

# TakeCHARGE of your health

The TakeCharge Campaign is dedicated to empowering people to TakeCharge of their health care decisions with informed decision-making and effective advocacy.

## 5 Steps to Safer Health Care



# 1

### Understand & Complete Your Advance Directives

“Advance directives” is a general name for several types of documents you can sign to help ensure that your wishes about medical treatment are known and respected if you are unable to communicate for yourself. Designate someone who can speak on your behalf at times when you can't.



# 2

### Keep a Record of Your Medical History & Current Medications

Keep a detailed record of your medical history and all past and current medications, vitamins and herbs. Bring this information with you to every medical appointment. Tell them about any drug allergies you have.



# 3

### Prepare for Doctor Visits / Make A List of Questions

Make your doctor visit count. Prepare a list of questions and symptoms before you visit your doctor or go for a procedure or to the hospital. A doctor won't be able to answer your questions if you don't ask.



# 4

### Prevent Infections / Ask Caregivers to Wash Their Hands

1 in 25 people who are hospitalized will get an infection. Help stop the spread of infections. Ask caregivers to wash their hands before touching you. If you see a healthcare provider reaching for you without having washed, ask them to do so. Gentle, but assertive reminders can be lifesaving.



# 5

### Use an Advocate / Be an Advocate for Others

Everyone getting medical treatment should have someone to support them, to help raise questions, take notes, enhance communication with medical staff and make sure they are receiving patient-centered care. This person is called a “patient advocate”. Choose an advocate and be an advocate for someone.

Learn more at [www.TakeCHARGE.care](http://www.TakeCHARGE.care)

TakeCHARGE is a program of Pulse Center for Patient Safety Education & Advocacy / Pulse of NY

