The First 72 Hours at Home

A plan and a simple log for the first three days after the hospital, when new medicines, new routines and new questions all arrive at once.

Emergencies first
Call 911 for trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, fainting, sudden weakness or numbness on one side, a drooping face or trouble speaking, severe bleeding, or any sudden change that frightens you.

Within a few hours of getting home

- [ ] Compare the discharge medicine list with every bottle in the house. Set aside anything that was stopped (see checklist 4 in this set).
- [ ] Write down the time of the next dose of each medicine.
- [ ] Check that ordered equipment arrived and works. If oxygen came, no smoking, candles or open flames in the house.
- [ ] Clear the path from bed to bathroom. Leave a night light on.
- [ ] Put a phone within your parent's reach.
- [ ] Post the warning signs and the numbers below on the refrigerator.
- [ ] Decide who stays the first night.

Within the first day

- [ ] If home health was ordered and the agency hasn't called, call them. Confirm the date of the first visit.
- [ ] Make the follow-up appointment if no one has, or confirm the one that was made.
- [ ] Fill or pick up any prescriptions still waiting.
- [ ] Call the doctor's office with any question about the instructions. Don't guess.

© 2026 Mark Duda. Print and copy for your own family's use. Not medical advice.

Who to call

For	Name	Phone (and after-hours number)
Primary care doctor		
Specialist		
Home health agency		
Pharmacy		
Hospital unit or nurse line		
Family member on call		

Warning signs the care team told us to watch for

Ask the hospital team which signs matter for your parent's condition, and write them here with what to do for each.

Sign	What to do	Who to call

© 2026 Mark Duda. Print and copy for your own family's use. Not medical advice.

Three-day log

A few words in each box is enough. Bring this to the first follow-up visit; it answers most of the doctor's questions.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Medicines given as listed			
Eating and drinking			
Up and walking as advised			
Bathroom (urine, bowels)			
Pain, and what helped			
Wound or device checked			
Sleep			
Mood, alertness, confusion			
Questions for the nurse or doctor			

Notes for the next person on shift

> **The care team has the final word**
> Ask the hospital team or your parent's doctor about anything on this list that is unclear. This checklist helps you organize; it does not replace their instructions.

The other checklists in this set: Preparing for a Parent's Hospital Discharge · Questions to Ask Before Leaving the Hospital · The First 72 Hours at Home · Understanding Medication Changes After Hospitalization · Getting the Home Ready for Home Health Services. All at AgingAtHomeSupport.com/hospital-discharge-checklists/

For the whole discharge in one place, the Coming Home from the Hospital workbook (21 fill-in pages) is at AgingAtHomeSupport.com/coming-home-from-the-hospital-workbook/

© 2026 Mark Duda. Print and copy for your own family's use. Not medical advice.