System Is Committed to Your Safety

Our health care partnership begins with our commitment to your safety. Patients who are involved with their care in the hospital tend to do better. By working together with your health care team, you can lower your risk of injury and make your stay safer.

Our Partnership Pledge

At Lincoln Medical Center, we take a team approach to your safety. We invite you and your family to join us as active members of your care team.

Speak Up!

- Speak Up is a collaborative effort between Lincoln Medical Center and The Joint Commission to encourage patients to help us prevent medical errors in the delivery of your care.
- Speak up if you have any questions or concerns. If you still do not understand, ask again. It is your body and you have the right to know.
- Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Always make sure you are getting the right treatments and medicines by the right health care professionals. Do not assume anything.
- Educate yourself about your illness. Learn about the medical tests you get, and your treatment plan.
- Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate, advisor, or supporter.
- Know what medicines you take and why you take them. Medicine errors are the most common health care mistakes.
- Use an accredited healthcare facility, like Lincoln Medical Center, which has completed a rigorous survey to assure safety and quality.

- Participate in all decisions about your treatment plan. You are the center of the health care team.
- Reproduced with the permission of The Joint Commission.

Your Health Care Team

While you receive treatment at Lincoln Medical, you are likely to have a team of health care professionals involved in your care. This well-rounded team enhances your care. These members include:

- The Attending Physician or Physician of Record- doctor that supervises your treatment. This may be your private physician or the hospitalist (a physician that specializes in hospitalized patients).
- Nurse Practitioners- Advanced practice nurses who are licensed professionals who work closely with the attending physician in planning your care.
- Registered & Licensed Practical Nurses- Nurses will plan and evaluate your daily care, administer medications, and treatments, and provide education for discharge.
- Pharmacists- A pharmacist will review your medication orders and work with your doctor and nurse to ensure safe and accurate medication therapy.
- Others who may be involved in your care: Clinical Dietitians, Nursing Support Staff, Social Workers, Respiratory Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Laboratory, Coding and Billing, and Administration

Safety During Treatments, Surgery, and Procedures

As a patient, you can make your care safer by being an active, involved, and informed member of your health care team. You will be asked to sign an Informed Consent form before any surgery or procedure. Read it carefully and make sure it has your correct identification information, as well as the kind of surgery/procedure you will have. Ask questions about anything you do not understand.

There are also steps the hospital takes to prevent adverse events. When you are admitted for your surgery/procedure, the staff will ask your name and birth date, and confirm our specific surgery/procedure and the side of the body on which you will be operated. Before the surgery/procedure, the team will perform a “time out” to assure, among other things, they are doing the right surgery on the right body part on the right person.

Patient Identification

Anytime someone enters your room to administer medications, draw blood, perform procedures, or treatments they must identify you by checking your name and birth date before they proceed. You may be asked the same question repeatedly and we understand this can be annoying. Please understand this verification process is a critical step in keeping you safe in order to ensure all our patients get the right care for the right patient.

Notify a member of the health care team if your safety ID band comes off for any reason.

Staff Identification

Name Tags - All staff members at Lincoln Medical Center are required to wear a name tag while on duty. Feel free to ask anyone entering your room to identify himself/herself and his/her department.

Nutrition Safety

The Department of Nutrition is here to serve you and ensure that your nutritional needs are met as prescribed by your physician. There may be times during your stay that a family member or a friend will want to bring you food from home. While we do not encourage this practice, should it happen, we ask that you:

- Notify Nursing to ensure the food is permitted on your diet.
- Ask your family member or friend to bring in only one serving of the food.
- If extra food is brought in, please notify Nursing so that they can ensure proper storage of the food. Any perishable food will be discarded after twenty-four hours.

It is also important that you eat the food served to you as soon after the tray arrives as possible. Trays that sit over long periods of time lose temperature which decreases the quality of the food. In addition, there is an increased potential for food borne illness. If you are not ready to eat, the tray will be removed, and another meal will be sent. Snacks are available to patients upon request.

Preventing Falls

In the hospital, people can be at a higher risk for falls. Illness, surgery and medicines can weaken or affect your balance and judgment. Also, medical equipment and the unfamiliar environment can make movement more difficult. We are committed to keeping you safe from injury during your stay. During your stay we will:

- Assess you for your risk of falling upon admission and as your condition changes and apply fall risk armband as needed.
- Determine what preventive measures should be taken to try to prevent a fall while you are in the hospital, and share this information with other staff involved in your care.
- Show you how to use your call bell and remind you when to call for help.
- Respond to your calls for assistance in a timely manner.
- Assist you with getting in and out of bed and using the restroom as needed.
- Provide you with safe footwear and any recommended equipment (such as a walker or bedside commode) that will make it safer for you to move about.
- Make sure the call bell and other needed items are within reach.

We ask you or a loved one to:

- Tell your nurse if you have a history of falls.
- Ask your nurse about your assessed risk for falling and what prevention measures are being taken to reduce that risk.
- Use the call bell before attempting to get out of bed and wait for staff to come and help.
- Wear non-skid footwear and use equipment that has been provided for your safety.

- Make sure the call bell and other needed items are within reach before family or staff leaves your room.

Suicide Safety

The rate of suicide is increasing in America. Now the 10th leading cause of death, suicide claims more lives than traffic accidents, and more than twice as many as homicides. Those at risk for suicide include patients who suffer from the following disorders:

- Mental or emotional disorders, particularly depression and bipolar disorder. Up to 90 percent of suicide victims suffer from a mental or emotional disorder at the time of death.
- Previous suicide attempts or self-inflicted injury; the risk of suicide is twice as high (100 percent higher) than general suicide rates for one year following a suicide attempt, and the higher risk continues beyond that, the risk is even higher the first few weeks immediately following a suicide attempt.
- History of trauma or loss, such as abuse as a child, a family history of suicide, bereavement or economic loss.
- Serious illness, or physical or chronic pain or impairment.
- Alcohol and drug abuse.
- Social isolation or a pattern/history of aggressive or antisocial behavior.
- Discharge from inpatient psychiatric care, within the first year after and particularly within the first weeks and months after discharge. While some depressed patients who attempt or die by suicide after inpatient psychiatric hospitalization express suicide ideation before or during hospitalization, other depressed patients who have received inpatient psychiatric treatment develop suicide ideation after discharge.
- Access to lethal means coupled with suicidal thoughts.

If you or your family member needs assistance, please ask to speak to a member of our Clinical Resource Management Department (Ext. # 1244), call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text TN to the Suicide Prevention Line at 741 741.

Resource: www.jointcommission.org and www.crisistextline.org

Medication Safety

While you are in the hospital, it is important to talk to your doctor about your medicines. Bring a list of medications you take at home, including:

- Prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines, Vitamins, Herbal products, Dietary supplements

Make sure your nurse checks your ID bracelet prior to giving you any medications

Let your doctor and nurse know if you have any allergies to foods or drugs or have ever had a bad reaction to any drug, food, or latex product.

Your nurse will tell you about your medicines-what they are, what they look like, what they do, at what time they are given, and what side-effects you should expect or report.

Look at all medicines before you take them. If you do not recognize a medicine, let your nurse know.

Do not take medicines that you have brought to the hospital from home unless your doctor or someone on your health care team tells you it is okay. You should give your personal supply of medications to your nurse until you leave the hospital or give them to someone to take home for you.

After discharge, keep an updated list of medications you are taking.

Understanding and Managing Your Pain

Assessment of Your Pain

You have the right to have your pain assessed and managed appropriately. The staff at LHS are committed to ending the opioid crisis and limiting the use of opioids when possible.

Facts about managing your pain:

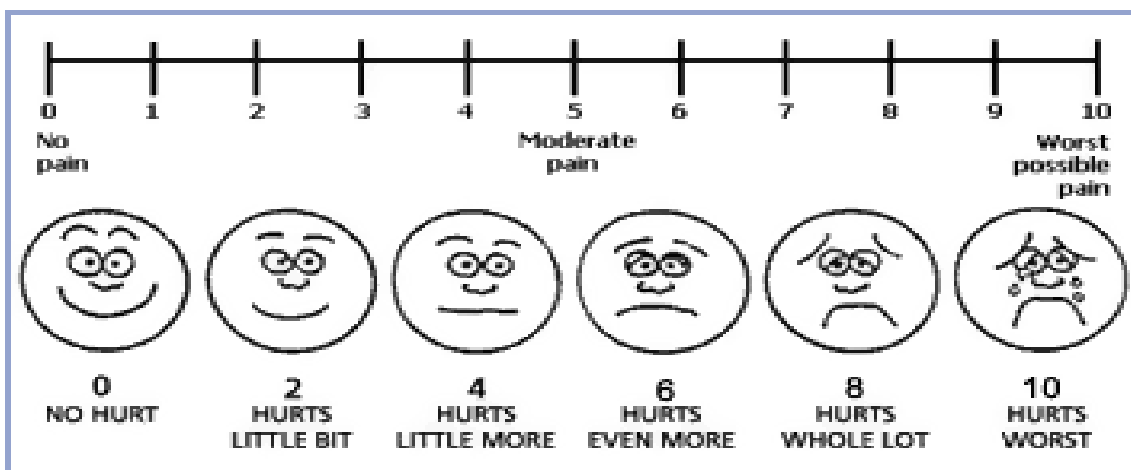
- Most pain can be controlled
- Communication with your health care team about your pain is important
- You and your health care team can work together to manage your pain.
- Only you know how much pain you feel.

Questions your health care team will ask you about your pain:

- “Where do you feel pain?”
- “How long have you had the pain?”
- “How does the pain feel; is it dull, tender, aching, cramping, shooting, burning, radiating, throbbing, stabbing, tingly, gnawing, squeezing?”
- “What makes the pain worse? What makes the pain better?”

Rating your Pain

Your pain can be measured. You will be asked to rate your pain using a scale like one of these. Choose a face or a number from 0 to 10 that best describes your pain.



From Wong DL, Hockenberry-Eaton M, Wilson D, Winkelstein ML, Ahmann E, DiVito-Thomas PA: Whaley and Wong's Nursing Care of Infants and Children, ed 6. St. Louis, 1999, Mosby, p. 1153.

If a patient cannot verbalize their pain, a non-verbal pain scale is used for infants through adults to assess pain levels.

Alternatives to Medication for Pain Management

There are other simple treatments for pain that do not involve medicine. These include listening to music, watching television, dimming the lights, using a hot or cold compress, and relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing exercises.

Remember: Your health care team will not know how much pain you have unless you tell them. The key to successful pain management is communication.

Pain Management with Medication

One of the most common ways to manage pain is with medicine. Most pain medicines can be taken by mouth. However, your health care team may set up a patient controlled analgesia (PCA) pump for you, which allows you to give yourself pain medicine by pushing a button.

Some side effects of pain medicines are very common but can be treated. These include constipation, sleepiness, nausea and itching. Please tell your nurse or provider whenever you have any side effects that you think could be related to the medications you are taking.

Some patients worry about using strong medicines too soon. In fact, your pain is easier to control when you start taking medicine when your pain begins. For severe pain, strong medicines may be needed. To help manage your pain, over time, your doctor may need to change your medicine.

Some patients fear taking opioids (such as morphine) because they think they might become “hooked” or addicted. This problem is rare when these medicines are used to treat pain. Talk openly with your health care team if you have concerns about addiction.

Prevention of Infections – You are Part of the Health Care Team

Hand Washing

- Clean your hands and remind others to clean their hands.
- Either use alcohol-based hand rub or wash your hands after using the bathroom, before eating, or after touching something that is soiled. If hands are obviously dirty, wash your hands well with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Health care providers are required to wash or sanitize their hands before and after seeing a patient. Health care providers should wear gloves when they perform tasks such as drawing blood or touching wounds or body fluids. Staff will welcome your reminder to clean their hands or wear gloves.
- Your visitors should wash or sanitize their hands as well.

Preventing the spread of respiratory infections

Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing by using tissues or the bend of your elbow. Both tissues and masks are available upon request. Please use these if you have a runny nose, sneeze, or cough. Please remember to wash your hands, especially after you sneeze, cough or use a tissue.

Visitors/Companions

If your visitors or companions are sick you should ask them not to visit. During peak flu season, LHS reserves the right to limit visitors. Signage will be posted and the policy will be enforced for the safety of our patients.

Vaccinations

When you are admitted to the hospital, you may be asked about your desire to have a flu (during certain months) and assessed for the need for pneumococcal vaccination. They are very effective at reducing the spread of disease.

Additional preventive measures

Some bacteria that require special measures to prevent the spread of infections- like Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE) or Clostridium difficile (C-diff). These infections can be spread by contact with clothing, hands, personal items, or health care equipment. If you have one of these conditions you will be placed on “isolation” to prevent the spread of infections to others. A sign will be posted outside your room and the staff will wear protective gowns, gloves or masks dependent on the type of infection and the extent of contact they will have with you. Visitors, in some cases may be asked to do the same. Hand hygiene is very important in preventing the spread of these conditions. If you are on isolation speak to your care provider before leaving your room.

If you have any questions, ask your health care provider.

For additional information: www.cdc.gov

Code Rapid Response

In providing the best care to our patients, Lincoln Medical Center (LMC) has implemented the “Code Rapid Response” system. LMC is dedicated to making the hospital a safe place for patient care. Code Rapid Response was created to address the needs to the patient in case of an emergency or when the patient is unable to get the attention of a healthcare provider. This call will provide our patients and families a resource to call for immediate help when they feel they are not receiving adequate medical attention.

When to call:

1. After speaking with a member of the healthcare team (i.e. nurses, physicians) you continue to have serious concerns about how care is being given, managed, or planned.
2. If in an emergency situation, there is a noted change in the patient’s condition that you feel is not being recognized by the caregiver or the patient does not receive attention deemed appropriate by the family.

How to call:

To initiate the Code Rapid Response System, please call **1333**. Stickers are located on the patient room phones. The operator will ask for the caller identification:

- room number
- patient name
- patient concern.

The operator will immediately activate a “Code Rapid Response” where a team of medical professionals are alerted and will arrive in the room to assess the situation.

Discharge Information

Make sure you have the following written instructions before you leave.

These instructions should tell you:

- Any dietary restrictions you may need to follow.
- What activities you can and cannot do, and for how long.
- How to care for any incisions or dressings you may have.
- Any follow-up appointments or tests you may need (and appointment times if they are scheduled before your discharge).
- What medicines you must take, why, what dosage, and for how long.
- Any prescriptions you will need to have filled.
- Any other instructions you need regarding your care at home such as how to get in and out of bed, how to use any assistive devices, etc.
- Signs and symptoms to watch for and when to call your health care provider.
- Phone numbers to call if you or your caregivers have any questions about your home care.

Make sure these instructions are understood by you and/or your caregiver.

Other services need after you leave the hospital

You may need other services after you leave such as time in a rehabilitation facility, nursing home, or in-home therapy or nursing care. Be sure to speak with your physician, nurse, or case manager before you leave to get all the details.

Meeting Your Needs

Advance Directives

Advance Directives are documents you create to describe the extent of medical treatment you do or do not want to receive if you are unable to communicate your wishes. You have the right to make an advance directive, such as a living will or durable power of attorney for health care, and to appoint someone to make health care decisions for you if you are unable. We recommend that you discuss advance directives with your family members, doctors, nurses, and cleric while you are alert and feeling well. Bring any advance directives you may already have to the hospital with you. For information about advance directives or to obtain the necessary forms, call Admitting Office at ext. 7488 or 931-438-7488 or Clinical Resource Management at ext. 1244.

Do-Not-Resuscitate orders currently in effect will be suspended during the perioperative period which is the time of surgery.

Personal Items and Valuables

You are encouraged to bring only essential items to the hospital, such as sleepwear and toiletries. Large sums of money, keys, jewelry, personal papers, and other valuables should be left at home. For safety reasons, do not bring TVs, radios, hairdryers, or other electric devices.

The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items or electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, cell phones, hearing aids, glasses or dentures.

Personal Items

To keep personal items secure you should:

- Keep eyeglasses and hearing aids in a case in the top drawer of your bedside table when you are not using them.
- Keep dentures in a denture cup in the top drawer of your bedside table. Do not place dentures on your food tray or on the bed linen.
- Keep clothing in your room closet, bedside table, or suitcase.
- If you do have personal valuables (jewelry, watches, money, credit cards, etc.) they need to be sent home with a family member.
- Lincoln Health System is not responsible for personal items.

Organ and Tissue Donation

Organ and tissue donation provides new hope to seriously ill or injured persons. Lincoln Medical Center participates with Tennessee Donor Services to manage organ and tissue donations. If you already have a donor card, it is important that your family is fully informed of your wishes. For information on donations call 1-800-969-4438 (GIFT).

Guide Dogs and Other Service Animals

Service animals are those animals trained to help patients and visitors with activities of daily living. They are welcome in any area of the hospital that is unrestricted to patients and visitors, provided that the presence of the service animal does not alter the policies, practices, or procedures of Lincoln Medical Center. Proof of registration and vaccinations may be requested.

Cell Phones

The use of cell phones is permitted in all departments of Lincoln Medical Center. If you must use your cell phone, please speak in a low voice so as not to disturb the privacy and comfort of other patients and visitors.

Flowers and Balloons

Flowers and Mylar balloons are welcome for patients except in ICU.

Visiting Guidelines

The Lincoln Medical Center believes that family and friends have important roles in a patient's plan of care. Our visiting guidelines are designed to help with safety, enable consistent care of patients, and promote a sense of security among patients, family and staff. These guidelines recognize that, because family situations differ, other variables may need to be considered in individual situations.

For the comfort of all patients, we ask that you limit your visitors (2 per patient in semi-private rooms; up to 4 in private rooms). Each unit reserves the right to further limit the number of visitors based on the needs of their patients. For your child's health and the comfort of our patients, we request that young children be cared for at home. It is requested that a responsible adult remains with pediatric patients 17 years of age and younger.

It is expected that visitors will:

- Not visit if they are sick
- Comply with designated visiting guidelines
- Clean hands before and after visiting
- Comply with any infection control practices that may be important to the patient's condition (e.g. wear isolation gown, mask and/or gloves)
- Comply with safety security procedures
- Act in a respectful manner
- Limit the number of visitors to no more than four at one time. Visitors may be restricted according to patient's medical condition and/or special needs
- Not take photographs or video without prior patient and hospital authorization

In response to a visitor who has displayed unacceptable behaviors of any kind, security measures including visitor restriction and/or legal action will be taken. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Unreasonable interference with a patient's plan of care
- Harassment of any kind, including inappropriate telephone calls to a staff member
- Use of loud, threatening, abusive or obscene language
- Offensive remarks of racial, sexual or personally derogatory nature
- Use of physical violence or act in a threatening manner towards staff
- Arrive on hospital property under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Damage to hospital property
- Possession of weapons or firearms
- Excessive noise that is obstructive to others in the vicinity

Interpreter Services

In order to better serve all patients of Lincoln Medical Center, information is provided in a manner tailored to the patient's age, language, and ability to understand. Provisions are made to provide interpreter services to Limited English Proficiency Patients (LEP). Please contact any employee if these services are needed.

Food Services to Visitors

Guest trays to be delivered to patient rooms are available at a nominal fee. If you are interested in a guest tray, please notify the nurse and payment should be made to the cashier on the first floor. Visitors may also purchase meals in the Courtyard Café.

Vending machines are located on the first floor near the restrooms.

ATM

An Automatic Teller Machine is located in the ER waiting room.

Guest Network Wireless Access to the Internet

We are pleased to be able to provide wireless access to the Internet for our patients and their visitors during their visit with us. Patients and guests may connect to the wireless access points located throughout the medical center at no charge.

Most patient care areas and waiting areas throughout the medical center are setup for guest network access. Phones, tablets, and laptops are all welcome to join the wireless network. You'll access it just as you would at any other "wireless hot spot" using password 'lincolnmedical'. If you have issues connecting to the guest network, please ask a member of the medical center's staff, or a volunteer to get in touch with the information technology department during normal business hours, which are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm.

Gratuities, Gifts and Donations

Gratuities are neither expected nor accepted by our staff members. If you wish to make a contribution to the hospital, it can be done through the Hospital Foundation. Please call 438-7392.

Clergy

Please feel free to have your personal pastor visit you during your stay. If you would like the hospital to make contact with a clergyman, every effort will be made by the case management department or by nursing personnel during nights, weekends and holidays.

Your Medical Bill and Medical Records

Understanding Your Insurance

The necessary paperwork will begin as soon as we are informed of your scheduled visit or admission. You should contact your insurance company before your visit to find out what services are (or are not) covered under your plan. Your insurance company's member service office is a good source of this information. Your member card should have the contact telephone number. Please be sure that your Primary Care Physician (PCP) knows about your impending visit. Your insurance company may require your PCP to submit a referral to us as part of the authorization process.

A preadmission coordinator may call you in advance of your visit to verify basic information. On the day of your arrival, you will be required to pay for your hospital and physician services that are not covered by your insurance. These payments may include a co-payment, deductible, or co-insurance amount. In certain cases, an admission deposit, based on your estimated length of stay, may be required.

Billing

Our billing office will file your claims directly with your primary and, when appropriate, your secondary insurance payer. You will be billed for any co-payments and/or outstanding balances not paid by your insurance payer. If you have not received notice of payment to us from your insurer within 60 days of receiving a copy of your bill, we ask that you contact the insurer and encourage speedy payment.

Inpatient or Observation Hospital Bill

Your hospital bill will include charges for your room, food, medical supplies and services, medications and any tests or procedures that you undergo, including x-rays and labs or observation hours.

Outpatient Hospital Bill

Patients seen in a clinic or outpatient setting may receive separate invoices for some services. Your clinic or outpatient bill will include charges for the use of the facility and any test or procedures done at the time of your appointment.

You could also receive bills from the following in addition to facility charges:

Emergency Room Physician – American Physician Partners

Hospitalist/Physician services – Lincoln Medical Group

Reading of x-rays – Huntsville Radiology

Anesthesia – MedStream

Pathology - PCA Southeast

DME - Life Aid Medical Equipment

For Questions about Your Hospital Bill, please call 931-438-7482.

Cashiers and Billing Coordinators

A cashier is located on the 1st floor of Lincoln Medical Center near the front entrance. The cashier accepts payments for hospital and physician services in the form of cash, personal check, money orders, and most types of credit cards. Services are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 am-4:30 pm.

Billing coordinators are located in the business office to assist with financial concerns and to help identify the payment option that is best for you. They are available Monday through Friday 8:00 am -4:30 pm.

Billing Rights and Obligations

Not all medical costs are covered by insurance. The hospital makes every effort to see that you are billed correctly. It is up to you to provide complete and accurate information about your health insurance coverage when you are brought in to the hospital or visit an outpatient clinic. This will help make sure that your insurance company is billed on time. Some insurance companies require that bills be sent in soon after you receive treatment or they may not pay the bill. Your final bill will reflect the actual cost of care minus any insurance payment received and/or payment made at the time of your visit. All charges not covered by your insurance are your responsibility.

Financial Assistance

If you are unable to pay for medical care, you may qualify for Free or Reduced-Cost Medically Necessary Care if you:

- Are a U. S. citizen or permanent resident living in the U.S. for a minimum of one year
- Have no other insurance options
- Have been denied medical assistance or fail to meet all eligibility requirements
- Meet specific financial criteria

If you do not qualify for financial assistance, you may be eligible for an extended payment plan for your medical bill.

Call 931-438-7482 with questions concerning:

- Your hospital bill
- Your rights and obligations with regard to your hospital bill
- Your rights and obligations with regard to reduced-cost, medically necessary care due to financial hardship.
- How to apply for free and reduced-cost care
- How to apply for programs that may help pay your medical bills

Obtaining Your Medical Records

You have the right to obtain a copy of your medical records and to request that your records be provided to someone else (subject to certain limitations). In order to protect your privacy, we must have your written permission before releasing the records. There is a fee for copying medical records. There is no charge for records sent directly to a physician or health care facility for continuing care.

To obtain a copy of your records, call 931-438-7377. After authorization for release of information is signed, copies are available by paper or electronic format of your choice (email, cd, or thumb-drive). We are available Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. If you need to sign a release in the evening or weekends, please ask your nurse to print out the authorization for you to complete. Authorization for release of information is not required if you would like for us to fax reports to a physician involved in your care.