



Hospital Visit Checklist

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS IN AOTEAROA



Kia ora! This handbook is designed to help you feel more prepared and empowered during your hospital journey in Aotearoa. Whether you're a patient or a caregiver, this guide provides practical checklists and tips to help you navigate appointments, treatments, and advocate for the best possible care. We're here to support you every step of the way.

Remember: You are the most important member of your healthcare team.

Checklist: What to Bring to Your Hospital Visit

Having the right items with you can make a big difference. Tick off the essentials:

- ☐ **Your NHI (National Health Index) number:** This is your unique identifier within the New Zealand healthcare system.
- ☐ **Referral letter (if applicable):** If your GP has referred you, bring the letter.
- ☐ **Medication list:** Include names, dosages, and frequency of all medications, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements.
- ☐ **Allergies list:** Note any allergies and reactions.
- ☐ **Glasses/hearing aids:** If you use them.
- ☐ **Moblie phone & charger:** For communication and entertainment.
- ☐ **Snacks and drinks:** Something light, especially if you have dietary requirements.
- ☐ **Comfortable clothing:** Layers are a good idea.
- ☐ **Reading material/entertainment:** To help pass the time.
- ☐ **Notebook and pen:** To jot down notes and questions.
- ☐ **Support person (optional):** A friend or family member for support.

Kiwiana touch: Don't forget your jandals! 😊

Checklist: Preparing for Treatment

Preparing for treatment can help ease anxiety and ensure a smoother process:

- ☐ **Understand your treatment plan:** Ask your doctor to explain the treatment, its purpose, potential side effects, and alternative options.
- ☐ **Organise transport:** Plan how you'll get to and from appointments.
- ☐ **Arrange childcare/eldercare:** If needed.

- [] **Prepare your home:** Ensure a comfortable and supportive environment for recovery.
- [] **Inform your employer/school:** About your treatment schedule and any necessary time off.
- [] **Talk to loved ones:** Share your feelings and ask for support.
- [] **Plan for self-care:** Schedule activities you enjoy to help manage stress.
- [] **Consider a support group:** Connect with others who are going through similar experiences.
- [] **Prepare any necessary equipment:** Crutches, braces, special bedding - ask your healthcare team what you will need.

Consider: Create a 'whānau' (family) roster to help with tasks.

Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Team

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Here are some ideas:

- What is my diagnosis?
- What are my treatment options?
- What are the benefits and risks of each treatment?
- What are the potential side effects?
- How long will the treatment last?
- What is the expected outcome?
- What are the costs involved?
- Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns?
- Are there any support services available?
- What should I do in an emergency?

Pro Tip: Write down your questions before your appointment to ensure you don't forget anything.

Tracking Your Symptoms

Keeping track of your symptoms can provide valuable information to your healthcare team. Use a notebook, app, or spreadsheet to record:

- **Date and time**
- **Symptoms experienced:** Be specific (e.g., headache, nausea, fatigue).
- **Severity:** Rate your symptoms on a scale of 1 to 10.
- **Triggers:** Note any activities, foods, or situations that seem to worsen your symptoms.
- **Medications taken:** Record any medications you took and their effectiveness.
- **Other notes:** Include any other relevant information.

Think of it like: Keeping a 'pūrakau' (story) of your health.

Advocating for Yourself or a Loved One

Advocacy is about ensuring your voice is heard and your needs are met. Here are some tips:

- **Be informed:** Learn as much as you can about your condition and treatment options.
- **Be assertive:** Express your concerns and needs clearly and respectfully.
- **Ask questions:** Don't hesitate to ask questions until you understand everything.
- **Bring a support person:** Having someone with you can provide emotional support and help you remember information.
- **Document everything:** Keep records of appointments, conversations, and symptoms.
- **Know your rights:** Understand your rights as a patient under the New Zealand healthcare system.
- **Seek support:** Connect with advocacy organisations or support groups.
- **Escalate if needed:** If you're not satisfied with the care you're receiving, know how to escalate your concerns through official channels.

Remember: You have the right to a second opinion.

We hope this handbook has been helpful. Remember, you're not alone, and there are many resources available to support you. Tū kaha! (Stay strong!)