

## **Patient Responsibilities**

As a patient we expect that you will:

- Ask your doctor or nurse what to expect.
- Discuss pain relief options with your doctor and nurse.
- Work with your doctor and nurse to make a pain relief plan.
- Help the doctor and nurse measure your pain.
- Tell the doctor and nurse about any pain that will not go away.

## **Pain Relief and Prevention**

While not everyone who is hospitalized experiences pain, many patients do experience pain, either as a result of preexisting medical conditions or as a result of surgery or other medical procedures. Relief of pain is an important part of your medical treatment. While in the hospital, your doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers will work with you to make sure you receive timely and attentive treatment for pain that you may have. While it may not always be possible to eliminate all pain, your healthcare team will work with you to relieve your pain. This booklet provides information on what you can do to make sure you receive the most effective pain care.

## **Understand Why Pain Relief is Important**

- Pain relief will allow you to enjoy greater comfort.
- Pain relief may allow you to get well faster. For example, with less pain you will be better able to walk and do breathing exercises, thereby reducing the risk of having problems such as pneumonia and blood clots.

## **Discuss Pain Control Options With Your Nurses and Doctors**

- Tell your doctors and nurses about pain control methods that have worked for you in the past.
- Tell your doctors and nurses about side effects you may have had from pain medications in the past.
- Discuss any concerns you may have about pain medicines.

## **Help Your Nurses and Doctors Measure Your Pain**

- You will be asked to rank your pain on a scale of 0-10.  
0 = No pain  
10 = Worst possible pain
- Reporting your pain as a number will help your doctors and nurses know how well your treatment is working, as well as how effective any changes in treatment are.
- Your nurse may ask you to set a "Comfort Zone" or pain goal. This is the level of pain on the 0-10 scale where you think your pain is acceptable.
- This would be a rating where the pain is not distressing to you, and the pain does not prevent you from sleeping and going about your daily

routine.

### **Tell Your Nurses and Doctors About Unrelieved Pain**

- New or worsening pain can be a symptom that something is wrong.
- Do not worry about being a "bother."
- Your doctors and nurses want and need to know about unrelieved pain.