



Strength
at Your Side

Care Tips

Please use the following information as a supplement to your team's care for day-to-day management of concerns.

POSITIONING AND TRANSFERRING

Helpful Hints for Caregivers

- Never lift more than you can comfortably handle
- Do not let your back do the heavy work, instead, use your legs
- Get close to the individual you are repositioning to ensure safety
- Avoid letting the individual put their arms around your neck
- Place transfer surfaces (wheelchair and bed) close together
- Ensure wheelchair brakes are in the locked position
- Never pull on the individual's arms or shoulders
- To increase safety, a gait or transfer belt that slips around the individual's waist can be provided by your care team

FALL PREVENTION

There are a number of things you can do at home to prevent falls.

- Clear walkways of any objects that might cause tripping
- Remove throw rugs
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and shower
- Use a raised toilet seat to ease transition on and off the toilet
- Choose footwear with light, non-slip soles
- Keep often-used items on shelves that can be easily reached
- Ensure rooms are well lit
- Use a chair with firm support and arm rests to help transition from sitting to standing
- Install grab bars in the bath and near the toilet
- Request a hospital bed with side rails from your care team
- Request assistive equipment from your care team such as a cane or walker to maximize independence and prevent injury





PREVENTING INFECTION

Top 4 ways to avoid the spread of germs and infection:

- **Use proper hand hygiene**

What is the best way to wash your hands?

- Wet your hands with warm, running water
- Apply liquid, bar or powder soap
- Lather well
- Rub your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). Remember to scrub all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails
- Rinse thoroughly under warm, running water
- Dry your hands with a clean, dry cloth, disposable towel or air dryer
- If possible, use your towel to turn off the faucet

Keep in mind that antibacterial soap is no more effective at killing germs than is regular soap. Using antibacterial soap may even lead to the development of bacteria that are resistant to the product's antimicrobial agents — making it harder to kill these germs in the future.

How to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers, which don't require water, are an acceptable alternative when soap and water aren't available. If you choose to use a hand sanitizer, make sure the product contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Then follow these simple steps:

- Apply enough of the product to the palm of your hand to wet your hands completely
- Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces, until your hands are dry

- **Use disposable gloves** when in contact with blood or other bodily fluids, including soiled items
- **Change soiled linen/bed clothes promptly** and wash separately in hot water with bleach and detergent
- **Dispose of syringes or needles** in the rigid, plastic container provided by Unity

Call Unity 24/7 at **920.338.1111** or **800.990.9249**

If there is no answer and the phone continues to ring, call **920-490-7418**.



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Planning

Disaster/Emergency Planning

In the event of a disaster, Unity staff will make every attempt to contact patients living in areas that are known to be directly impacted to assess patient/family status. Initial contact will be attempted by telephone. If phone contact is not successful, the County Emergency System will be notified of any potential patient safety issues.

- Patients/families identifying any actual or potential emergency/disaster in the vicinity of their residence should call 911 immediately.
- Patients who depend on electricity for their medical needs or who are compromised/live alone/etc. will be contacted first to assess patient status.
- Patient care needs will be prioritized and assigned to appropriate clinical staff.

Patients/families should have a plan for household fires and severe weather, including snow emergencies, tornadoes and flash floods.

The Ready Wisconsin website (readywisconsin.wi.gov) is an excellent resource to assist you in planning and being informed.

RECOMMENDED DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT:

- Battery powered radio
- First aid kit
- Extra supply of medications

- Extra pair of glasses
- Supply of water (one gallon per person per day)
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Supply of non-perishable food and a non-electric can opener
- Flashlight
- Change of clothing, including outer garments for warmth
- Extra batteries
- A list of emergency telephone numbers
- Car charger for cell phone
- Extra necessary medical supplies

RECOMMENDED HOME EMERGENCY CHECKLIST:

- Location of water, gas and electric main switches or valves
- Smoke detectors
- Back-up power supply for essential medical equipment
- Fire Extinguisher
- Location of emergency shelters
- Home evacuation plan
- Identified local and out-of-state relative or friend for check-in contact during an emergency



Advance Care Planning

Advance care planning is the process of making your end-of-life care wishes known through the completion of legal documents. These documents only become effective if you are no longer able to make decisions or communicate your wishes.

Though this process is not required, Unity encourages you to complete these documents to ensure you receive the care you desire. Loved ones should be a part of this process. Knowing your healthcare wishes is very helpful and comforting to your loved ones because it gives them peace-of-mind that the care you receive is the care you chose.

Advance care documents include:

POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTHCARE

A power of attorney for healthcare is a legal document that enables you to designate another individual to make healthcare decisions on your behalf in the event that you are unable to do so.

LIVING WILL

A living will expresses your preferences for life-sustaining procedures or treatments, such as the use of feeding tubes, in the event that a terminal condition exists.

CODE STATUS

Your code status directs the attempts that are made to save your life if your heart or breathing stops. Regardless of your code status, Unity will provide pain and symptom management measures to ensure your comfort. Types of code status directives include:

- Do not resuscitate (DNR): If you choose do-not-resuscitate (DNR) status, you will be kept comfortable and have a natural death without medical actions to attempt to restart your heart or your breathing.
- Resuscitate: If you choose resuscitate status, aggressive medical actions may be taken to restart your heart or your breathing. These medical actions

may include cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), breathing tubes, electricity through your heart, or injecting medication(s) into your veins. CPR may combine pressing on your chest and/or someone giving you breath by pressing his/her mouth over yours and breathing into your lungs. Since Unity staff are not required to be CPR certified, please keep in mind the following if your plan of care includes administration of CPR:

- If a Unity staff member is present or arrives and you are not breathing or without a heartbeat, the staff member will call 911 for further life support measures. If the staff member is CPR certified he/she will initiate CPR after calling 911.
- If your family calls to notify Unity your breathing or heartbeat has stopped, Unity staff will give instruction to call 911

Your Unity care team is happy to discuss and assist you in completing an advance care plan at any time. You have the right to make decisions concerning your medical care, including the right to accept or refuse treatment and the right to complete advance directives.

We realize that care at home oftentimes creates complex ethical issues. When Unity care team members are faced with these types of challenges, they rely on the St. Vincent Hospital Ethics Committee regarding the withholding or withdrawal of treatment. You or your representative have the right to participate in any discussions concerning ethical matters. In the event that a Unity caregiver is unable to carry out an Advance Directive and/or do-not-resuscitate order based on religious belief or personal conscience, Unity will reassign a caregiver to ensure your end-of-life care wishes are met.

Please discuss any questions you may have concerning your rights or related policies or procedures with a member of your Unity care team member.

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