

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to give you a resource for questions that come up after your organ transplant.

After your surgery, you will begin the recovery process and life with your new transplanted organ(s). This booklet will help you and your care partner(s) understand the process, learn what you need to know about taking care of yourself and serve as a guide for common questions.

Considering the seriousness of the surgery and based on the amount of time you and your family had to get ready for your transplant, you may be feeling somewhat overwhelmed. Remember that you need to heal emotionally, mentally, and spiritually as well as physically.

While patients want to go back to a “normal life” right away, this will take time. It may be many months before you start to feel you have regained your strength and have a good idea of how to handle your health care. You will leave the hospital with a sound knowledge of your medicines, your diet and your basic cares.

During the time right after your transplant, it may be helpful for you and your family to speak with another post-transplant patient and his/her family, take part in a transplant support group, and talk about your concerns with a transplant team member. Our transplant nurse coordinators, social workers, psychologist and chaplain are available. Please ask your nurse or transplant nurse coordinator if you feel you need one of

these services. You may be surprised to hear how normal your feelings are; it is vital to have these feelings and concerns addressed. It is important to learn that this is just another change in your life. It will take time, and with some support, to get comfortable with all the changes.

A transplant coordinator will review this booklet with you before you go home. Please keep this booklet within reach and refer to it when you have questions. You may keep your medicine sheets in this book. Be sure to bring it to clinic for a quick guide to your medicines.

Ask questions when you are not sure about any aspect of your home care. No question is “silly” or unimportant. Do not be shy about asking questions. Our goal is to help you go home with the belief in yourself and the knowledge you need to live your life and care for your transplanted organ.