

# 2009 Hospital National Patient Safety Goals

The purpose of the National Patient Safety Goals is to improve patient safety. The Goals focus on problems in health care safety and how to solve them.

## Identify patients correctly

Use at least two ways to identify patients. For example, use the patient's name and date of birth. This is done to make sure that each patient gets the medicine and treatment meant for them.

**Make sure that the correct patient gets the correct blood type when they get a blood transfusion.**

## Improve staff communication

Read back spoken or phone orders to the person who gave the order.

Create a list of abbreviations and symbols that are not to be used.

Quickly get important test results to the right staff person.

Create steps for staff to follow when sending patients to the next caregiver. The steps should help staff tell about the patient's care. Make sure there is time to ask and answer questions.

## Use medicines safely

Create a list of medicines with names that look alike or sound alike. Update the list every year.

Label all medicines that are not already labeled. For example, medicines in syringes, cups and basins.

Take extra care with patients who take medicines to thin their blood.

## Prevent infection

Use the hand cleaning guidelines from the World Health Organization or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Report death or injury to patients from infections that happen in hospitals.

**Use proven guidelines to prevent infections that are difficult to treat.**



**Use proven guidelines to prevent infection of the blood.**

**Use safe practices to treat the part of the body where surgery was done.**

## Check patient medicines

Find out what medicines each patient is taking. Make sure that it is OK for the patient to take any new medicines with their current medicines.

**Give a list of the patient's medicines to their next caregiver or to their regular doctor before the patient goes home.**

**Give a list of the patient's medicines to the patient and their family before they go home. Explain the list.**

**Some patients may get medicine in small amounts or for a short time. Make sure that it is OK for those patients to take those medicines with their current medicines.**

## Prevent patients from falling

Find out which patients are most likely to fall. For example, is the patient taking any medicines that might make them weak, dizzy or sleepy? Take action to prevent falls for these patients.

## Help patients to be involved in their care

Tell each patient and their family how to report their complaints about safety.

## Identify patient safety risks

Find out which patients are most likely to try to kill themselves.

## Watch patients closely for changes in their health and respond quickly if they need help

Create ways to get help from specially trained staff when a patient's health appears to get worse.

## Prevent errors in surgery

Create steps for staff to follow so that all documents needed for surgery are on hand before surgery starts.

Mark the part of the body where the surgery will be done. Involve the patient in doing this.

This is an easy-to-read document. It has been created for the public. The exact language of the Goals can be found at [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org).