

# TIPS FOR WELL-BEING

## While your child is in the hospital

For families,  
from families

Having a child in the hospital is stressful. It is easy to put your own well-being as a last priority, but keeping yourself healthy helps you be your best for your child. Families and caregivers of children who have been hospitalized at Children's Minnesota put together these tips to help you maintain your well-being.

### Be your child's advocate.

You are your child's champion. You know better than anyone what your child needs. Trust your inner voice and ask questions. Use the communication board in your child's hospital room to write down all of your questions.

### Eat, sleep, breathe and be active.

Go for a walk every day to get fresh air and sunshine. Slow your breathing to keep calm. Take 10 slow, deep breaths to slow your heart rate, relax your body, and your mind. Feed your body healthy foods to keep it energized. Connect with the Family Resource Center or speak with a social worker for resources to help you maintain basic needs for your well-being.

### Be comfortable.

The hospital environment can be cold and dry. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and healthy. Ask your child's nurse for a warm blanket, or bring one from home, to stay cozy in the cooler environment. You can get personal care items, such as toothpaste, shampoo, body wash and shaving cream at the Family Resource Center. Ask your nurse or the Welcome Center for these items if you are unable to go to the Family Resource Center.

### Ask for help. Allow help. Prioritize.

It can be difficult to ask for help. Be willing to ask for help and to accept help. Make a list of things you need help with, such as delivering meals, laundry or cleaning, or taking care of other children while you are at the hospital. Deal with only the things that must be taken care of right now and let the rest go for now.

### Ask for credible resources regarding your child's condition.

Your child's care team and staff at the Family Resource Center can provide credible resources if you would like to do further research. It is always okay to ask questions or request more information about your child's condition.

### Connect with people who can be supportive.

Call a family member, a friend, or ask your child's care team to speak with spiritual care resources or a social worker. There is always someone to help you.

### Communicate efficiently.

CaringBridge and social media can reach a large audience with one post. You can reduce the amount of communication you send out and still keep people informed and connected to what is going on with your child. Contact the Family Resource Center for help using these tools.

### Whatever you are feeling, it's OK.

Remember the chaos, the grief, and the rollercoaster of emotions are normal. Having a child hospitalized can be a very challenging and emotional time.

### Counseling can help you process your emotions.

Your emotional well-being is important. Talking with a therapist can help you work through your concerns, sort out your emotions, and minimize your stress. If you need help connecting to these resources, ask your child's care team to connect you with a social worker.

### Utilize the Family Resource Center and the Family Resource Guide.

Staff at the Family Resource Center can help you navigate the many resources and amenities available to you and your family. They can also give you a For Families, From Families Resource Guide, created by Children's Minnesota Family Advisory Council to help other patient families through their health care journey — including tips for organizing your child's health information.



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