

Hospital Go Bag Checklist

Bag last checked: _____

For: _____

Where the bag lives: _____

A note from the nurse who made this: my family's go bag was three things for eighteen years: a fresh set of clothes, a phone charger, and the current medication list. A simple bag you actually keep packed beats a perfect bag you never build. Start with section 1; everything else is a bonus.

1. THE INFORMATION · the part that matters most

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Current dated medication list (swap it the same day the list changes) | ☐ Emergency information sheet (copy) |
| ☐ Insurance card & photo ID (the only two valuables this trip needs) | ☐ Advance directive / healthcare POA (copies) |
| ☐ Care team contact page | ☐ Home logistics note (pets, garage code, a neighbor's number) |

2. FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ A fresh change of clothes | ☐ Sweater or light jacket (hospitals run cold) |
| ☐ Non-slip socks or slippers | ☐ Travel-size toiletries |
| ☐ Glasses, hearing aid, or denture supplies (cases, batteries, solution) | ☐ One small comfort item (a photo, a book, something familiar) |

3. FOR YOU, THE CAREGIVER · hospital time is measured in hours

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Phone charger (the item every family forgets; ours was for us, not for him) | ☐ Notepad and pen (for writing down what the doctors say) |
| ☐ Snacks and a water bottle (for YOU; see the note below) | ☐ A sweater for yourself |

4. LEAVE AT HOME · a nurse's advice

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✗ Medical equipment & supplies (the hospital provides them; exception: home breathing equipment like a BiPAP; ask the care team, ours came with us every time) | ✗ Medication bottles (the dated list is what the team needs) |
| ✗ Valuables, especially jewelry (in an emergency it often has to come off anyway: swelling, surgery, MRI; what stays home cannot be lost) | ✗ Cash (not needed) |

TWO RULES THAT KEEP THE BAG WORKING

Your snacks are for you, not for your loved one: hospital diets are monitored and often restricted, so never give food or drink without asking the nurse first. And the bag goes stale the way lists do: when the medication list changes, the copy in the bag changes the same day; check the whole bag when the seasons change.