

Helpful Tips for Avoiding Hospital Stays & Emergency Room Visits

1. ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

The Emergency Room is designed to deal with life-threatening medical issues. However, it is often first line of treatment for patients that do not have a primary care provider. Establishing yourself with a primary care physician, as well as their staff, provides you with a first line of defense when a situation arises. Maintaining regular annual physicals with your physician also helps you maintain optimal health and avoid expensive ER visits.

Always be sure to keep your scheduled appointments with your primary care provider, your specialists and your behavioral health specialists.

2. SELF-CARE & PREVENTION

Be proactive with your care by:

- Washing your hands often
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Drinking plenty of non-caffeinated fluids
- Refraining from smoking
- Limiting your alcohol consumption
- Avoiding illegal drugs
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Getting your Flu & Pneumonia Vaccine
- Making sure you have active smoke detectors in your home

3. AVOID FALLS

Falling is a common reason for a visit to the ER. Avoid falls by using your assistive devices. Remove rugs, cords, tubing or other trip hazards.

4. UNDERSTAND YOUR MEDICATIONS

- Talk with your provider if you don't understand your medications.
- Do not miss medication doses.
- Keep a current medication list with you at all times.
- If possible, use one pharmacy. They can keep track of potential medication interactions.
- Do not stop your medications without discussing it with your provider.
- If you can't afford your medication, notify your provider.