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5. Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery.

- Make sure you, your doctor, and your surgeon all agree on exactly what will be done during the operation.
- Ask your doctor, “Who will manage my care when I am in the hospital?”
- Ask your surgeon:
 - “Exactly what will you be doing?”
 - “About how long will it take?”
 - “What will happen after surgery?”
 - “How can I expect to feel during recovery?”
- Tell the surgeon, anesthesiologist, and nurses about any allergies, bad reactions to anesthesia, and any medications or nutritional supplements you are taking.

Patient Safety Links

For more information on patient safety, please visit:

- www.jointcommission.org/topics/patient_safety.aspx. The Joint Commission helps healthcare organizations to improve the quality and safety of the care they deliver.
- www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality makes available a wide-ranging list of topics not only to inform consumers about patient safety but to help choose quality healthcare providers and improve the quality of care you receive.
- www.bemedwise.org. The National Council on Patient Information and Education is dedicated to improving communication about the safe, appropriate use of medications.

- www.leapfroggroup.org. The Leapfrog Group is active in promoting safe practices in hospital care.
- www.ahqa.org. The American Health Quality Association represents organizations and healthcare professionals working to improve patient safety.

Preventable Healthcare Acquired Conditions (“Never Events”)

When you enter the hospital for treatment of one medical problem, you do not expect to leave with additional injuries, infections, or other serious conditions that occur during the course of your stay. Although some of these complications may not be avoidable, patients do suffer from injuries or illnesses that could have been prevented if doctors or the hospital had taken proper precautions. Errors in medical care that are clearly identifiable, preventable and serious in their consequences for patients can indicate a significant problem in the safety and credibility of a healthcare facility. These conditions and errors are sometimes called “Never Events” or “Serious Reportable Events.”

We have a benefit payment policy that encourages hospitals to reduce the likelihood of hospital-acquired conditions such as certain infections, severe bedsores, and fractures, and to reduce medical errors that should never happen. When such an event occurs, neither you nor your FEHB Plan will incur costs to correct the medical error.

You will not be billed for inpatient services when care is related to treatment of specific hospital-acquired conditions if you use Preferred or Member hospitals. This policy helps to protect you from having to pay for the cost of treating these conditions, and it encourages hospitals to improve the quality of care they provide.

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