

## General advice

If you are preparing to go to the hospital for overnight or longer – or if you find that hospital visits must be frequent – consider making a bag with all of these items ready to go. We at #MEAction suggest you use a small, rolling suitcase or overnight bag with wheels as these are easier to travel with.

Note that some of these are primarily for people who are at the hospital for an extended stay.

Note that every hospital has different rules. Contact your local hospital to find out about their rules and regulations regarding outside bedding, food, and electronics.

## Medical Information

- Photo ID
- Insurance and Medicare cards, along with pre-certification and other documentation required by insurers
- A list of all your current medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, along with the dosage and frequency (200-mg twice a day, for example)
- A copy of advance health care directives, such as durable power of attorney for health care and living will
- A personal health record that includes information such as allergies, health conditions, immunization record and reports of recent tests or physical exams  
A list of telephone numbers of family and friends to be contacted as needed

## Toiletries

- Toothbrush and travel-sized toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Soap, skin care products, and hair care products if you prefer your own (ideally travel sized); consider using dry shampoo
- Hair brush, ponytail holders
- Lip balm (hospital air can be very dry)
- Hand cream
- Tampons, sanitary pads
- Wet wipes/hand wipes
- Travel pack of tissues
- Breath mints/breath spray/mouthwash

## Personal Effects

- Contacts and/or glasses (glasses may be easier than contacts)
- Protective containers for holding eyeglasses or dentures when not in use
- Eyemask and/or sunglasses
- Earplugs or noise-cancelling headphones
- Your own pillow
- An extra blanket – #MEAction's roll-up blankets or another blanket that rolls and secures are ideal
- An empty Ziplock labeled in permanent marker with your full name and contact information, for any valuables (jewelry, cell phone, etc.). If you have the option to remove these items before traveling to the hospital, however, you should do so.

**Note: if you bring your own pillow/blanket to the hospital, be sure to wash it very thoroughly when you bring it home.**

## Clothing

- Socks
- Underwear
- Slippers
- A housecoat, scarf, or button-down sweater/jumper to stay warm
- Sweatpants or pyjama pants to wear with your hospital gown  
At least one change of clothes (to travel home)

## Food and medicine

- Your medications – bring more doses of everything than you usually need
- Any meds you keep for emergency situations or symptoms outside your usual presentation
- Snacks, especially if you have food intolerances. Consider jerky, nuts, trail mix, and other foods that are satisfying and that will not go bad if they are unrefrigerated for a few days. **Be sure to check in with your nurse/doctor** regarding dietary restrictions and why you require your own snacks.
- Water or electrolyte drinks

**Note: put your name on any personal item you bring!**

**Note: be sure to let the hospital know your current medications!**

## Tech

- Laptop or tablet
- Cell phone
- Charger for cell phone
- Extra batteries for cell phone and/or laptop/iPad
- An extension cord. The outlet may not be in a convenient place for laptop use. Double-check with nursing staff as to where you may place a cord out of the way. You may not be allowed to use one in your room, and do not remove covers from any blocked outlets. It is best to bring extra batteries rather than a cord.

## Entertainment and comfort

- Books, magazines, crossword puzzles to help pass the time
- Paper and pen for jotting down notes and questions
- A small amount of money for newspapers and magazines and other items from the gift shop or vending machines family and friends can get for you. The café will not always be open, but vending machines always will be.
- A pack of cards or other two-person games if you know you will be hospitalized for some time