

Leaving the Hospital After Your Heart Attack: What you need to know

Understanding what you need to do to recover may lower your chances of coming back to the hospital.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE HOSPITAL

With your health care team, check which new medicines you are taking. **Many will lower your risk for a heart attack or stroke.**

- ☐ **Aspirin** and prescription **antiplatelet medicines** each work differently to stop dangerous blood clots from forming.

- ☐ **Medicines to lower cholesterol**
 - ☐ **Statins** _____
 - ☐ **Ezetimibe** _____
 - ☐ **PCSK9 inhibitors** _____
 - ☐ **Bempedoic acid** _____
- ☐ **Medicines to lower triglycerides**
 - ☐ **Prescription Omega-3** _____
 - ☐ **Fibrates** _____
- ☐ **Blood pressure medicines** help lower blood pressure and help your heart recover

- ☐ **Nitroglycerin** helps relieve chest pain or pressure by improving blood flow

- ☐ **Diabetes medicines** help lower your blood sugar

- ☐ **Other medicines** specific to your care

It is important to take all your medicines. Talk to your health care provider before you start, stop or change medicines or supplements.



Keep an up-to-date list of all your medicines. Write them down or use a health app or notes section on your smart phone. List name, dose, when and how to take them.

- With your care team, review your list of home medicines and supplements with the list from the hospital.
- If you will be taking an injection, make sure you have been given instructions and a demonstration.

Work with your health care team to:

- a. Fill your prescriptions before you go home, if possible.
- b. Find out if your medicines need to be approved by your insurance company.
- c. Schedule follow-up visits with your health care providers.
- d. Find out about any limits to your activities, such as lifting, bathing, walking, driving, having sex, and exercise.

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AFTER YOU LEAVE THE HOSPITAL

Call 911 for any of the following:

- Chest pain, pressure, or squeezing discomfort in your neck, jaw, stomach, back, or arm
- New or worsening shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness or a sudden, cold sweat
- Numbness or drooping on one side of your face
- Weakness in your arm or leg
- Difficulty speaking
- Confusion
- Dizziness, vision loss, or a severe headache
- Vomiting blood

Contact your health care provider:

- Blood in your urine or stool
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- If you think your medicines are not helping you, or if you have side effects
- If your symptoms are not getting better, such as feeling sad or tired, or if you are having a hard time sleeping
- If you have unusually high or low values for heart rate, blood pressure or weight
- Any questions or concerns about your condition or care

What to Check at Home

- Check your heart rate, blood pressure, and daily weight, as directed. Use a written log, a health app or notes section of your phone to share with your health care provider.

Medicines

- Take all your medicines as directed. Each works in a different way.
- Use a pill box and alarm reminders.
- Always carry your medicine list with you in case of emergency.



Follow-up Appointments

- Be sure to keep all your appointments. Bring a list of your questions, and a family member or friend for additional support.
 - + Cardiology provider
 - + Cardiac Rehab: includes an exercise program, heart monitoring, and support for healthy lifestyle habits
 - + Primary Care Provider

Ways to Lower Your Risk for a Heart Attack or Stroke

- As directed, start a limited walking program the day after you return home.
- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet with low-sodium foods, fruits, vegetables, and less fat. The DASH diet is a good example.
- Limit alcohol to 2 drinks/day for men, and 1 drink/day for women.
- Stop using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or cigars. Ask your health care team for help. Avoid second-hand smoke.
- Let your family and friends help pick up medicines, take you to appointments, provide healthy meals, housekeeping, or emotional support.