Diabetes: Five ways to be active in your care at the hospital

The Joint Commission’s Speak Up brochure provides advice

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Ill. – November 3, 2010) People with diabetes need to take extra precautions if they find themselves at the hospital, according to The Joint Commission’s Speak Up™ educational campaign. The campaign is supported by the American Association of Diabetes Educators, American Diabetes Association and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

The Joint Commission’s new Speak Up™ brochure “Diabetes: Five ways to be active in your care at the hospital” includes tips for people living with diabetes and encourages them to ask a trusted family member or friend to be an advocate during trips to the emergency room or any planned hospitalization. Topics covered in the brochure include finding out how diabetes will be managed during hospitalization, asking about medications and possible interactions, talking with the hospital dietician, avoiding infections, and planning for recovery at home.

“Going to the hospital presents special challenges for people with diabetes, but being prepared will help them to be active participants in their care. It will also help patients ensure that their diabetes is appropriately monitored and controlled while they are hospitalized,” says Mark R. Chassin, M.D., M.P.P., M.P.H., president, The Joint Commission.

The Joint Commission’s new diabetes education campaign is part of the award-winning Speak Up™ program. Speak Up™ brochures help patients be active participants in their care and are available in English and Spanish at www.jointcommission.org.

The basic framework of the Speak Up™ campaign urges patients to:

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.
Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you’re getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don’t assume anything.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care errors.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by The Joint Commission.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

Speak Up™ brochures also are available on topics including visiting your doctor’s office, understanding medical tests, recovering after leaving the hospital, preventing medication mistakes, preventing infections, health literacy, preparing to become a living organ donor, avoiding wrong site surgery and preventing errors in care. To sign up to receive future issues of Speak Up™, please go to [http://www.jointcommission.org/Library/Newsletters/list_serve.htm](http://www.jointcommission.org/Library/Newsletters/list_serve.htm) to join the Speak Up™ listserve.

**Statements from supporters of the Speak Up™ campaign**

“Effectively managing diabetes is an important yet potentially challenging issue for those who are admitted to the hospital. The Speak Up program provides patients with essential information to ensure they can be an active and informed participant in properly controlling their diabetes during their time in the hospital.”

*Davide M. Kendall, M.D., Chief Scientific and Medical Officer, American Diabetes Association*

“AADE was pleased to participate in this project because we know that it’s critical that people with diabetes know how to manage their diabetes in every situation, including hospital stays. This brochure will serve as a handy reference.”

*Lana Vukovljak, CEO, American Association of Diabetes Educators*

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Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value. The Joint Commission evaluates and accredits more than 18,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States, including more than 9,700 hospitals and home care organizations, and more than 6,800 other health care
organizations that provide long term care, behavioral health care, laboratory and ambulatory care services. In addition, The Joint Commission also provides certification of more than 1,700 disease-specific care programs, primary stroke centers, and health care staffing services. An independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. Learn more about The Joint Commission at www.jointcommission.org.