



# Patient Guide



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## Letter from the President

Welcome to Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, Kern County's premier medical center. Aided by some of the most advanced diagnostic and treatment equipment available, your healthcare team is here to ensure that you receive the best possible care.

On behalf of the entire hospital staff, I want to assure you that we will do everything possible to make your upcoming hospitalization as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

Outside organizations that grade hospitals, and even more importantly, our patients, have said some very flattering things about the great work we do here. Five-star ratings and independent recognition is nice, but we believe what makes Memorial Hospital unique is the way we relate to our patients and their families—offering respect, compassion and exceptional care.

That exceptional care begins with providing you with direct access to the people who are personally invested in making your experience with our hospital a positive one. If there is anything you need to discuss, you may, of course, talk to your nurses.

You can also pick up the phone and ask the operator to call the department manager or supervisor. To reach me, simply call (661) 327-4647, ext. 1820.

From all of us at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, we wish you a speedy recovery.

Sincerely,

Jon Van Boening  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Bakersfield Memorial Hospital

## Our Mission

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital is committed to furthering the healing ministry of Jesus. We dedicate our resources to:

- Delivering compassionate, high-quality, affordable health services;
- Serving and advocating for our sisters and brothers who are poor and disenfranchised; and
- Partnering with others in the community to improve the quality of life.



## Our Ethics

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital has established a code of ethical behavior in recognition of our responsibility for the quality of relationships with patients, families, staff, doctors, payers and the communities we serve. If you would like further information, please refer to the Code of Ethics form provided at the time of your admission.

## Our Values

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital is committed to providing high quality, affordable health care to the communities we serve. Above all else we value:

**DIGNITY** - Respecting the inherent value and worth of each person.

**COLLABORATION** - Working together with people who support common values and vision to achieve shared goals.

**JUSTICE** - Advocating for social change and acting in ways that promote respect for all persons and demonstrate compassion for our sisters and brothers who are powerless.

**STEWARDSHIP** - Cultivating the resources entrusted to us to promote healing and wholeness.

**EXCELLENCE** - Exceeding expectations through teamwork and innovation.

## About Bakersfield Memorial Hospital

Founded in 1956, Bakersfield Memorial Hospital was created to meet the needs of our community, and has grown from a small local facility to a large regional hospital serving all of Kern County.

Today, we have more than 400 general acute beds, nearly 50 intensive care and cardiovascular recovery units, 13 state-of-the-art surgical suites, a full-service Emergency Department with a nationally certified Stroke Center, and the Central California Heart Institute.

In addition, we offer beautiful birthing suites, The Children's Medical Center including the southern valley's only Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, a family care center, a 31-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, a full complement of diagnostic laboratory and imaging services and an outpatient surgery center.

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital is a member of Dignity Health, the fifth-largest hospital system in the nation and the largest not-for-profit hospital provider in California.



## Admissions

If you are being admitted to the hospital, please come to the Admitting Department in the main entrance lobby. Once you have completed the registration process, you will be escorted to your hospital room.

Labor and Delivery patients should pre-register after 24 weeks gestation.

**Hours:** Monday through Friday,  
4:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
Closed on major holidays

After business hours, and on weekends and holidays, please go to the Emergency Room Admitting area on the San Dimas Street side of the hospital.

## What to Bring

- Your hospital insurance card.
- Orders or forms from your doctor.
- If you have completed an Advance Health Care Directive form, please bring a copy with you.
- Please bring a list of prescription medication(s) as well as any over-the-counter drugs and herbs you are currently taking. Please leave your medication at home, unless specifically directed otherwise by your doctor.
- For your comfort, we suggest that you bring a pair of pajamas or a nightgown, slippers, robe, and toiletries (such as shampoo and toothbrush), etc.
- Don't forget your glasses, hearing aids and dentures if needed.
- Insurance information and emergency telephone numbers.
- Infant car seat and clothing for maternity patients.

## What Not to Bring

- Please leave the following items at home: jewelry, credit cards, other valuables and cash. If you need to bring cash, checks or a credit card to make a deposit or co-payment, please have a family member take them home after you are admitted.
- Please limit the personal items you bring and arrange to send extra items home with a family member.
- Do not bring your own supply of medications.
- To ensure your safety, you may not bring any electrical items that operate on household voltage (such as hairdryers, curling irons, hot rollers, radios, computers, VCRs, razors and tape recorders). Some personal appliances are available for loan. Ask your nurse for more information.
- If you wear eyeglasses, dentures or hearing aids, be sure to store them properly with your belongings when they are not in use. We are unable to look after valuables in your room.
- Please leave cash, jewelry or other important items at home. If you bring any valuables to the hospital, ask a friend or relative to take them home for you. We urge you to keep no more than \$5 in your room, or check in your valuables to be itemized on a receipt and placed in the hospital safe until your discharge. We cannot be liable for any possession not placed in our safe and itemized on a receipt.



## Patient Safety

At Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, the safety of our patients is our highest priority. In order to maintain a safe environment, fire and/or safety drills are performed regularly and may occur during your stay with us.

In terms of your care, we have created communication protocols and procedures that ensure you will receive the correct medications and treatments.

Communication is the key—communication between the patient, the family and the healthcare team of doctors, nursing staff and therapists. Your role in this communication is vital—so please let us know as soon as any questions or concerns arise.

Expect our staff to check two forms of identification prior to giving you medications, performing procedures or drawing your blood.

Expect staff members to introduce themselves to you and look for their I.D. badges. If you are having surgery or an invasive procedure involving “right” or “left” parts of your body or multiple structures such as fingers or toes, you will be asked by the doctor and nurse to identify the procedure and its location before surgery.

Expect your healthcare workers to wash their hands or use an alcohol gel before touching you.

When it comes to your health, there are no silly questions. If you do not understand something, please ask! Be involved in your care—take part in every decision. Ask what the benefits and risks are to a proposed treatment or medication, and what the alternatives might be.

## Questions & Answers About The Discharge Process

### Who determines when I am discharged from the hospital?

During your stay with us, your care team will be planning for your needs after you leave the hospital. They will work with your physician to arrange any special needs for care at home. This will involve meeting with a case manager on the first or second day of your stay. Your physician will assess your health status and determine the appropriate time for you to either go home, or to another facility suitable for your recovery.

### Will someone discuss with me how to take care of myself once I leave the hospital?

Rest assured, you will be given complete instructions from your care team regarding how to take care of yourself outside of the hospital. Your nurse will review the information with you and will also provide written instructions for you to take home. Feel free to ask questions now about what your healthcare plan will be after discharge. If you have arranged for a caregiver, it is a good idea to discuss with him/her what your needs will be and answer any questions he/she might have before you leave the hospital.

### Can I just walk out when I’m told I am ready for discharge?

No. To ensure your safety we have a discharge process. This process will involve a discharge assessment by your nurse and a review of your home healthcare instructions. A hospital representative will escort you to the pick-up location and help you safely into the car. Please note that if all requirements are completed for your discharge and you are unable to leave the hospital for personal reasons, there may be additional charges.

### When should I arrange for transportation home?

We ask that you start thinking about your discharge transportation needs early in your stay. Early planning is the best way to be certain you will be able to leave as soon as your doctor has approved your discharge. Please make sure you tell your nurse how you will be getting home, and rest assured every effort will be made to accommodate anyone with special circumstances.

### If I am leaving the hospital by ambulance, what time should I expect to leave?

Ambulance availability varies and therefore an exact time is not always possible to determine. Your care team will give you an estimated time of departure the morning of your discharge. We recommend that you send any personal items home in advance, as space is limited in the ambulance and items could be lost. Please check your insurance for ambulance transportation coverage; not all carriers cover this mode of transport.

### What if I have questions regarding my bill?

You may speak with a financial counselor about questions or concerns regarding your bill before you go home. Please call ext. 4692.

### How will I know when to see my physician for follow-up?

You will receive written instructions before you leave the hospital that will tell you when your doctor would like to see you next.

### What if I need special equipment or supplies at my home?

Your nurse or case manager can help with arrangements for special equipment or supplies.

### What medications should I take after I leave the hospital?

Before you leave the hospital you will be given complete instructions from your team, including specifics regarding your medications. Should your physician give you a prescription at the time of your discharge, you may fill it at your local pharmacy.

## Danger Signals

If any of these danger signals become evident as you continue your recovery at home, call your doctor immediately.

- Arm or leg has changed color or temperature
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Unrelieved pain
- Temperature higher than 101 degrees
- A wound that looks infected (red, swollen, draining pus or bleeding unexpectedly)
- Shortness of breath



## Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

### Know the Signs

Heart attacks can strike suddenly with dramatic, obvious pain... but not always. In fact, most start slowly, with only mild discomfort or pain. Often people wait before getting help and delaying important care.

### Here are some warning signs.

- Chest discomfort - uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or tightness.
- Discomfort in the upper body - pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach. May feel like indigestion.
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat, nausea, lightheadedness

### ACT FAST!

If you—or someone you're with experiences chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait.

### Call 911 right away!

Emergency personnel can start treatment immediately upon arriving on the scene.

## Stroke Warning Signs



Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body



Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding



Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes



Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination



Sudden severe headache with no known cause

## With Stroke...Time is Brain

**STROKE** is the fourth leading cause of death in our country.

Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a **STROKE**.

Every four minutes, someone dies from a **STROKE**.

**STROKE** is the leading cause of adult disability in the U.S.

### Stroke prevention is the best medicine.

Eighty percent of all strokes can be prevented through healthy living and having regular checkups to detect conditions that can lead to stroke, such as:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Previous stroke or TIA ("mini-strokes")
- Sickle cell disease

Treatment can be more effective if given quickly. Every minute counts. If you notice one or more of these signs, act FAST!

**STROKE is a medical emergency. Call 9-1-1!**

## How to Quit Smoking

The California Smokers' Helpline is a telephone program that can help you quit smoking. Helpline services are free, funded by the California Department of Health. The Helpline has been in operation since 1992. Every month, thousands of Californians call and receive help.

When you call, a friendly staff person will offer a choice of services: self-help materials, a referral list of other programs, and one-on-one counseling over the phone.

Whether you're ready to quit or just thinking about it, call 1-800-NO-BUTTS.

The Helpline is here for you.

Service hours are Monday through Friday, 9a.m. to 9p.m., Saturday 9a.m. to 1p.m. If you call after hours or if the lines are busy, you will reach the Helpline's 24-hour voice mail service.

The Helpline has services in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean and TDD/TTY. There are also services for those wanting to quit chewing tobacco.

Anyone in California can call the Helpline, whether they are currently smoking, have already quit, or want information for a friend or relative.

Counselors at the Helpline are caring professionals trained in the field of smoking cessation.

### More About the Smokers' Helpline

How can the California Smokers' Helpline help you to quit?

- Self-help materials, if you would like to quit smoking on your own.
- A referral list of other programs in your area, if you would like to attend a group or a class.
- Confidential, one-on-one telephone counseling, if you are ready to quit smoking and want some help.

Does telephone counseling really work?

Yes. People who receive counseling are twice as likely to successfully quit as those who try to quit on their own. These results are from a research study of over 3,000 smokers.

Will some insurance plans pay for the nicotine patch?

Many plans, including MediCal, will pay for the patch for those enrolled in a quit smoking program, such as the California Smokers' Helpline. Check with your insurance company to find out whether you are covered for Zyban™ or a nicotine replacement product such as gum, inhaler, patch or spray.





## Contact Us

We encourage you to contact your nurse if there is anything you need to discuss about your care. You can also pick up the phone and ask the operator to call the department manager or supervisor if you would like to recognize staff for excellent care or to express concerns.

You may contact us at 327-4647 or via e-mail by clicking on the "Contact Us" link at our hospital website [www.BakersfieldMemorial.org](http://www.BakersfieldMemorial.org).

File a grievance: If you want to file a grievance with this hospital, you may do so by writing or by calling:

### Quality Management

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital  
420 34th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301  
(661) 327-4647

### Interpreter Services

Interpreter services are available for any patient or individual needing assistance with language translation and for those who are hearing impaired. These services are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week through an outside contractor.

### Telecommunication Devices (TDD)

The hospital offers telecommunication devices (TDD) for the hearing impaired. To request telecommunication devices (TDD), please ask your nurse.

### Environmental/housekeeping Services

Our Housekeeping Services staff is dedicated to your comfort and safety. While at Memorial Hospital, they will clean your room daily, but with as little noise and disturbance as possible. If you are not pleased with their services, please contact Environmental Services at ext. 3027 so we can immediately address your concerns. If there is no answer at that extension, please dial "0" and ask the operator to request housekeeping assistance.

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