

Understanding Patient Safety

What Are Medical Errors?

Medical errors happen when something that was planned as part of medical care doesn't work out or when the wrong plan was used in the first place.

Errors can happen with even the most routine tasks. Research shows that the majority of medical errors can be prevented.

You will be notified of any significant errors related to your care which interfere with your safety.

Provide Accurate Information

Be honest and provide to the best of your knowledge accurate and complete information about your present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications (including over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements like vitamins and herbals – keep a list of all the medications you take) and other matters relating to your health. Report changes in your condition.

Tell staff what medications you take (including herbal and dietary supplements) as well as what allergies or reactions you have had in the past. When taking medications, ask what each one is and what it is for.

Patient Verification

You can expect our employees to ask you for your name, as well as check your armband, or ask you for another type of personal identifying information. This is to double-check your identity prior to any treatment or procedure.

Information About Tests and Procedures

BAMC staff will give you information about your tests, treatments, procedures, illness, medications and how to care for yourself at home. However, your physician is the only caregiver who can fully explain why he/she has ordered tests/procedure and what the test results are.

Name Tags

BAMC employees are expected to introduce themselves and to wear name tags to set them apart from visitors. Our name tags also identify the department in which employees work. Feel free to ask any employee who approaches you what their role in your care will be.

Personal Electronic Devices

The electrical safety of certain personal electric items brought in from home must be checked before use (i.e., electric razor, radio, lap top). BAMC staff will notify the Bio-Medical Department to inspect the items if necessary.

Medical Equipment Alarms

Most of our medical equipment has a safety device which automatically shuts the unit down and sounds an alarm if there is a problem. Please do not adjust any alarms or functions on medical equipment. Please call staff if an alarm goes off in their absence.

Dietary Orders

The Dietary Department will make every effort to meet patient needs and desires for meals and snacks. Any food brought in from home that the patient does not eat right away must go home with the family or be discarded.

Security

BAMC has Security Staff available 24 hours a day/7 days a week for security issues.

Handwashing

Handwashing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. BAMC uses two handwashing methods:

- Soap and water; and
- an alcohol-based waterless gel

BAMC staff and physicians are trained to wash their hands before and after coming in contact with patients. Ask your healthcare providers about cleaning, disinfecting and sterilizing equipment.

Wash your hands before handling food, after using the bathroom, or sneezing or coughing, changing a diaper, touching pets, or taking care of someone sick.

Fall Prevention

Our staff will show you how to use your call light. Please ask for help in getting up if you are weak, dizzy, unsteady on your feet or have received pain or sleeping medications. Please wear non-slip shoes or slippers when getting out of bed.

Please do not raise the entire bed – we like to keep your bed in the "low position" unless staff are caring for you. Please keep the floor clear to prevent you from tripping.

Side rails near the foot of the bed remain down. Upper rail(s) will be in the 'up' position to give you easy access to the bed controls.

Surgery

Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery.

Ask who is in charge of your care, exactly what will be done, how long it will take, what will happen afterwards, and how long recovery will take.

You can expect our staff to ask you to identify the site where your surgery is to occur. This is just one of the many extra steps we take to assure we are performing surgery on the correct site.

Follow instructions after surgery to prevent adverse events like urinary tract infections, lung infections, and blood clots.