Questions to ask your doctor

- How often will your doctor see you during your stay?
- Who is responsible for your care when the doctor is not available? For example, on weekends and at night?
- What happens to you if life-saving actions are taken?
- If your test or procedure shows that you need another procedure right away, can you get it done here? Or will you need to go to a different facility?

Resources
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, www.ahrq.gov, "Questions Are The Answer" campaign and "20 Tips To Help Prevent Medical Errors"
You have rights and a role regarding your treatment and care. This brochure has questions and answers to help you find out about your rights and role as a patient. Knowing your rights and role can help you make better decisions about your care.

What are your rights?
- You have the right to be informed about the care you will receive.
- You have the right to get information about your care in your language.
- You have the right to make decisions about your care, including refusing care.
- You have the right to know the names of the caregivers who treat you.
- You have the right to safe care.
- You have the right to have your pain treated.
- You have the right to know when something goes wrong with your care.
- You have the right to get an up-to-date list of all of your current medicines.
- You have the right to be listened to.
- You have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect.

Ask for written information about all of your rights as a patient.

What is your role in your health care?
- You should be active in your health care.
- You should ask questions.
- You should pay attention to the instructions given to you by your caregivers. Follow the instructions.

What happens if something goes wrong during treatment or with my care?
- If something goes wrong, you have the right to an honest explanation and an apology. The explanation and apology should be made in a reasonable amount of time.

How do you file a complaint?
- First, call the hospital or health system so that they can correct the problem. Next, if you still have concerns, complaints can be sent to the licensing authority or The Joint Commission. The Joint Commission provides a complaint form on its website at www.jointcommission.org.

Questions to ask before you enter the health care facility
- Can you have an advocate? Do you need to sign a document so your advocate can get important information about your care?
- What will be done to make sure I don’t get an infection?
- Is there a form you need to sign about life-saving actions, like resuscitation?
- Is there a form you need to sign about life support?
- Does the organization allow members of your religion to visit and pray with you?
- What kind of security does the facility have? Is there a 24-hour guard or alarm system?
- Whom do you speak to if a problem arises?
- How does the organization handle complaints?
- Are there any procedures that cannot be done at this facility for religious reasons?
- Can you get a copy of your medical record and test results?

The goal of the Speak Up™ program is to help patients become more informed and involved in their health care.