

Improve Safety: Urge Your Patients To Speak Up® *

➔ **JCAHO** encourages patients to become active, involved and informed participants on the health care team. The following simple steps are based on research which shows that patients who take part in decisions about their health care are more likely to have better outcomes.

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

Know your medications and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care errors.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by JCAHO.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

* Courtesy of Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). Complete Speak Up® document available at: <http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/SpeakUp/>. No copyright or reprinting permissions required, but JCAHO (<http://www.jointcommission.org/>) asks to be credited as the source in copies and references to the material.