



Tips For Preparing For Hospital Stays

Hospital stays might be a planned visit or may be unexpected. While it isn't always possible to plan ahead, here are some tips for parents to help guide your planning should your child become hospitalized.



Keep A "To-Go" Bag Ready

Have grab and go items such as change of clothes, toiletries, electronic chargers, comfort items (toy, stuffed animal, slippers, etc.), change for vending machines. Label personal items.



Create A Care Notebook

Keep a notebook with your child's vital records and information. It can be in a physical binder or an electronic version. Free templates are available online: <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources/Pages/For-Families.aspx>



Make A List

Have a plan for the care of other children and pets, especially if unexpected stays are common. Create a list of people willing to provide support and keep their contact information in your "to-go" bag with instructions on how to handle your affairs should you be unable to. Having a support plan in place can reduce the anxiety many parents face while caring for their hospitalized child.



Seek Support

Seek support through peers and family, spiritual center, your hospital's social worker or find parent support groups. You can also visit the Michigan Family to Family website www.f2fmichigan.org



Take Notes During Provider Visits

Have all providers explain to you who they are, what they are doing and why they are doing it. If you don't understand, ask again. Have them explain until you are comfortable and you understand. As your child's advocate, this keeps you in the loop and informed about your child's care.



Make Arrangements For Lodging

If necessary, make arrangements for lodging. Many hotels offer special hospital rates or discounts. Some hospitals partner with low/no cost lodging such as Ronald McDonald House or Renucci House. The hospital may have a list of these options or you can ask a hospital social worker or other parents for suggestions.



Practice Self-Care

Self-care is important while your child is hospitalized. Self-care is anything you do to take care of yourself, reduce stress, and maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle. Healthy eating and sleeping habits, managing stress and exercise will help your decision-making and the ability to participate in your child's care.

Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center

(MIF2F) exists to share resources, information, and learning opportunities for families of children and youth with special health care needs across Michigan, and also for the community partners and healthcare providers who care for them.

MI F2F offers:

- Information and resources related to caring for a child or young adult with special healthcare needs.
- Parent peers and individuals with experience navigating the maze of special health care services and programs.
- A network of Family Leaders across Michigan to help us identify community supports and resources for families.

www.f2fmichigan.org

