

TIPS for Parents

by parents

KEEP A NOTEBOOK BY THE BEDSIDE

Parents and caregivers are an important part of the healthcare team. You know your child best. Listen to your child and trust your instincts. To be an effective part of your child's healthcare team, keep a notebook, or even just a pen and some paper, by your bedside and jot down the following:

Contact information for the healthcare team

- Ask for and write down the name and contact number of your child's attending physician and other team members. The "attending" has overall responsibility for your child's care.
- Jot down the nurse's station phone number extension and tuck it in your wallet. Call it anytime for updates on your child.
- Give the nurse your contact information so you can be reached anytime.

Your child's care plan for the day

- Ask about the care plan for the day and write it down. If you are not sure what the plan is, ask the nurse or doctor.
- Repeat the information back to the doctor or nurse to confirm your understanding of your child's care.

Questions as you think of them

- Write down questions as you think of them – even during the middle of the night, or as you do your own research.
- Refer to your notebook when the doctors come in.
- Ask for as many explanations of a diagnosis, "labs" or test results as you need until you are comfortable with the information.

Remember: Asking questions is a good thing.

Your observations of your child

- Note any changes in your child's appetite, energy level, mood, pain levels, or other areas you observe. Share this information with the healthcare team.

If you think your child is in pain, do not wait for the doctors to come by. Your child's nurse may have instructions for pain management, or can contact your child's doctor to have the Pain Management Team called.

These tip sheets were developed by the parents of the Family Advisory Council at the Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital of New York Presbyterian.

For more information on the Family Advisory Council, please email familyadvisorycouncil@nyp.org.

*You are part of
your child's
healthcare team!*