

## **Follow-up**

### *After you leave the hospital*

***In this section:***

- ***What to Expect After Discharge***
- ***Your Outpatient Care Team***
- ***Coordinating Your Care***
- ***Requesting Your Medical Records***
- ***Medicines (First Prescriptions and Refills)***
- ***Preventive Care: Staying Healthy Going Forward***
- ***Solving Problems After Discharge***

---

*In my opinion, preparing a patient and their family for a safe and stress-free discharge is one of the most important things to address in therapy. Our priority is to help patients and families be aware of what questions may come up once they get home, and to make sure they know who to call when something occurs.*

*~ Rehab Staff Member*

---



*Your physiatrist will make recommendations about your needs for follow-up therapy.*

## **What to Expect After Discharge**

- ❑ **Follow-up visits with your Outpatient Care Team.**  
Your attending doctor will arrange for your follow-up visits. It is important to attend these appointments so that your ongoing medical and rehabilitation issues can be managed. After discharge, your care will be provided by your Outpatient Care Team rather than your inpatient team.

- ❑ **Medicines – first prescriptions and refills.** You will receive prescriptions for your medicines before discharge. You will also need to get refills as your medicines get low.
- ❑ **Preventive health care.** Your Outpatient Care Team wants to partner with you to create a long-term plan for your health.
- ❑ **Problem solving.** You have resources to help with issues that may occur after you leave the hospital. Ask your care team or social worker for more information.

## **Your Outpatient Care Team**

### **Primary Care Provider (PCP)**

Your PCP is usually a family medicine or internal medicine doctor who coordinates care and manages medical issues. This doctor will handle many of your health-related problems, keep your medical history, review your medicines and medical records, and refer you to specialists as needed.

### **UWMC Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic**

If you and your PCP decide you will have your follow-up visits at UWMC's Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic on 8-South, your first appointment will be made just before discharge. You will be seen by a physiatrist or nurse practitioner with rehabilitation expertise in this clinic.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the Rehab Clinic weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The phone number is 206-598-4295, and the fax number is 206-598-2813.

### **Physiatrist (Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Doctor)**

Your physiatrist will oversee your rehabilitation issues, including home health or outpatient therapies, and prescription of medical equipment or medical supplies. This doctor assesses your needs and also makes recommendations for vocational or psychological counseling, as needed.

## **Specialists**

Other specialist doctors may help manage your ongoing medical issues. These specialists may be urologists, cardiologists, nephrologists, oncologists, surgeons, or others who have been involved in your care. They will work with your PCP and physiatrist.

## **Physical, Occupational, or Speech Therapists**

Ongoing rehabilitation therapies can be provided, either as an outpatient (at UWMC or other facility) or through a home health agency in your home. Your attending physiatrist will make first recommendations and oversee your rehabilitation plan of care for 1 month after discharge or until you see an outpatient physiatrist or other doctor who will assume oversight of your outpatient rehabilitation program.

## **Nursing Care**

Nursing care may be prescribed. This may be through a home health care agency or in a specialty clinic such as Wound Care.

## **Nurse Practitioner and Clinic Nurse**

A nurse practitioner (ARNP) is a registered nurse with special training for providing primary health care, including many tasks usually done by a doctor. ARNPs can specialize in a certain area of medicine such as rehab or pediatrics.

The clinic nurse (RN) is a registered nurse who can assist you when you have questions and can make sure your PCP gets important information about your health care.

## **Coordinating Your Care**

Your attending doctor will talk with your primary care and specialist doctors and provide a discharge summary of the care you received while you were in the hospital.

## **Choosing Your Primary Care Provider**

If you do not already have a PCP when you are ready to leave the hospital, your Inpatient Rehabilitation Team can help you find one.

If you need help finding a PCP after discharge, you can call any of the University of Washington Physician Network (UWPN) neighborhood clinics or the General Internal Medicine Clinic (GIMC) at UWMC Roosevelt, at 206-598-8750. We encourage you to visit your PCP within 2 weeks of discharge.

Your insurance companies may require a referral if you want coverage for seeing other health care providers. These referrals can be made by your inpatient doctor or your PCP.

### **Requesting Your Medical Records**

We recommend you have your medical records sent to your PCP. This is usually done when you are discharged from the hospital.

To get your medical records after discharge, contact Health Information Management, Room BB306 on the 3rd floor of the medical center, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

You will need to fill out and submit a “release of information” form. Call Health Information Management at 206-744-9000 for more information (be sure to dial 9 first when calling from your bedside phone).

### **Medicines (First Prescriptions and Refills)**

Your attending physiatrist will give you a complete list of your medicines and prescriptions before discharge. Prescriptions usually provide medicine to last 1 month. Your PCP and other consulting doctors will receive a copy of your discharge summary, including a complete list of the medicines you were prescribed upon discharge.

### **UWMC Prescription Refills**

To refill a prescription, use our Refill Authorization Center (RAC), even if you get your medicines through a different pharmacy. If your prescription says it has no refills left, the RAC will take care of getting it refilled.

### **Remember that requests take 48 hours to process.**

Here are the steps to follow when you need prescription refills:

- If you use an outside pharmacy, call your pharmacy and have them fax us your refill request to **206-744-8538**. This is the fastest way to get refills authorized.
- If you want prescriptions to be mailed to you, call the RAC at **206-744-8513**. Follow the phone instructions and press the # key to proceed. You will need to provide:
  - Your first name, last name, and hospital ID number
  - Your daytime phone number
  - The name of the medicine and the amount you need
  - The name and phone or fax number of your pharmacy
  - The name of your primary care provider and clinic

### **Coumadin (or warfarin)**

If you are taking Coumadin, a blood thinner, either your PCP or an anticoagulation clinic will need to closely monitor your health. If you like, you can have the Anticoagulation Clinic at UWMC take care of your blood work and Coumadin prescriptions. To learn more, please call 206-598-4874.

### **Preventive Care: Staying Healthy Going Forward**

Routine preventive health appointments you will need to schedule include immunizations; health risks and healthy lifestyle counseling; and checkups, tests, and screenings.

#### **Immunizations**

Getting the right shots can protect you from various diseases.

#### **Health Risks and Healthy Lifestyle Counseling**

Talk with your health care provider about:

- The importance of regular exercise
- Diet and eating habits
- Smoking
- Drug and alcohol use
- Birth control and sexually transmitted disease

## Checkups, Tests, and Screenings

Checkups, tests, and screenings help find health problems early. This can help you make changes in your health habits and get treatment that may save or lengthen your life. Knowing the facts can improve your chances of getting good care. Many screenings can be done by your PCP, during your annual physical exam.

No one screening schedule is right for everyone. Be sure to think about your risk factors. For example, if you have a spinal cord injury, you may have a greater risk for urinary tract infections, high cholesterol, or diabetes. Work with your PCP to plan a schedule that is right for you.

You will need to ask for the screenings and tests you want to have done. Do not assume that your PCP will schedule all of the screenings that you need.

At your annual physical exam, talk with your PCP about your general health, your disability, and other aspects of your life. This helps you build a partnership and a good working relationship with your PCP.

The tables below and on the next page show recommended health care screenings and how often they should be done:

<b>When</b>	<b>Screenings and Exams</b>
<b>Daily</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skin self-checks (if you are sensation-impaired)</li></ul>
<b>Monthly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Women:</i> Breast self-exam</li><li>• <i>Men:</i> Testicular self-exam</li></ul>
<b>Yearly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit with PCP, check weight and blood pressure</li><li>• Digital rectal exam after age 40</li><li>• Check for blood in your stool (feces) after age 50 to detect colon polyps that may become cancerous</li><li>• Flu shot</li><li>• <i>Women:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Clinical breast exam after age 40 (sooner if a self-exam is hard to do)</li><li>- Baseline mammogram in your 30s or 40s, annual mammogram beginning in your 40s</li></ul></li><li>• <i>Men:</i> Digital prostate exam and PSA after age 40</li></ul>

<b>When</b>	<b>Screenings and Exams</b>
<b>Every 2 or 3 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete blood count with biochemistry study</li> <li>• Cardiac risk assessment after age 40</li> <li>• Urologic assessment (if you have urinary issues)</li> <li>• Assess equipment and posture</li> <li>• Functional assessment – transfers, bed mobility, and locomotion (in wheelchair or walking)</li> <li>• Full skin evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Every 5 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lung capacity (if you have pulmonary impairment)</li> <li>• Lipid panel test for cholesterol levels in your blood</li> <li>• Eye evaluation after age 40</li> <li>• Screening sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy after age 50 to find colon polyps that may become cancerous</li> <li>• Motor and sensory testing</li> <li>• Review changes in life situation, including coping, adjustment, life satisfaction</li> </ul>
<b>Every 10 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tetanus booster</li> <li>• Pneumonia vaccine (if you have pulmonary impairment)</li> </ul>

## **Solving Problems After Discharge**

After you leave rehab, you may need help with solving problems. The tables below and on the next page give resources that can help you resolve some issues that may come up:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>What to Do</b>
Medicine questions or other issues that occur <b>right after discharge</b> (the night or weekend after discharge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For non-urgent questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call the 8-North nursing station (206-598-4800) and speak with a nurse.</li> <li>- Or, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the rehabilitation physician to be paged.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If it is an urgent or life-threatening emergency medical issue, <b>call 9-1-1.</b></li> </ul>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>What to Do</b>
Medicine issue or concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call your primary care physician, the Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic (if being followed by the clinic), or the specialist doctor who is managing that medicine.</li> </ul>
Need medicine refill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call the Refill Authorization Center (206-744-8538) or pharmacy where the prescription was filled.</li> </ul>
Outpatient occupational, physical, or speech therapy issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are currently being seen by OT, PT, or Speech Therapy, call the OT, PT, or Speech Therapist who is providing your care.</li> <li>• If you are having trouble getting started with your rehabilitation therapy, call your UWMC Rehabilitation attending physiatrist, primary care provider, or Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic (if being followed by the clinic).</li> <li>• If you haven't been seen by your PCP or Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic, have the OT, PT, or Speech Therapist contact your attending physiatrist from 8-North rehab.</li> </ul>
Need copies of medical records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call Health Information Management at 206-744-9000.</li> </ul>
Home health care (OT, PT, Speech Therapy, RN, etc.) concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the home health care staff contact your attending physiatrist (who originally prescribed the home health care), the Rehabilitation Clinic, your PCP, or a specialist doctor (if it is more than 1 month after discharge and/or you have had follow-up visits after discharge).</li> </ul>

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Talk to your doctor, nurse, or other health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

While you are a patient on Inpatient Rehab, call:  
206-598-4800

After discharge, call your primary care provider or UWMC's Rehabilitation Clinic: 206-598-4295