
The First 72 Hours Home

A Caregiver Guide

A calm, practical companion for the first days after a loved one comes home.

Save This For Mom

Practical caregiver education, saved for when you need it.

Start here

Educational notice

This guide is educational information, not medical advice. It does not diagnose conditions, replace discharge instructions, or tell you when it is safe to change medications or care.

Follow the care team's written plan. For urgent or life-threatening symptoms, call 911 or your local emergency number. When you are unsure, contact the clinician or service named in the discharge plan.

You do not have to do everything at once. Choose one next step, then return when you are ready.

Before leaving: the handoff check

Bring home or confirm access to:

- ☐ Discharge instructions and the medication list
- ☐ Primary follow-up contact and after-hours number
- ☐ Appointments, therapy, home health, and equipment instructions
- ☐ Symptoms that require a call and symptoms that require emergency help
- ☐ Pharmacy details and a plan for medications not yet available

Caregiver note: What is the one instruction you want explained again?

Hour zero

Arrive, orient, and make the space safer

1. Settle your loved one in the safest, easiest-to-reach resting place.
2. Put a phone, water if allowed, glasses, hearing aids, and needed supplies within reach.
3. Clear paths to the bathroom; remove loose rugs, cords, and clutter.
4. Review the next medication time and the next planned care task.
5. Note a simple baseline: how they look, sound, move, eat, drink, think, and breathe right now.

☐ Home entry and walking path are clear and well lit.

☐ Discharge papers are in one visible place.

☐ Phone numbers are saved or written nearby.

☐ Mobility aids are nearby and used as instructed.