

## Disordered Eating: What to Expect in the Hospital

You are here because of medical problems that come from not getting enough nutrition to meet your body's needs. Because we care about your health and well-being, there are many things we do to keep you safe and help you get healthy.

### Monitoring and Lab Tests

At first, we check your vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure, temperature, and breathing rate) many times a day. You will also need blood and urine tests.

Each morning, we check your blood pressure while you are lying in bed and when you stand up. Your blood pressure numbers may drop when you stand up. If you are dehydrated when you arrive, and your blood pressure numbers change, you may need to get fluids with an IV.

You will need an EKG (electrocardiogram) to look at your heart rhythm. You will wear a heart monitor until your health is stable. This will tell the nurse if there is a problem with your heart rate or rhythm.

### Your Healthcare Team

We have a large team to help you get healthy again. Staff you may see includes:

- doctors
- medical residents
- psychiatrists
- nurses
- patient safety aides
- nutritionists
- health psychologists
- physical or occupational therapists
- social workers
- case managers
- chaplains
- other specialists

### Safety and Activity

For your safety, a patient safety aide (PSA) or video monitor camera will be monitoring you 24 hours a day. If you have a video monitor camera, it is monitored by a technician at a different location and there is no video recording. If you have a PSA, they will always be with you. This includes when you eat, shower and use the bathroom.

To keep you safe, bed rest and fall precautions are put in place. You will wear a yellow wristband and have a yellow leaf outside your door to notify staff that you are at high risk for falls. You always need to sit in bed with your back supported or lay in bed. You may not exercise or walk around your room. You may be allowed to walk to the bathroom with a staff member.

### Nutrition

While you are here, we give you a healthy diet with the vitamins and minerals your body needs. The nutritionists plan your meals. Your nurses will not talk about food or teach about nutrition while you are here.

### Food Rules

- You will eat 3 meals and up to 3 snacks a day. Your meals and snacks will be brought to your room at planned times.
- You need to eat your meals within 30 minutes and snacks within 20 minutes. If you can't finish your meal, you will get a liquid supplement. This is not a punishment. No one will be upset with you if you take the supplement instead of finishing the meal.
- If you do not eat your meal or drink your supplement, you will have a nasogastric (NG) tube placed. This

tube goes in your nose and down to your stomach. Your supplement is given in the NG tube. If you aren't able to finish your water, it will be given through the NG tube.

- You can't give your food to others.
- We can't serve vegan diets.
- We also do not allow:
  - diet food or drinks
  - caffeine
  - outside food (including food brought by family or friends)

### **Bathroom Rules**

A staff member must always go with you to the bathroom. If you are being monitored by a video monitor, you will need to push your call light and wait for staff to help you to the bathroom. You may not use the bathroom for 1 hour after meals or snacks. Please do not flush the toilet. There will be a "hat" in the toilet to catch your urine.

You can take a 5-minute shower when your team decides it is medically safe.

### **Weight Rules**

You are weighed every morning after you urinate and before you shower. Your hair must be dry. We ask that you wear your underwear and gown (no bra) when you are weighed. We do not talk about your weight, and you will face away from the scale.

### **Why so many rules?**

These rules are in place to help you. They have been shown to help keep you safe while in the hospital and keep your stay as short as possible. While the rules are strict, they help to improve your nutrition in a safe way and help your body work normally again. We also do our best to tell you what will happen during your stay. But there may be new things come up that require changes to your plan. We will tell you about any changes that we need to make. Please feel free to ask questions.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 6/2022. University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7574